

**THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN CHIVI
DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE: A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION**

BY

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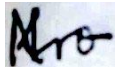
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JANUARY 2021

DECLARATION

Student number: **58527680**

I declare that **THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN CHIVI DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE: A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION**, is my work and that every source that I have used or quoted has been indicated and acknowledged using complete reference. I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software. It is submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, in the subject of Sociology of Education at the University of South Africa, Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.



SIGNATURE

JANUARY 2021

DATE



SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE

January 2021

DATE

DEDICATION

To my late mother, Mergie, Musiiwa Madobore Maringwa Ndlovu

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated English as the language of instruction (LOI) and its implications for social justice at Grade Three level in Chivi District, Zimbabwe. There is a dearth of linguistic diversity in Chivi District schools despite their multilingual nature, where indigenous languages, Shona, Ndebele and Shangani, are spoken. The Zimbabwean language in education policies do not promote heritage languages although Zimbabwe's participation in international declarations on African languages which aim to recognise heritage languages as LOIs were not fruitful. The demise of indigenous languages, culture and identity are social justice malpractices due to the dominance of English as LOI in the education system. The study adopted a qualitative research design and a phenomenological research strategy which are embedded in the constructivist paradigm. focus group interviews, semi-structured, open-ended interviews, document analysis and observation were used to generate data. A total of twenty-two (22) purposively sampled research participants participated in the study. The findings indicated that the LOI is the language recommended by government for teaching and learning in schools. The study also indicated that social justice can be achieved when learners and teachers have equal access to use the language of their choice in teaching and learning. The findings indicated that English as the LOI at Grade Three level largely communicates social justice malpractices because participants revealed lack of language diversity, manifestation of xenocentrism, low self-esteem, subtractive bilingualism, transitional submersion, poor performance and lack of teacher-learner proficiency in English as weaknesses in the education arena. Furthermore, findings revealed that indigenous languages occupy peripheral roles although they are spoken by the majority in Chivi District schools. Notwithstanding, the study revealed that English has benefits for the learners since it is instrumental in securing employment opportunities, further education and global communication and it is responsible for sifting, selecting and allocating occupational roles in society. The study recommends that for social justice to prevail in the education system in Chivi District, the Ministry responsible should formulate and enact language in education policies that focus on linguistic diversity. The Ministry should also be pragmatic in enforcing language policies.

KEYWORDS

Language of instruction, social justice, critical investigation, implications, subtractive bilingualism education, transitional bilingualism education, indigenous languages and culture, shop- talk

KAFUSHANE NGOCWANINGO

Lolu cwaningo lwaphenya ukusetshenziswa kolimi lwesiNgesi njengolimi lokufundisa (*language of instruction* [LOI]) kanye nomthelela walokhu ekuqinisekiseni kobulungiswa namathuba alinganayo kubafundi beBanga Lesithathu esiFundeni sase-Chivi, kwelaseZimbabwe. Ukubhekelelwa nokuhlinzekelwa kokwahlukahluka ngokwezilimi kuyinto eyindlala kakhulu ezikoleni zesiFunda saseChivi nakuba zona kuyizikole ezinabo ubuliminingi, lapho kukhulunywa khona izilimi zendabuko, okuyisiShona, isiNdebele kanye nesiShangane. Izinqubomgomo zolimi kwezemfundo kwelaseZimbabwe azizigqugquzeli izilimi zamagugu endabuko futhi akuzange neze kube nezithelo ezinhle ukubamba iqhaza kwezwe laseZimbabwe ezivumelwaneni zamazwe ngamazwe maqondana nezilimi zase-Afrika okuyizivumelwano okuhloswe ngazo ukwamukela ngokusemthethweni izilimi zamagugu endabuko njengezilimi zokufundisa. Ukufadalala lwezilimi zendabuko, usikompilo kanye nokwehluka kwabantu ngokwemvelaphi nobunjalo babo njengabantu kuyinto ephambene nenkambiso elungileyo engumphumela wokukhonya kakhulu kolimi lwesiNgesi njengolimi lokufundisa ohlelweni lwezemfundo kulesi sifunda esishiwo ngenhla. Ucwangingo lwasebenzisa indlela-kucwaninga yokuxoxisana ngokujulile nabambambiqhaza bocwaningo (*qualitative research design*) kanye neqhingasu lokucwaninga izimo abahlangabezana nazo futhi abadlule kuzona ababambiqhaza ezimpilweni zabo (*phenomenological research strategy*) okuyiqhingasu eligxile ekuzakheleni kwababambiqhaza ulwazi ngokwabo kanye nokuqonda (*constructivist paradigm*). Ngenhloso yokuthola nokukhiqiza idatha (imininingo) kwasetshenziswa indlela-kuxoxisana egxile kwiqenjana elincane elinezici-bunjalo ezifanayo (*focus group interviews*), nendlela-kuxoxisana ubuso nobuso engagcini nje kuphela ohlwini lwemibuzo ehlelekile, kepha elandelisa nangeminye imibuzo evulekile (*semi-structured face-to-face interviews*), nokuhlaziywa kwemibhalo kanye nokubukela lokho okwenziwa ngababambiqhaza bocwaningo. Bangamashumi amabili nambili (22) ababambiqhaza ababamba iqhaza kulolu cwaningo ababekhethwe ngenhloso. Imiphumela eyatholakala ocwaningweni yabonisa ukuthi i-LOI wulimi olunconywe nguhulumeni ukuba luzetshenziswe njengolimi lokufundisa nokufunda ezikoleni. Ucwangingo lwabonisa futhi ukuthi bungafezekiswa ubulungiswa bomphakathi nokulingana uma abafundi nothisha benikezwa ithuba elilinganayo lokusebenzisa ulimi oluqokwe yibona ngokwabo maqondana nokufundisa nokufunda. Imiphumela eyatholakala ocwaningweni yabonisa ukuthi ukusetshenziswa kwesiNgesi njengolimi

lokufundisa eBangezi Lesithathu kubonisa ikakhulukazi inkambiso ephambene nobulungiswa bomphakathi nokulingana ngoba phela ababambiqhaza babonisa ukuntuleka kokubhekelelwa nokwahlukahluka ngokwezilimi, ubukhona bothando losikompilo nolimi lwabezizwe esikhundleni sokuthanda olwabo, ukuzenyeza, ukufunda ulimi lwesibili okugcina sekukhonya lona esikhundleni solimi lwebele, ukuthatha kolimi olusha indawo yolimi lwendabuko (*transitional submersion*), ukungasebenzi/ukungaqhubi neze kahle kanye nokuntuleka kobunyoninco nekhono lokukhuluma nokusebenzisa kahle ulimi lwesiNgisi kothisha nabafundi, okuyizinto ezibonisa ubuthakathaka emkhakheni wezemfundo. Ngaphezu kwalokho, imiphumela yocwaningo yabonisa ukuthi izilimi zendabuko azidlali indima engumongo futhi zibekwe eceleni nakuba kuyizona ezikhulunywa ngabafundi ezikoleni eziningi esiFundeni sase-Chivi. Kepha-ke nakuba kunjalo ucwaningo lwabonisa ukuthi ulimi lwesiNgisi lunayo imihlomulo kanye nosizo kubafundi njengoba lubaluleke kakhulu ekutholeni amathuba omsebenzi, nemfundo ephakeme kanye nokuxhumana nabantu bamazwe ngamazwe futhi isiNgisi yisona esidlala indima esemqoka ekuhlungeni, ekukhetheni kanye nasekwabeni imisebenzi emphakathini. Ucwanningo luncoma ukuthi ukuze kube nobulungiswa bomphakathi nokulingana ohlelweni lwezemfundo esiFundeni sase-Chivi, iHhovisi likaNgqongqoshe elibhekelele lokhu kumele lakhe futhi liphasise izinqubomgomo kwezemfundo ezigxile ekubhekeleleni ukwahlukahluka ngokwezilimi. IHhovisi likaNgqongqoshe kumele futhi lithathe izinyathelo eziphathekayo nezizosebenziseka ngempumelelo ekuqinisekiseni ukuqaliswa kwezinqubomgomo zolimi.

AMAGAMA ASEMQOKA

Ulimi lokufundisa, ubulungiswa bomphakathi nokulingana, uphenyo/ucwaningo olunzulu olubukisisa izinhlangothi zonke, imithelela, imfundo egxile ekufundeni ulimi lwesibili okugcina sekukhonya lona esikhundleni solimi lwebele, imfundo ebonisa ubukhona bothando lolimi lwabezizwe esikhundleni sokuthanda olwakho, izilimi zendabuko nosikompilo, ukukhuluma ngezakho izimfuno nezintshisekelo

NGOKURHUNYEZIWEKO

Irhubhululo leli beliphenya isiNgisi njengelimi lokufundisa (LOI) kanye neminqopho yalo kezobulungiswa babantu/bomphakathi esiGabeni seGreyidi yesiThathu esifundeni se-Chivi District, eZimbabwe. Kunokunyamalala kwehlelo lokukhulunywa kwamalimi ahlukahlukene eenkolweni eziku-Chivi District naphezu kokuthi kuneenkolo zamalimi amanengi, kuleziinkolo kukhulunywa amalimi wendabuko anjengesishona, isiNdebele kanye nesiShangani. Ilimi leZimbabwe malungana nemigomo yezefundo, imigomo le ayithuthukisi amalimi okumagugu kanti godu inarha yeZimbabwe ayizibandakanyi ehlelweni lephasi lokumenyenzelwa kwamalimi we-Afrika, okulihlelo elihlose ukuhlonipha amalimi amagugu njengamalimi wokufundisa (LOI) kube yipumelelo. Ukufa kwamalimi wendabuko, kwesikopilo kanye nobunjalo bethu kuyindlela yokubhalelwa kuletha ubulungiswa babantu, ngenca yokubuswa siNgisi njengeLimi lokuFundisa kusistimu yefundo. Irhubhululo lilandele idizayini yerhubhululo lekhwalithi (*qualitative research design*) kanye namano werhubhululo lefenomenoloji (*phenomenological research strategy*), okumamano atholakala ku-*constructivist paradigm*). Amahlelo wehlolombono wesiQhema esiNqotjhiweko (*Focus group interviews*), amahlolombono enzeka ubuso-nobuso ahlelwe kabili (*semi-structured face-to-face interviews*), ukutsengwa kwemitlolo kanye nokubuthelela ilwazi ngokuqala ngamehlo, koke lokhu kusetjenziswe ukubuthelela idatha. Inani loke labadlalindima abamasumi amabili (22) kwirhubhululo lesampuli eneminqopho. Ilwazi elitholakeleko likhombise bona iLimi lokuFundisa kulilimi elinconywa ngurhulumende ehlelweni lokufunda nokufundisa eenkolweni. Irhubhululo likhombise ukuthi ubulungiswa bomphakathi bungafikelelwa lokha abafundi nabotitjhere nabanamandla alinganako wokusebenzisa ilimi abalithandako ekufundeni nekufundiseni. Ilwazi elitholakeleko likhombise ukuthi isiNgisi njengeLimi lokuFundisa esiGabeni seGreyidi yesiThathu kanengi siveza ukungakhambi kuhle ehlelweni lezobulungiswa bomphakathi, ngombana abadlalindima bakhombise ukuthayela kwehlelo lamalimi ahlukahlukene, ukuvela kwehlelo lokuninana, ukuzithathela phasi, ukubulala elinye ilimi ngelinye ilimi, ukufunda ilimi lesibili ngelinye ilimi elingabonakaliko, izinga lokungasebenzi kuhle esikolweni kanye nokuthayela kwabotitjhere nabafundi abakghona ukukhuluma ilimi lesiNgisi njengobuthakathaka emkhakheni wezefundo. Ngaphezu kwalokho, ilwazi elitholakeleko liveze ukuthi amalimi wendabuko athethe indima ekhambisanako, nanyana akhulunywa bunengi beenkolo ze-Chivi District. Ngaphandle kokuphikisana okunengi, irhubhululo liveze ukuthi isiNgisi sineenzuzo

kubafundi njengombana sisebenza khulu malungana nokuvula amathuba wemisebenzi, ukuragela phambili ngefundo kanye nokuthintana nephasi loke kanti ilimi leli lilungele ukusefa, ukukhetha kanye nokuhlukaniselana iindima emphakathini. Irhubhululo lincome kobana ukuze ubulungiswa bomphakathi bubonakale ehlelweni lezefundo ku-Chivi District, uMnyango othintekako kufanele wakhe bewusebenzise, kumithethomgomo yezefundo eqalene nokuvumela amalimi ahlukahlukeneko. UMnyango godu kufanele usebenze ngendlela yamambala ukuqinisa umthetho ekulandelweni kwemithethomgomo yezamalimi.

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Ilimi lokufundisa, ubulungiswa babantu/bomphakathi, iphenyo elihlabako, iinhloso/iminqopho, ifundo yokujamiselela elinye ilimi ngelinye, ifundo yokuqinisa elinye ilimi ngelinye, amalimi wendabuko kanye nesiko/isikopilo, ikulumiswano engakahleleki emalungana nokuthize.

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CHAPTER FIVE

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
DSI	District Schools Inspector
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EMI	English Medium Instruction
ESAR	Eastern and Southern Africa Region
FAREME	Family, Religion and Moral Education
FGIs	Focus Group Interviews
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ILs	Indigenous Languages
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LC	LinkedIn Corporation
LOI	Language of Instruction
LOLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
MOI	Medium of Instruction
MoPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
OAU	The organisation of African Unity
PED	Provincial Education Director
PHAST	Public Health Support Team
REC	Research Ethics Committee
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SDC	School Development Committee
TIDAM	Tesch's Interactive Data Analysis Model
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNISA	University of South Africa

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The language of instruction (LOI) plays a significant role at primary school, Grade Three level in Zimbabwe's education system, particularly in Chivi District of Masvingo Province. There are diverse cultural groups in Chivi District, namely, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele speaking people. The LOI refers to the language in which curriculum content is taught (Trudell, 2016: 790). Benstern and Tiegerman-Farber (2011: 16) describe human language as the use of voice sounds in organised combinations and patterns to communicate thoughts and feelings. The curriculum content and knowledge dissemination currently takes place in English as the medium of instruction (MOI) or LOI in Chivi District. These terms and acronyms are used interchangeably throughout this study. There is a lack of language diversity and this does not foster social justice education practices, since learners express their thoughts and feelings in English, which is a second language in the district. Harrison and Clark (2016: 231) define social justice as a situation that provides equal opportunities to all groups of people in society. Similarly, Bell (2007: 1) cited in Mthethwa-Sommers (2014: 10) views social justice as equal participation of all groups in a society. Accordingly, Hawkins (2009: 2) postulates that social justice can be seen in terms of fairness, human rights and democracy. Thus, Harrison and Clark (2016), Bell (2007) in Mthethwa-Sommers (2014) and Hawkins (2009) argue that social justice is an attempt to create a conducive environment where all groups in any given society participate on an equal platform and the rule of fair play is observed.

The LOI currently in use at Grade Three in Chivi District does not promote language diversity. This scenario militates against social justice practice in the education system in general. Shizha (2012: 787) argues that the retention of the dominant role of English in teaching and learning is likely to impact negatively on the development of indigenous languages (ILs) in Zimbabwe. In accordance with the above, Phillipson (2008: 251) argues that the absence of linguistic diversity is an explicit effort of nations attempting to impose monolingualism within their borders. This is because English is regarded as *lingua franca* (a global language) by most education systems in post-colonial Africa (Trudell, 2016: 90; Cholakova, 2015: 16). The *lingua franca* mindset

disregards language diversity in the education system and is in tandem with language immersion education models. This situation calls for the decolonisation of the mindset of post-colonial Africa educationists for social justice to prevail. This research affiliates to the Sociology of Education discipline and is an endeavour to critically investigate how English as the LOI hinders social justice in the education system in Chivi District and Zimbabwe at large. Learners are physically free and mentally sound when they have the opportunity to use their language as LOI. Again, equity and fairness are real when learners use their mother tongue in education (Mthethwa-Somers, 2014: 10; Hawkins, 2009: 2). Zimbabwe, being a multilingual society, is prudent to disregard the *lingua franca* rhetoric and embrace language diversity so that social justice may be realised in the education system in Zimbabwe as a whole.

The study is an investigation of English as the LOI at Grade Three level and it attempts to find out the degree to which English as the LOI in selected Chivi District primary schools promotes a social justice agenda in the district. The study aims to explore the use of English in pursuing social justice in the education system, particularly at Grade Three level, which is a transitional grade in the Zimbabwean education system (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE), 2015: 7). The purpose of this chapter is to give a brief background to this research, which is a critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools. This introductory chapter sheds important light on how lack of linguistic diversity in the education system at the primary school level may be problematic and a source of social injustice in the education system.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In post-independence Zimbabwe, Chivi District Grade Three learners are exposed to English as the LOI although they come from diverse ethnic groups, speaking Shona, Shangani and Ndebele respectively, which are officially recognised languages (Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act, 2013: 31; Thondhlana, 2013: 32; Trudell, 2016: 90). The above situation poses a challenge in the education system in the form of racial discrimination and alienation through language. Cumming-Potvin (2009: 84) opines that the school environment should be socially just and not negatively influenced by discrimination on the grounds of gender, language, culture or any other social parameter. Therefore, the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three

level compromises the practice of social justice in the education system in Chivi District.

The richness of the indigenous languages (ILs) and culture is despised. This negatively impacts Grade Three learners, who are young and still acquiring the norms and values of their cultures and the deeper vocabulary of their home languages. Therefore, a decolonisation of the mindset is a prerequisite for the promotion of language diversity in Chivi District primary schools. Through language diversity realisation, post-independence Zimbabwe can influence education policies to consider ILs as languages of instruction.

1.2.1 The Language Issue in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has a population of thirteen (13) million people made up of mainly African and European cultural groups. Zimbabwe is, therefore, a plural linguistic nation. Accordingly, Zimbabwe has declared sixteen (16) official languages with particular focus on the indigenous languages, Shona and Ndebele, as well as English (Trudell, 2016: 90). Shona, Ndebele and English are the three main national languages in Zimbabwe. Of the three, English is the national official language (Thondhlana, 2013: 32; Sithole, 2016: 7). An estimated 82% of the Zimbabwean population speak Shona, and 14% speak Ndebele. Foreign language speakers (whites and Asians) constitute 1% and 3% are speakers of the other ethnic languages spoken in Zimbabwe (United States Department of State Report on Zimbabwe, 2011; Magwa, 2019: 27-28).

Although English is spoken by a minority, less than 1% (United States Department of State Report on Zimbabwe, 2011), it dominates the education system at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools. There is a gross absence of linguistic diversity. This situation points to the fact that English, the current LOI in Chivi District primary schools, militates against social justice education practices. Chimhenga and Chivhanga (2013: 59) cited in Trudell (2016: 90) assert that Zimbabwe has three national languages, Shona, Ndebele and English but virtually all learners are educated through the medium of English and are supposed to study their heritage language as a subject. Similarly, in articulating the decolonisation of the mindset, Grosfoguel (2013: 75) posits that the knowledge emanating from the social experiences and world views of the global south also known as 'non-western' are considered inferior and not part

of the canon of thought. The denigration of African languages is leading to their disappearance as the LOI in schools. The researcher has observed that Grade Three learners in Chivi District primary schools are not facing the reality of social justice. The fact that Grade Three learners are exposed to English as the LOI in schools while they are a multilingual society of Shona, Shangani and Ndebele speaking people suggests that realising social justice goals is a myth. There is need to decolonise the mindset of the Zimbabweans to foster linguistic diversity in the education system. The decolonisation of the mindset is a recipe for social justice in the education sector.

Zimbabwe officially recognises sixteen (16) languages. These are Chewa, ChiBarwe, English, Kalanga, Khoisan, Nambya, Ndau, Ndebele, Shangani, Shona, Sign Language, Sotho, Tonga, Tswana, Venda and Xhosa (Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act, 2013: 1). Against the above backdrop, English dominates the education sector (The Education Act, The statute law of Zimbabwe 1987, as Amended in, 2006: 225, Magwa, 2019: 27). To that end, English as the LOI is a strong factor in building up or thwarting a socially just school system in Chivi District primary schools.

Elaborating on how the LOI influences social justice education practices, Shizha (2012: 787) opines that for African learners, subject content and the language of education are a mismatch with the learners' home linguistic environment and interactions with their teachers. Shizha (2012) further reiterates that children are expected to learn in a language they do not understand, a language that psychologically traumatises them. In Zimbabwe, the LOI haunts learners and minimises their involvement in learning activities (Shizha, 2012: 790). The researcher believes that the use of English as the LOI compromises equal participation of all groups in society in terms of language usage thereby compromising fairness and entitlement which are the key components of social justice.

The existence of sixteen (16) languages in Zimbabwe is indicative that ILs should take centre stage as the LOI (Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment no. 20 Act, 2013: 17; Trudell, 2016: 90). Nevertheless, in practice, English is an inevitable communicative mode in the education arena. In Chivi District, ILs Shona, Shangani and Ndebele are dominant. However, English dominates teaching and learning. Lack of linguistic diversity in the LOI has a great influence on social justice practices. This study seeks

to explore English as the LOI at Grade Three to find out how it influences social justice practices in two Chivi District primary schools. This is because language possesses not only communication but other facets of social life, for instance, heritage, culture, identity and feelings. Preserving a speaker's heritage language has an affective dimension of enhancing the speaker's self-actualisation and pride in his/her heritage and identity (Tondhlana, 2013: 35-36). The use of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District schools compromises the practice of social justice.

In the next section of the chapter, the general functions of language are explored to be able to critically examine the role of English as the LOI at primary Grade Three in fostering social justice practice in Chivi District.

1.2.2 The Functions of Language and Their Link to Five Components of Social Justice

Every language has several functions. The purposes for which the language is used has implications for social justice. Each language exists for its just cause and should not be despised. The following are some of the functions of language: informational/communicative, expressive, directive, phatic and the identity function (Leech, 2017: n.p; Nurhidayati, 2013: np; Das, 2016: 12). A thorough analysis of the above language functions in comparison with some elements of social justice may assist to explain how the marginalisation of ILs is a cause for concern to Grade Three learners in Chivi District primary schools. Ignoring one's language in education is a violation of a fundamental human right. The following four language functions are relevant for this discussion; identity function, communicative function, expressive function and the phatic function.

1.2.2.1 Identity Language Function

Nurhidayati (2013) alludes that language is used to identify the objects and events in the world we live in. Accordingly, Das (2016: 12) posits that language is the flesh and blood of human culture and it is central to one's identity as an individual and as a marker of a social group. Thus, the above language function is a strong reason for the Grade Three learners to continue with ILs as the LOI in Chivi District. Their introduction to English as the LOI for the majority of learning areas compromises self-love and

knowledge social justice element. In self-love and knowledge social justice element, teachers provide learners opportunities to examine themselves and appreciate their identity. A sense of pride in their culture, heritage, ethnicity and race, religion, skin tone and gender is cultivated in the classroom (Picower, 2012: 5). The researcher's observation is that the identity language function is breached in Chivi District primary schools. This is because learners as early as Grade Three are introduced to English as the LOI. The learners are still young and need to master their mother languages and the dictates of their culture and heritage. The sense of pride is virtually removed from them. In this way, self-love and knowledge of their culture are removed from them. Hence, it is the focus of this research to explore the degree to which social justice practices can be promoted through English as the LOI.

1.2.2.2 Expressive Language Function

Another function of language is its expressive function, the idea that it can be used to express a speaker's feelings and attitudes. The expressive function will give a clear image of the personality of the speaker or writer (Leech, 2017). The expression of feelings and attitudes demands that the speaker of the language possesses high command and masters elaborated codes of the language. Considering the age of Grade Three learners, it is hard to believe that they have the skills to express their deeper thinking or feelings and attitudes in a second language. Thus, the expressive language function is a blockage to the social action social justice element. Picower (2012: 12) postulates that in social action social justice element, learners learn how to improve the material conditions of their lives by learning how to carry out research and analyse who can change particular situations, make correspondences and speeches. Similarly, Das (2016: 15) says that language also has an expressive function. It is used not just by poets but all people to express their deep, innermost feelings. Thus, the use of English, a foreign colonial language, as the LOI at Grade Three level limits the power of the learners to express themselves fully. The researcher contends that most Grade Three learners fail to express their innermost feelings competently in English. To that end, the introduction of English as the LOI at Grade Three level is a violation of the learners' linguistic competence. This study attempts to explore the place of English as the LOI in fostering social justice at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools.

1.2.2.3 Informative/communicative Language Function

One of the goals of any language is communication in a bid to understand one another (Leech, 2017). Thus, language is a tool for dialogue not only in the teaching and learning processes but also at home and in the community at large. The fact that Grade Three learners in Chivi District resort to English as the LOI testifies that their communicative power is limited since they come from a semi-literate populace in a rural area who do not understand English. This mismatch of the learners' first language and the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools is a cause for concern. This depicts social injustice. Picower (2012: 8) describes social injustice as a movement from celebrating diversity to an exploration of how diversity has been used as a weapon for the oppression of various people. There is a need for the decolonisation of the African mindset so that ILs are recognised as languages of education, especially at the primary school level. The continued practice of using English as the LOI is a violation of fundamental entitlements and runs counter to democratic practices in education.

1.2.2.4 The Phatic Language Function

Phatic language function means keeping communication lines open and keeping relationships in good repair (Leech, 2017). The phatic language function relates to the social justice element of respect for others. (Picower, 2012: 7) posits that the goal of respect for others is to create an environment of respect for diversity wherein learners learn to appreciate the experiences of their counterparts. The above function can be achieved by learners when they are communicating in their languages. The mastery of the first language (L1) can go a long way to assist learners to communicate effectively and maintain positive human relationships. This may automatically garner self-respect and respect for others, which are key elements of social justice. This critical investigation of English as the LOI in Chivi District primary schools is an endeavour to create linguistic diversity in education. This will act as a vehicle to foster social justice agenda in the district and the nation at large.

1.2.2.5 Principles of Social Justice

The elements of social justice discussed above communicate the four pillars of social justice, namely equity, access, participation and entitlement. In their definition of social justice, authorities, to a large degree, embrace equity, access, full participation and fundamental human rights (Nelson et al., 2016:4-5). Thus, a socially just society should endeavour to grant equal opportunity and access to every language in its education system to be used as the LOI. The practice would be a major incentive to the learners since participation in education through their heritage languages is pivotal to embrace their culture and celebrate linguistic rights. Hence, this study aims to find out the degree to which the four pillars of social justice are applicable at Grade Three level in Chivi District where the current LOI is English and where learners affiliate to various heritage languages, namely Ndebele, Shangani and Shona. The assumption, therefore, is that the use of English as the LOI is an impediment to the social justice principles.

1.2.3 The Education Language Policy in Zimbabwe

The issue of the language for formal education in Zimbabwe is a result of the 1987 Education Act whose clauses stipulate that Shona, Ndebele and English shall be taught in every primary school from Grade One to Grade Seven. However, this is not to take place on a compulsory basis but regional basis. For instance, in all communities which have Ndebele as the heritage language, Ndebele and English will be the languages offered in schools. Also, in those areas that speak Shona as their L1, Shona and English will be taught as languages (Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225). Thus, Section 55 of the Education Act raises the question: why is English compulsory in both Ndebele and Shona speaking communities?

The Zimbabwe Education Act also requires that before Grade Three, teachers should use the dominant language in the area as the LOI. However, from Grade Four to Seven, the LOI should be English. Shona and Ndebele are taught as subjects (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education, 2015: 31; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 2013: 90). This sub-section exposes ILs as incapable to educate their native speakers. More prominence is given to English. This

has prompted the researcher to embark on this study on English as the LOI and its implications for social justice education in primary schools.

The Education Act is not silent about ethnic languages in Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, sub-section 4 of the Act authorises the standing Minister of Education to recommend or not to recommend the teaching of ethnic languages in areas in which they are spoken (Magwa, 2019: 28; Muchenje, Goronga and Bondai, 2013: 60).

Of concern are sub-sections 3 and 4 above which are punctuated by serious discriminatory utterances and divisive tendencies in terms of language usage. Although several policy reviews have been instituted, especially the adjustments to Sub-sections 2, 3 and 4 regarding ILs and their recognition as the LOI in areas they are dominant, very little is being done (Muchenje, Goronga and Bondai, 2013: 38-39). Currently, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) is undergoing a curriculum review and this has seen another major shift to education language policy (MoPSE, 2015: 7; Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 10). The promotion of English as the LOI starting from Grade Three has reversed all the gains of the 1987 Education Act in Zimbabwe and it means education authorities are giving a signal to the effect that ILs are less important. Dube and Ncube (2013: 249) concur that a language that is not actively used in education is exposed to language attrition, which is the loss of a first language or a portion of that language by its originators. Thus, sub-section (3) of the language policy in Zimbabwe as amended (Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 10) mirrors language attrition. This study is an endeavour to explore English as the LOI at primary Grade Three to find out how it influences social justice education practices in Chivi District.

1.2.3.1 Language and Ethnicity

Although strides were made to realise sub-section (4) above, which recognises minority languages legally, the researcher observes that there is still a lack of social justice in the manner schooling is conducted (Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment no.20, Act, 2013: 17). In the same vein, Thondhlana (2013: 33) laments that this recognition is largely in theoretical terms. The implementation of ethnic languages in the above-mentioned Act is even more difficult because the few teachers who are proficient in those languages are not deployed in the districts in which they are spoken.

Shona, Shangani and Ndebele speaking people reside in Chivi District. Shona-speakers constitute the largest percentage. Shangani and Ndebele are minority languages in the district. Although the language policy through the Constitution of Zimbabwe promotes the usage of all the languages, it is not practically possible. There is a lot of resistance from various quarters. Against the above backdrop, it is difficult to practise language diversity in teaching and learning and this compromises social justice. This study explores critically various ways to improve linguistic diversity in the education system at Grade Three level in primary schools in Chivi District.

1.2.3.2 Declarations on Language

The importance of African languages cannot be underrated. This is evidenced by several declarations made on their validity and the need to become vehicles for teaching and learning. Three declarations were made concerning the issue of languages in Africa: the Language Plan of Action for Africa of 1986; the Harare Declaration of 1997; and the Asmara Declaration of 2000 (Mutasa, 2004: 2-3; Nhongo, 2015: 3). All the above declarations on African languages aimed at promoting African languages to be on par with the colonial foreign languages. The idea of equity through languages and culture is a step towards the attainment of social justice in society worldwide.

The Language Plan of Action for Africa (1986) contains the following key aims:

- To assert Africa's independence and identity in the field of languages;
- To encourage the increased use of African languages as vehicles of instruction at all educational levels and;
- To liberate the African peoples from undue reliance on the utilisation of non-Indigenous African languages as dominant, official languages of the state in favour of the gradual takeover of appropriate and carefully selected indigenous African languages in this domain (Organisation of African Unity (OAU), 1986; Nhongo, 2015).

The Harare Declaration on African Languages (1997) is the brainchild of UNESCO. It has some of the following key aims: Each country should have a clear language policy document whereby every language spoken in the country should be given its space. Every country is encouraged to have a policy framework flexible enough to allow each community to use its language side by side with other languages while at the same time giving provision to wider communication. The use of African languages is a prerequisite for maximising African creativity and resourcefulness in developmental activities (Nhongo, 2015: 3).

The Asmara Declaration on African Languages and Literatures (2000) in Eritrea made the following recommendations:

- The diversity of African languages reflects the rich cultural heritage of Africa and must be used as an investment of African unity;
- All African children have the alienable right to attend school and to learn in their mother tongues. Every effort should be made to develop African languages at all levels of education;
- The vitality and equality of African languages must be recognised as a basis for the future empowerment of African unity and;
- African languages must take on the duty, the responsibility and the challenges of speaking for the continent (The Asmara Declaration on African Languages and Literatures, 2000; Mutasa, 2004).

Commonalities in the three declarations on African languages are language diversity, the role of ILs in educational instruction, and the uniqueness of language. These declarations on language indicate that every language deserves to be espoused and fully recognised at all levels in society. The situation obtaining at Grade Three level in Chivi District does not concur with these common aims because learners resort to English as the LOI. The Grade Three learners are young and should develop their languages yet they are distanced from them. Das (2016: 31) opines that the loss of any language brings a potential threat to the existence of human beings as a collective. To that end, the marginalisation of ILs and the failure to make them the LOI, especially

at Grade Three level is a threat to the ILs and their speakers. This has the potential to violate human rights, for instance, the right to identity.

A close look at some models of the LOI in the next section will explain the comprehensive relationship between the LOI and its influence on social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools.

1.2.4 Perspectives on the Language of Instruction

Many models have been developed on language and the LOI. Of significance in this section of the chapter are subtractive bilingualism, additive bilingualism and the transitional submersion models. The above models are relevant for this study because they explore language in teaching and learning. They provide the opportunity to find out the extent to which language is a reality in the education system (Pluddemann, 2010: 19; Ramokgopa, 2010: 15).

1.2.4.1 The Subtractive Bilingualism Model

Subtractive bilingual education is the replacement of the first language of instruction with a second language of instruction so that the first language plays no role in teaching and learning (Trudell, 2016: iv; Ramokgopa, 2010: 14). The subtractive bilingualism perspective entails a situation where the primary language(s) is/are denigrated and less valued so much that they cease to be part of the language of education. A scenario where one language replaces another testifies gross violation of human rights and social vices.

The subtractive bilingualism model punctuates day-to-day educational activities in Chivi District primary schools. This is because Grade Three teachers replace Shona, Shangani and Ndebele with English as the LOI. The 1987 Education Act, as amended in 2015, states that, with the advent of the curriculum review process from Grade Three, English is the LOI provided that all other languages shall be taught as subjects (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015: 7; Education Amendment Bill, 2019: 10). This move has the potential to endanger ILs in the district, for instance, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele. The loss of any language potentially threatens the existence of human beings as a collective (Das, 2016: 31). This study is being carried

out to explore the extent to which social justice is envisaged in the languages of education, especially in elementary schools.

1.2.4.2 The Additive Bilingualism Model

Pluddemann (2010: 19) asserts that additive bilingualism refers to a form of programme or model that adds languages to a child's repertoire, rather than phasing them out. Similarly, Ramokgopa (2010: 15) defines additive bilingualism as the acquisition of a second language without losing or thwarting the first language. The above explanations are in line with the recommendations of some declarations on languages on various forums in Africa, notably, the OAU of 1986, the Harare of 1997 and the Asmara of 2000 declarations. These declarations underlined that every African child has the right to attend school and learn in his or her heritage language (Mutasa, 2004: 3; Nhongo, 2015: 4-7). However, these recommendations have remained rhetoric and in writing. The situation on the ground is that ILs are not treated equally with English in educational instruction.

For its part, the Zimbabwean education language policy disregards ILs, especially in Grade Three. The learners use home languages as the LOI up to Grade Two. From Grade Three to Seven (five years of schooling), learners are subjected to English as the LOI. Language in education policies in African countries are punctuated by the following problems: avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuations and declarations without implementations (Chimhenga and Chivhanga, 2013: 60-61). Thus, additive bilingualism is a myth in Chivi District primary schools. The Grade Three learners are deeply immersed in a second language, a situation that opposes both the education language policy in Zimbabwe and the aforementioned three declarations on African ILs, which aim to promote local cultures and the heritage of Africa. There is a need for rigorous decolonisation of the African mindset in terms of language usage in education since the ILs in the Chivi district primary schools run the risk of extinction and are threatened by English as the LOI in what can be understood as a linguistic and cultural battlefield (Maldonado-Torres, 2009: 247). Contextually, the school system in Chivi District is the 'battlefield' where the ILs and English language have skirmished. In the end, the ILs have suffered a humiliating defeat. The situation prevailing in Chivi District primary schools does not promote equality of opportunities for the use of different languages as the LOI. It is the focus of this study to find out

how English as the LOI reflects and /or impedes social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools.

1.2.4.3 The Transitional Submersion Model

The goal of the transitional submersion model is assimilation; the goal is to have the native speaker learn English and become assimilated into Anglophone society. Since the first language is not promoted, it gradually falls into disuse and thus the model is considered subtractive (Adeyen, 2008: 52; Mlay, 2010: 9; Roberts, 1995: 370). The transitional submersion model is well articulated in the 1987 Education Act of Zimbabwe as amended in 2015, where ILs are recognised as the LOI from Early Childhood Development (ECD) to Grade Two. From primary Grade Three to Seven, English is the LOI (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015:7: Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019:10). The overemphasis of English as the LOI from Grade Three entails the genesis of a long journey towards assimilation tendencies. A close analysis of the Zimbabwe language policy points to neo-colonialism in the form of cultural imperialism. As Maldonado-Torres (2009: 242) notes, languages are not just 'cultural' phenomena in which their speakers find their 'identity', they are also knowledge laboratories and, languages are not something people possess but rather something of what they are. To that effect, the transitional submersion model, a common feature in Chivi District primary schools, is a cause for concern in fostering social justice in the education sector.

For their part, subtractive bilingualism and transitional submersion language models are relevant for this study since they communicate deprivation tendencies in as far as the right to linguistic diversity is concerned (Mlay, 2010: 9; Roberts, 1995: 370; Ramokgopa, 2010: 15; Pluddeman, 2010:19). They (Mlay, 2010; Roberts, 1995; Pluddemann 2010; Ramokgopa, 2010) reiterate that the above-mentioned language models entail the banning of learners' heritage languages in teaching and learning. The mother tongues are replaced by another language; in this case, English will replace the three ILs, namely, Shona, Ndebele and Shangani. Thus, transitional submersion and subtractive bilingualism models are relevant for this study because they reflect social justice malpractice in the education system.

The additive bilingualism language model also suits this study since it promotes language diversity in the education system. According to Pluddemann (2010: 19), the additive bilingualism model aims to increase the opportunity to acquire more languages to the learner, rather than phasing out his/her mother language. In other words, the additive bilingualism model endeavours to create a more socially just education system where every language is fully recognised in communicating the academic content.

Language models, therefore, inform this investigation into how social justice is mirrored in the education system in Chivi District primary schools. Having discussed the relevance of language models, the researcher provides the motivation for the study on the relationship between language and Grade Three learners.

1.2.5 Motivation for the Study

This study sought to critically investigate the use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice to Grade Three learners in Chivi District, Zimbabwe, in an endeavour to end 'shop talk' (policy rhetoric) and to interrogate education language policy and the African languages declarations. It is hoped that this will lead to rigorous policy implementation and the decolonisation of the mindset. As mentioned, the language of education policy in Zimbabwe stipulates that from ECD to Grade Two, the LOI is the ILs and from Grade Three to Seven, English becomes the LOI (Mashangwa, 2017: 6; Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015: 2; Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 10). Grade Three in Zimbabwe is a transitional grade, that is, Grade Three learners are introduced to a new mode of teaching and learning. For that reason, Grade Three is a contested area in that various language models come into play, for instance, the subtractive bilingualism and the transitional submersion models, among others (Ndamba, 2010: 21).

For its part, subtractive bilingualism occurs when the acquisition of a second language and culture takes place at the expense of the learners' own ILs (Muchenje et al., 2013: 14; Trudell, 2016: iv). The idea that English dominates teaching and learning at primary Grade Three in Chivi District demonstrates that subtractive bilingualism exists. This scenario motivated the researcher to undertake this study on the use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice education practices in the district.

Transitional submersion means that home languages like Shangani and Ndebele, which are spoken by a small proportion of Grade Three learners in the district schools, are not used at all (Adeyen, 2008: 52). In that context, the Grade Three learners who belong to the minority ILs, like Shangani speakers, face a double bind. The learners struggle to acquire both Shona and English. Hence, transitional submersion and immersion propagate gross social injustice in the education system. It is appropriate that the influence of English as the LOI, therefore, is investigated at Grade Three since that is the stage where learners are introduced to English as the LOI.

Grade Three learners fall within the infant grades in the Zimbabwean education system. Their early immersion into English as the LOI leads to indigenous language attrition. May (2010: 15) refers to early immersion as a situation whereby the second language, in this case, English, is used as the MOI of either all or some of the instruction. The early immersion of Grade Three learners into English distances the learners from the ILs as medium teaching and learning used in previous grades. Prah (2008: 17) cited in Mlay (2010: 9) laments that culture, freedom and African emancipation cannot be realised, enhanced or developed where the LOI is not the heritage language of learners. Thus, at Grade Three, language should be an instrument for learners to acquire their culture and exercise their freedom. It is through language that learners express their feelings. The early immersion into English limits the learners' chances of mastering their own ILs. This is largely because from Grade Three up to university level, English is the LOI in Zimbabwe. The early departure from the home languages compromises social justice in the education system in Zimbabwe, particularly in Chivi District.

The language development issue among Grade Three learners is sensitive because Grade Three learners are young and developing both physically and linguistically. Socialisation plays a critical role in the transmission of language and culture. Through language socialisation, children become competent members of their social groups (Sithole, 2016: 9). Psychologically, a heritage language is a system of meaningful signs which automatically assist the learner's expression and understanding of concepts. Sociologically, it is a means whereby the individual identifies with members of the community to which he or she belongs. Educationally, he or she learns more quickly through mother tongue than through an unfamiliar linguistic communication mode (Masuku and Peresuh, 2002: 29; Sithole, 2016: 14). Thus, the mother tongue is

a vehicle for speech and expression emancipation of young learners. For this critical investigation of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District, the mother tongue is considered pivotal in mastering concepts for better academic achievement but it is undervalued. This generated the researcher's interest to undertake this study to explore English as the LOI and its influence on social justice in the education sector in Chivi District and the nation at large. Grade Three learners, therefore, depend largely on ILs to reach academic success. Shizha (2012: 787) concludes that ILs are instrumental towards improved provisions of education for children. Thus, Grade Three learners depend on ILs to deal positively with school work. Thus, there is a strong connection between Grade Three learners and language and ILs are more effective when used as LOI than English.

Having dealt with motivation to embark on this study, it is important to focus on the significance of this study in the next section.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study attempted to critically explore the use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools, particularly at Grade Three, and to evaluate its impact on influencing social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools.

1.3.1 Significance of the Study to the Learners

Grade Three learners in Chivi District come from diverse cultural groups and their languages are different (Magwa, 2019: 1). As a classroom practitioner in the district and later as a lecturer in an institution of higher learning in the province, the researcher extensively used English as the MOI although the dominant languages in the district schools were Shona, Shangani and Ndebele. The use of English rather than the learners' home language militated against the learners' performance and participation to their full capacity. In accordance with the above, Gora (2013:124) argues that the mother tongue should be the language of first choice for educational institutions since it is the language of primary socialisation. A Grade Three class was a 'composite' one in terms of language and culture affiliation in Chivi District primary schools. There were Shona, Shangani and Ndebele speakers in one particular grade. These learners

experienced different kinds of pressure in terms of language acquisition and usage. Those who affiliated to the 'hybrid' Shona were advantaged since they struggled only to grasp concepts in English. However, the Shangani and Ndebele speaking learners faced the mastery of both Shona and English. They learned Shona as a subject (Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225). Moreover, when teachers clarified concepts, they used home language. In such cases, Shona was used since the majority of the learners were Shona speakers.

The researcher observed a lack of fairness, equity and equality of opportunities in language usage in Chivi District primary schools. Chimhenga and Chivhanga (2013: 59) point out that people relegate their African languages to a second class status in comparison to English. Schools in the district embrace English as the LOI and regard ILs as second languages. Muchenje, Goronga and Bondai (2013: 12) concur that every learner has the right to an education that values the learner's culture, language and access to education and active participation without limitations. This study would be important to the Grade Three learners because it attempts to empower them and it would be a yardstick to measure the extent to which linguistic rights are observed and promoted in the district primary schools.

1.3.2 Significance of the Study to Education Authorities

Extensive work on English as the LOI has been carried out at macro-level, that is, at secondary and post-secondary levels of education (Hopkyns, 2014: 1). This research undertook to explore English as the LOI and how it reflected social justice practices at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools. This gap can be observed in various research studies on the LOI. Although, several types of research on the LOI were carried out, they address the distributive paradigm, that is, equity and fairness in the distribution of resources and economic opportunities (Harrison and Clark, 2016: 230). This study endeavoured to take the recognition and self-identity approach to the LOI and its influence on social justice. That is, the education system should provide a level ground for all languages to be recognised and to take centre stage in teaching and learning at Grade Three in Chivi District Primary schools. This study would be instrumental in raising awareness among education language policy of the social vices in the education sector in terms of language usage. This knowledge would assist curriculum planners to implement declarations and education language policies and

to produce a more effective education language policy that fully recognises the use of ILs as the LOI across the primary school grades. This move disregards the notion of English as a global language in the district primary schools.

In Zimbabwe, the LOI concept has been extensively researched in other areas, especially at secondary and university levels, leaving a gap at the primary school level, particularly at Grade Three level. For instance, Shizha (2012); Muchenje, Goronga and Bondai (2013); Ndamba (2010) and Trudell (2016) broadly researched the LOI, that is, across the grades or forms. This was largely because the issue of English as the LOI at Grade Three level is a focus of recent curriculum review (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Infant Syllabus, 2015: 2; Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 10). Before the current curriculum review, Zimbabwe education language policy stipulated that from Grade Four, English was the MOI and Shona or Ndebele were taught as subjects granted equal time allocation as English Language (Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 255; The Government of Zimbabwe, 1999:156). This study, therefore, can uniquely inform education policy makers and leaders in Zimbabwe of the feasibility of introducing English as the LOI at such an early grade in multicultural communities. Moreover, the study follows a micro-approach since the previous studies on the LOI in Zimbabwe were macro. The focus on the critical investigation of English as the LOI at Grade Three is an endeavour to approach social justice education practices from bottom-up, beginning by exploring the role of language diversity in fostering social justice at Grade Three in Chivi District. The findings which emerge from this study could be effective tools for the education authorities to craft a lasting solution to the education language problem in Zimbabwe. This study could also motivate further research on this concept.

1.3.3 Significance of the Study to the Entire Zimbabwean and African Population

The critical investigation of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District is regarded as crucial because language is a key element in human society. Despising one's language leads to linguistic and cultural erosion. Crystal (2003: 20) in Cholakova (2015: 16) argues that one of the major concerns of using English as a global *lingua franca* is the linguistic death of heritage languages. Similarly, Gora (2013: 32) opines that a mother language gives a national identity; it gives a feeling or sense of belonging

which cultivates the value of patriotism. This study could play a pivotal role in cultivating citizenship among Zimbabwean learners and promoting the importance of heritage languages and culture in Africa and across the globe. It would, therefore, promote the use of local languages as the LOI. Through this study, education stakeholders may realise the importance and benefits of language diversity, which include self-identity, tolerance, and inclusivity. Having dwelt on the importance of this study to various stakeholders above, the following discussion focuses on the formulation of the research problem.

1.4 FORMULATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.4.1 Introduction

There is a dearth of linguistic diversity in Chivi District primary schools. The government of Zimbabwe drafted education language policies and affiliates to several international declarations on ILs but to no fruition. The lack of implementation of policy and declarations by education authorities in this sub-Saharan African country is leading to the death of ILs, culture, heritage and identity. Das (2016: 12) posits that language is the flesh and blood of culture, heritage and identity. The sidelining of ILs as the LOI in Chivi District impacts negatively on all the speakers of these primary languages. The reasons for this social injustice are unknown and, therefore, this has prompted this study on the LOI and its influence on social justice at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools.

1.4.2 Demarcation and Formulation of the Problem

This study focuses on Grade Three learners in Chivi District of Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe. The emphasis is on English as the LOI and its role on fostering social justice in the district primary schools, particularly at the primary school level, Grade Three. The current LOI (English) is problematic because it impacts negatively on issues of social justice. The LOI at Grade Three should be the mother language since it is the language in which the majority of the learners are competent (Trudell, 2016: 90; Owu-Ewie and Eshun, 2015: 73; Ochshom and Garcia, 2007: 16). The low status granted to ILs in the education system in Chivi District schools deprives home languages of the opportunity to become the medium of instruction. This gross

insensitivity to language diversity manifests lack of social justice practice in Zimbabwe's education system. This is problematic, especially at Grade Three, since the use of English as the LOI leads to subtractive bilingualism and transitional submersion. Muchenje et al. (2013: 42) powerfully state that stripping away the learners' mother tongue strips away the learner's cultural identity, cultural voice and cultural integrity of the entire family and group. Hence, the introduction of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi Primary schools is a cause for concern in that their cultural identity, cultural voice and integrity are endangered.

The justification for choosing Grade Three learners is as follows: the researcher is motivated by the recent shift made in the Zimbabwe Language of Education Policy by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education whereby the introduction of English as the LOI was moved from Grade Four (4) to Grade Three (3). Secondly, Grade Three learners have not yet developed proficiency in their mother tongues to the extent that this policy shift has subjected the learners to early transitional submersion (Pluddenmann, 2010: 19; Ramokgopa, 2010: 15; Mlay, 2010: 9). The rationale behind this downward shift in the language policy is not known, hence, the need to undergo this critical investigation of the LOI and its implications for social justice educational practice.

1.4.3 Main Research Question and Sub-Questions

This study sought to provide the answer to the following fundamental research question:

How does the use of English as the language of instruction impede social justice education practices at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools?

The following were the three sub-questions derived from the main research question:

How do Grade Three learners, teachers, education administrators and parents perceive English as the language of instruction and its implications on fostering social justice practices in Chivi District primary schools?

How does English as the language of instruction at Grade Three influence the practice of social justice in Chivi District primary schools?

What role does English as the language of instruction play in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners in Chivi District schools when it comes to fostering social justice?

1.5 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research was essential to critically investigate the use of English as the LOI in primary schools to give space for the practice of social justice in the education system. It was an endeavour to promote linguistic diversity in the LOI discourses.

1.5.1 Aims of the Study

This research aimed to:

1. Reflect on the perceptions of Grade Three learners, teachers, education administrators and parents on the use of English as the language of instruction and its implications on fostering social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools.
2. Examine the influence of English as the language of instruction at Grade Three level in fostering social justice practices in education in Chivi District primary schools.
3. Explore the role of English as the language of instruction in the educational achievement of primary Grade Three learners in Chivi District primary schools when it comes to fostering social justice.

1.5.2 Objectives of the Study

The present study seeks to:

1. Explain how Grade Three learners, teachers, education administrators and parents perceive English as the language of instruction and its capacity to influence social justice practices in two Chivi District primary schools.
2. Evaluate the role of English as the language of instruction in fostering social justice practices at Grade Three level in two Chivi District primary schools.
3. Determine the role of English as the medium of instruction in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners in two Chivi District primary schools when it comes to fostering social justice.

Apart from the aforementioned objectives, this study is an endeavour to assess the extent to which linguistic diversity is a reality in the education system in Chivi District and in Zimbabwe. The results of this study give insights into the promotion of the use of ILs as languages of instruction. It is envisaged that this study will be instrumental in putting an end to the 'shop talk' embodied in some declarations on languages and to appraise the value of ILs (OAU, 1986; Harare Declaration, 1997; Asmara Declaration, 2000; Chiweshe, 2018).

The above aims and objectives of the research study could not be accomplished without proper procedures being undertaken. The next section spells out the research design, methodology and methods followed in carrying out this research.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

1.6.1 Introduction

In every research process, it is imperative to employ a relevant research design to produce the best results. A research design is a roadmap that defines the appropriate action to take when carrying out research (Magwa and Magwa, 2015: 19; Creswell, 2014: 47). Therefore, a research design is a plan put in place to guide a study in an endeavour to find authentic research results. This study was qualitative because the researcher intended to deal with participants of varied constituencies in situ. The research participants' experiences and viewpoints were integral in this research. In this section of the research, the researcher endeavoured to give brief key aspects of the research design for this study. Before a brief discussion of the research design

that informs this study, the research paradigm and research methodology which embed qualitative research design are briefly outlined.

1.6.2 Research Paradigm

Qualitative research design is grounded in a paradigm. Mertens (2015: 7) defines a paradigm as a way of looking at the world. The paradigm consists of some philosophical assumptions that guide and direct the research process. Thus, a paradigm depicts how an individual perceives his or her world view through the interaction process with other people. This study is informed by the constructivist paradigm.

The basic assumptions of the constructivist paradigm are that knowledge is socially constructed by people active in the research process, and researchers should make an effort to comprehend the complex world of lived experiences from the point of view of those who live it (Mertens, 2015: 16; Creswell, 2009: 9-10). This study intends to employ the constructivist paradigm since the study focuses on exploring the use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice practices in Chivi District primary schools. The constructivist paradigm accommodated face-to-face interactions with research participants and the researcher in a natural setting and meanings are constructed as people engage each other. It is the task of the next section of this study to explain how constructivist research paradigm is married to social justice and education.

1.6.3 Social Justice and Education

This study focuses on the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three and its implications for social justice, that is, to explore the existence of social justice in Chivi District primary schools, it is appropriate to employ the constructivist paradigm which calls for participants' views of the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2014: 37). A discussion of social justice and its relationship to the language of education will function to illustrate how this study is informed by constructivism as a paradigm in qualitative research. The discussion will also shed light on social justice educational practices and malpractices as a result of the use of English as the LOI.

Social justice endeavours to accord equality of opportunities to all groups of people in society (Harrison and Clark, 2016: 231; Bell, 2007: 1). Accordingly, Hawkins (2009: 2) posits that social justice can be viewed through the lens of democracy, fairness and human rights. Therefore, social justice is a process of attempting to apply democratic principles in every facet of human life. The lived experiences of learners, teachers, parents and administrators will reveal social justice educational practices or malpractices. Hirsch, Kett and Trefil (1998: 18) point out that educational institutions function to acculturate those who do not have a national culture. Thus, the introduction of English to the third graders in Chivi District aims to impose the culture of the dominant group. In other words, English as the LOI in Chivi District primary schools points to a mirage of shortfalls.

The question of whether English as the LOI promotes social justice or inflicts social injustice was addressed through employing the constructivist qualitative paradigm methods of enquiry which engaged research participants in their natural settings (Creswell, 2014: 37).

Having discussed social justice as part of the research design, the following section focuses on research methodology.

1.6.4 Research Methodology

1.6.4.1 Phenomenology

In this study the phenomenological research strategy was adopted for the present study which focuses on how the use of English as LOI influences social justice practices. The phenomenon under study is English as the LOI and its implications for social justice education practices at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools. Phenomenology is a theoretical point of view that advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value; and one which sees behaviour as determined by the phenomena of experience rather than by external objective and physically described reality (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011: 18; Creswell, 2011: 42). A phenomenological research strategy was deemed suitable because the research participants are the sources of data through interviews, observations, document analysis and focus group discussions. A phenomenological research strategy provides

face-to-face interaction between the inquirer and the research participants since it employs the aforementioned data generation techniques which call for the lived experiences of the participants. Thus, in this critical investigation of English as the LOI, Grade Three learners, teachers, parents and education administrators' lived experiences were information rich data sources to explore the degree to which the use of English as the LOI affects the realisation of social justice in the education sector in Chivi District.

1.6.4.2 Qualitative Research

This research adopted a qualitative research methodology. Qualitative inquirers study phenomena in their natural settings, attempting to understand, or interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 3). Marshall and Rossman (2006) allude that qualitative research places emphasis on natural settings rather than laboratories and fosters pragmatism in using multiple methods for exploring a phenomenon. Qualitative methodology, in this regard, calls for face-to-face interaction with the research participants, exploring learners' own spoken or written words, as well as observable behaviour. In this study, qualitative research methodology is feasible since descriptive and interpretive data from the research participants is crucial to examine the degree to which English as LOI influences social justice education practices. The data generated by directly interviewing people and observing their behaviour within their context is a major characteristic of qualitative research design (Creswell, 2007: 37). Thus qualitative research methodology is relevant for this study since Grade Three learners, teachers, parents and other education stakeholders are the sources for information about the use of English as the LOI and its influence on social justice education practices at Grade Three in Chivi District.

Qualitative researchers use multiple data generation methods such as interviews, observations, focus group discussions and documentary study, instead of one data generation method. The researchers study and analyse the data and make sense of them, organising them into themes and sub-themes that cut across all the data sources (Creswell, 2007: 387). In this study data were gathered by face-to-face semi-structured interviews, observation in a natural setting, as well as document analysis to

gain understanding of factors that militate against social justice education practices in Chivi District of Masvingo Province.

1.6.4.3 Theoretical Framework

This critical investigation of English as the LOI and its influence on social justice practices is embedded in critical theory. In educational discourses, critical theory examines the structure of schooling as well as the elements of the education process that create unequal power relationships between and among education stakeholders (Wood, 2008: 8). In line with Wood (2008), Mthethwa–Sommers (2014: 10) posits that critical theory is concerned with the role of institutions such as schools in propagating economic, social, and political inequalities. Critical theory is a platform that challenges society for favouring the interests of the few and powerful individuals at the expense of the majority of powerless individuals. Critical theory inquires about injustice, inequalities, and oppression that highlights the power imbalances in all societies (Freire, 1970 cited in Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014: 10).

In an endeavour to narrow the scope of critical theories, this study is informed by two critical theories, namely, Martin Carnoy's (1975) education as cultural imperialism theory and Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) education as cultural reproduction theory. Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural imperialism is relevant in exploring how English as LOI influences the degree to which social justice is mirrored and realised at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools. This is because ILs are replaced by English as the LOI, although people internalise their culture, norms and values fully through language (Drysedale, 1975: 378). Rugut and Osman (2013: 23) argue that the goal of education is to build on the language, experiences and skills of learners, rather than imposing the culture of the 'educators' on them. Social justice in the education sector is realised when the LOI is the language of the learners.

For his part, Bourdieu (1977) contributes to critical theory through the analysis of the forms of cultural-capital, social and economic. He focuses on how inequality is reproduced not only through wealth but also through education. Cultural capital is considered to be a key mechanism in the reproduction of the dominant culture through which background inequalities are converted into differential academic achievements and, hence, rewards (Wood, 2008: 8; Bourdieu, 1977: 480). For this study, Bourdieu's

cultural capital assumption of his critical theory is relevant because firstly, the introduction of English as the LOI at Grade Three suggests that ILs have been underrated, despised and denigrated; and, secondly, learners who have an affluent background and knowledge of English are advantaged and perform better academically than those who lack this background.

Against the above backdrop, critical theory is 'married' to the social justice concept. This is because the school environment and education system in general cast long shadows of oppression and exploitation. The majority of Grade Three learners in Chivi District primary schools do not speak English but lessons are conducted in English. The use of the second language has the potential to compromise the educational achievements of the learners. In the process, social justice cannot be realised because there is the exploitation of one culture by another. Thus, two critical theories, namely, Bourdieu's (1977) theory of education as cultural reproduction and Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural imperialism, have been adopted to inform this study.

The following discussion focuses on the methods which were used to generate data for this research.

1.7 METHODS

This research proposes to employ four major research methods for generating data, namely, focus group interviews, semi-structured open-ended interviews, document analysis and observation. The rationale behind the adoption of the aforementioned data generation methods is to enhance rigour in research. The focus group interview (FGI) is a carefully organised discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a certain phenomenon under study in an allowing, free working environment (De Vos, 2003: 306; Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 90). Thus, FGIs comprise of a team of research participants who possess similar characteristics in terms of socio-economic, political and geographical location. A total of 12 Grade Three learners, six (6) from school A, and six (6) from school B, who were purposefully sampled, comprised the FGI participants. The critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice also adopted semi-structured open-ended interviews to collect data. Qualitative interviews are attempts to grasp the participants' point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world before scientific explanation

(Schulze, 2001: 271; De Vos, 2003: 269). A composite picture from the above views interviews as face-to-face interactions between interviewers and the interviewees. Thus, in the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in Chivi District primary schools of Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe, semi-structured, open-ended interviews were the appropriate tool to generate data from two (2) heads of schools, four (4) teachers, two (2) education officers and two (2) parents. The study on a critical investigation of English as the LOI and its promotion of social justice also employed document analysis as a data generation instrument. Document analysis encompasses studying excerpts, quotations, or entire passages from organisational, clinical, or programme records, memoranda and correspondence, official publications and reports and personal diaries (Patton, 2002: 174; Neuman, 2000: 4). Thus pupils' exercise books, school end of term reports, minute books, schemes of work, attendance registers, circulars and textbooks were scrutinised by the researcher in the study of critical investigation of English as the LOI to determine whether social justice is a reality or a myth in the district schools. The focus was on the language used to prepare or record information in the above-mentioned documents.

Observation was another data generation method used in this study on the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in Chivi District primary schools. Cohen et al. (2011: 456) postulate that observation is more than just looking; it involves noting systematically on people, events, behaviours, settings, artefacts, routines and so on. Therefore, the observation method entails a situation whereby the researcher collects relevant data from research participants through the senses of sight and hearing. The open observation was a two-part approach whereby the teacher and the learner observations were made. On the teacher observation angle, wall charts, chalkboard, lesson delivery, assembly proceedings and the co-curricular activities were the focal areas. The learner observation focal areas were teacher-learner and learner-learner interactions during lesson delivery, co-curricular activities, break time and the assembly proceedings. The phenomenon to be studied in all the above observation focal areas was the communication mode during the interactions.

The four data generation methods outlined above assisted the researcher to explore learners, teachers, education administrators and parents' views and experience on the use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice education practices. The foregoing discussion focused on methods of data collection for this study. In the next section of the chapter, attention is given to the population and sampling procedures for the study.

1.8 POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

1.8.1 Population

Chiromo (2012:109) defines a population as all the people, units, objects or events that could be considered in research. Also, Tuckman (2000: 321 cited in De Vos 2003: 236) posits that population (target group) used in the study is the group about which the researcher is interested in gaining information and drawing conclusions. The population entails the source of information whether they are objects or people. In this study, the population constituted two (2) head teachers, thirty-six (36) classroom teachers, twelve (12) members of the School Development Committee (SDC), 1 200 learners and the five (5) education officers in the district. The total population for this study was 1 255.

From the total population of 1 255 people, a sample of 22 participants was drawn to take part in the research. A sample consists of the elements of the population considered for inclusion in the study and the results from the sample would be the same as those obtained from the whole population (De Vos, 2003: 198; Nisbert and Entwistle, 2 000: 211). This implies that a small proportion of the targeted group constitutes a sample in research. Twenty-two (22) purposively sampled participants took part in this study. Patton (2002: 230) alludes that the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Two (2) school heads, four (4) teachers, two (2) SDC members and two (2) education officers (EOs) participated in semi-structured, open-ended interviews. A total of twelve (12) Grade Three learners participated in two focus group interviews (FGIs) which were conducted in the two respective research sites. Each FGI consisted of six (6) learners. Thus, the purposive sampling procedure was suitable since it focuses on elements that possess the required and relevant behavioural traits. School heads, teachers,

SDC members who represent parents in general, education officers and the learners were information-rich and easily accessible with regard to the topic of the inquiry, the use of English as the LOI in primary schools and its implications for the realisation of social justice.

1.8.2 Data Processing and Analysis

Qualitative data were analysed using themes derived from the research questions. Data presentation and analysis followed the sequence of research questions. Data from open-ended semi-structured interviews, participant observation, FGIs and document analysis was presented in a narrative form, with verbatim statements from the participants in the case of interviews. Field notes from observations were also analysed to assess how English dominates the teaching and learning in the district schools. In document analysis, various school documents, for instance, attendance registers, progress record books, schemes of work and plan books to mention a few, were studied to solicit data about the hegemonic influence of English as the LOI on fostering social justice.

Interviews with head teachers and teachers were evaluated to determine the influence of English as the LOI on fostering social justice. The data generated from interviews, observations and the document analysis was used to come up with themes and sub-themes. Coding began by reading the data, identifying chunks of text that possess similar meanings, combining these chunks of text and then assigning them to categories (Creswell, 2014: 198). Thus, data processing and analysis adopted Tesch's interactive data analysis model, where the following steps were taken in order of occurrence: data collection, data display, reflection on data, data coding, data distillation/reduction, generation of themes, story interpretation, research conclusion and recommendations (Ganga, 2013: 114). Thematic content analysis approach dominated the data processing and analysis stage of this study.

1.8.3 Trustworthiness and Credibility

According to De Vos (2003: 340), triangulation is the use of multi-methods of data generation to increase reliability. In this study, open-ended semi-structured interviews, observations, FGIs and document analysis were used to solicit credible, dependable

and trustworthy data on social justice education practices. This is because combining data from a variety of instruments produces credible and transparent results from the study. Yin (2011: 19) opines that the first objective for building trustworthiness and credibility is that qualitative research should be done in a publicly accessible manner. The research procedures should be transparent. Thus, the study on the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its influence on social justice was conducted in public district schools, where the research participants were teachers, Grade Three learners, education officials and other stakeholders. Therefore, it is easily accessible, transparent and natural.

1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS

This section of the research attempts to give contextual meanings of the keywords in this study.

1.9.1 Language of Instruction

Trudell (2016: iv) defines the language of instruction/medium of instruction as the language in which curriculum content is taught. Similarly, UNESCO (2013: 5) views the LOI as the language in which subject matter is taught in a public or private school setting. Thus, the language of instruction (LOI) and the medium of instruction (MOI) are interchangeably used to refer to the mode of communication used in teaching and learning in any given subject in the school system. In the present study, therefore, the LOI/MOI is English which is used for teaching and learning in Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools.

1.9.2 Social Justice

Nelson, Creagh and Clarke (2016: 4) contend that social justice is a process as well as a goal that ideally allows all groups to participate equally in society and enables them to fulfil their needs as well as allowing individuals to be self-determining and independent. Nelson et al. (2016) further argue that contemporary notions of social justice coexist with expressions of human rights, fairness and equality. The above sentiments are relevant to this study in that they articulate the principle of recognition, that is, there should be equality of opportunities in terms of language usage in the

teaching and learning process. Language is a strong factor to manifest social justice or injustice, especially where it is used as the LOI. The current situation in two Chivi District primary schools, therefore, does not reflect social justice since only one language (English) dominates teaching and learning while the other three ILs (Shona, Shangani and Ndebele) occupy peripheral positions. Social justice in this study entails the recognition of linguistic diversity in pedagogy. This implies that social justice will be a reality when ILs in Chivi District will be accorded equal opportunity to become the LOI across the curriculum.

1.9.3 Critical Investigation

The term critical relatively denotes disapproval of something and describes what is bad about them (Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, 2011: 364). Similarly, the Oxford Popular School Dictionary (2008: 95) defines criticise as a verb that depicts that a person or thing has faults. In this research, the use of English as the LOI is the phenomenon under study. It appears that learners at Grade Three are deprived of the opportunity to learn in their mother tongues. In accordance with the above, Magwa (2019: 24) contends that currently, mother languages are not the LOI in the Zimbabwean education system and in other facets of life. The use of English as the LOI at Grade Three denigrates the African languages and cultures of the learners.

Oxford Popular School Dictionary (2008: 209) defines investigation as a noun that depicts to find out as much as one can about a phenomenon. To investigate means making a careful analysis of the use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice. For this study, a critical investigation is undertaken to explore English as the LOI at Grade Three and evaluate its influence in promoting social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools. The study focused on language diversity in teaching and learning.

1.9.4 Implications

Implications are the consequences that an action will have on something in the long run (COBUILD Advanced English Learner's Dictionary, s.a: n.p.). For this study, the term implication refers to the development that will be visible as a result of

incorporating English as the LOI at primary school level at the expense of indigenous languages.

1.9.5 Subtractive Bilingualism Education

Pluddemann (2010: 21) says that subtractive bilingualism occurs when a second language is learned at the expense of the first language, which it gradually replaces. This occurs when those in power denigrate the learners' heritage language and its associated culture. Also, Ramokgopa (2010: 14) contends that subtractive bilingualism characterises the situation in which learners lose their mother tongue in the process of acquiring the second language. Thus, subtractive bilingualism focuses on the replacement of one language with another language that is regarded as more prominent than the one to be disposed of.

For this research study, subtractive bilingualism refers to the introduction of English as the LOI at Grade Three, disregarding Shona, Shangani and Ndebele ILs. It is against this background that the researcher views the LOI as an impediment to social justice practices in the education system, particularly in Chivi District primary schools. Maldonado-Torres (2009: 247) concurs that ILs have already been shaped by the understanding of the world as a battlefield in which they are permanently defeated. The social conditions are intended to persuade black people to believe that ILs should become extinct.

1.9.6 Transitional Bilingualism Education

Trudell (2016: iv) defines transitional bilingualism as the use of one language as the LOI in the lower grades, transitioning to the use of a second language in upper grades. The foregoing explanation of the transitional bilingualism is within the context of the education system in Chivi District primary schools where from ECD to Grade Two, learners receive academic instruction in their various home languages (MoPSE, 2015: 7). However, this is only a supposition since, in practice, learners are immersed in English as the LOI from day one.

For this study, transitional bilingualism refers to the scenario where Grade Three is considered to be the transitional grade because learners are introduced to a different

language, in this case, English as the LOI. Grade Three learners are still young and need to internalise their own ILs. This suggests unfairness, violation of human rights, inequalities and the promotion of cultural hegemonic tendencies because learners are distanced from their languages and culture from a very tender age. Gotosa, Rwodzi and Mhlanga (2013: 91) argue that every Zimbabwean learner has the right to learn in his or her mother tongue in line with the Zimbabwe Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (1999) which recommends the recognition of linguistic rights as human rights to be enjoyed by every citizen. However, ILs are regarded as inferior and useless. The Black African is not a human being or simply nothingness, but is something else (Maldonado-Torres, 2009: 253). The ILs of Shona, Shangani and Ndebele spoken by black learners in two Chivi District primary schools are regarded as less important and inferior to English. The search for social just tends to be a myth in the aforementioned district schools.

1.9.7 Indigenous Languages and Culture

UNICEF (2016: iv) defines ILs as languages that are spoken in one or more ethnolinguistic communities in a country. Thus, in this study an IL refers to local languages, such as Shona, Shangani and Ndebele that are spoken in Chivi District primary schools and are the home languages of the learners in the study.

Best (2001: 14) posits that culture is the totality of learned, socially transmitted customs, knowledge, material objects and behaviour. Culture and language are strongly linked. Learners learn their culture through language. Therefore, the concept of culture is relevant to this study since when one's language is undervalued, one's culture is also threatened.

1.9.8 Shop Talk

The term 'shop talk' refers to talking about work, usually in a manner that is not appealing to other people (Oxford Advanced Learners's Dictionary, 2011; 1 406; MacMillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners, n.d: 1 315). Therefore, in this study shop talk refers to language declarations concerning the African languages as the LOI/MOI in schooling in African education systems, which are made without implementation.

After defining the key terms and their context as used in this study, it is important to outline the physical and conceptual boundaries of this study in the next section of the chapter.

1.10 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study focused on two rural primary schools in Chivi District of Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe. Out of the ninety-one (91) primary schools in Chivi District, two were regarded as the research sites. The purpose of the study was to critically explore the influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice education practices at Grade Three in the selected schools. The study, therefore, sought to find out the justification for use of English as the LOI in a multilingual community where learners speak heritage languages: Shona, Ndebele and Shangani. Primary schools in the Rural Service Centres were not part of this research. ECD, Primary Grades 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were excluded because it is at Grade Three level where English is first introduced as the LOI (MoPSE, 2015; Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 10). Only Grade Three learners were considered as research participants.

1.11 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background of the Study

This chapter deals with the contextual background to the problem under study. The chapter also focuses on the purpose of the study, research questions and the general aims and specific objectives of this research study. Further, in this chapter a brief explanation of the research design, methodology and procedures employed in the study, is undertaken. The theoretical framework that underpins the study is an integral part of this chapter, as well as a thorough explanation of key terms recurrent in the study. Finally, an outline of the organisation of chapters is given.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter examines journals articles, book chapters and magazines which deal with English as LOI, education language policies, social justice education and language diversity. The literature review explores both international and national literature on LOI, English as LOI and social justice in education. A comparison with other countries in Africa and elsewhere enabled the researcher to explore English as the LOI and to

find out its role in fostering social justice education practices. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary and conclusions on the reviewed literature.

Chapter 3: Research Design, Methodology and Procedures

In this chapter, the research design and research strategies are expounded. The research paradigm, methodology, population sample and sampling procedures, data gathering and analysis are outlined. Furthermore, trustworthiness, credibility and ethical considerations form integral parts of this chapter. Chapter Three also defines the theoretical lens which informed the study. Finally, the chapter focuses on delimitations and geographical location of the study

Chapter 4: Presentation and Analysis of Data

The data generated from the open-ended semi-structured interviews, observations, document analysis and the FGIs are presented as per the requirements of qualitative data presentation techniques. The data generated are narrated descriptively, using the thematic content analysis approach and selected excerpts from research participants are incorporated to substantiate the findings. Further, both the theoretical framework underpinning this study and reviewed literature from Chapter Two were incorporated to either confirm or refute the research findings.

Chapter 5: Summary of the Research, Conclusions and Recommendations

The chapter focuses on conclusions of the study, major findings and their relevance in the education sector. Recommendations for further studies are also suggested in this chapter.

1.12 SUMMARY

The chapter expounded the basis of this study. In this chapter, the background of the study was given. The chapter also explored the language situation in Zimbabwe to shed light on the problems of lack of linguistic diversity in primary schools, particularly at Grade Three level in Chivi District. This was followed by a thorough examination of the education language policy in Zimbabwe, including the dominance of English as the LOI from primary Grade Three. Following this was an analysis of declarations on African languages and the functions of language versus social justice components. Forming a major part of the discussion were the Harare Declaration of March 1997

and the Asmara Declaration of January 2000 which underpin key concepts in this study.

This was followed by perspectives on the LOI and motivation for the study. Key features of the perspectives on the LOI were transitional submersion and the subtractive bilingualism models. Attention was also given to the problem statement, research questions, aims and objectives of the study en route to exploring the research design. Under the research design, discussion concentrated on the methodology of the study (qualitative research), theoretical framework (critical theory as informed by Carnoy's 1975 theory of education as cultural imperialism and Bourdieu's 1977 education as cultural reproduction theory). The methodological approach also illuminated the population sampling techniques, research methods and credibility issues. The research design also discussed data collection and analysis techniques. The chapter closed by outlining the organisation of the study.

Chapter Two will review national and international literature on the use of English as the LOI and its implications on social justice at the primary school level. The focus is the perceptions and attitudes of learners, teachers, parents and education officials on English as the LOI. The chapter will also review research studies on the influence of the LOI on learners' educational practices. In closing, Chapter Two will present a detailed description of the theoretical framework that informs this study and the conclusion drawn from the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter One discussed the background of the study. Its purpose was to give the roadmap to this study through outlining the rationale and relevance of the study, formulation of the research problem and research questions. A skeletal discussion of the research design and methodology of the study were also presented in Chapter One. Chapter Two aims to review literature which relates to this study. The chapter also attempts to expand the scope and horizon of the research questions articulated in Chapter One, where the background of this study was given. Chapter Two intends to locate the relationship between this study and relevant prior research. A literature review is imperative in that it sheds light on what has so far been covered in the field of study, processes and steps taken, as well as the findings and recommendations suggested. The literature review identifies gaps to be filled in the area of study, thereby avoiding reduplication of other researchers' work (Flick, 2014: 68). Therefore, the review of literature is done to answer the what, how, where and why questions in a study.

The present study is entitled, 'The use of English as the language of instruction and its implications on social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation'. This chapter focuses on both international and national literature on English as the LOI with a view to covering the contribution of research on English as the LOI conducted outside Zimbabwe as well as local research. An examination of both international and national research on English as the LOI strengthens the credibility and trustworthiness of the current study. Moreover, the review of both international and local studies on English as the LOI is a step to filling any hiatus in this field. Local research on English as the LOI is better informed about the problems facing the Zimbabwean education system in terms of linguistic pluralism. The local studies further assist to identify under-researched issues in the niche of language in education.

Furthermore, this chapter will focus on theories of social justice. An analysis of the aforesaid theories is imperative because the critical investigation of English as the LOI

at primary school level is meant to explore and establish the extent to which social justice is a reality in Chivi District primary schools.

It is also in this chapter where the major theoretical frameworks which underpin this study are discussed. Apart from aligning this study to its field of study, theoretical frameworks act as the road map for the whole study. The last category of this chapter comprises of the conclusion and summary of the chapter.

2.2 CONCEPTION OF THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION/MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

This section serves to give a general discussion of the term, language of instruction (LOI) as found in the literature and in the context of this study. The LOI is the vehicle through which knowledge is communicated (Brock-Utne, 2014: 10; British Council, 2020: 1). Similarly, Liu (2018: 19) posits that the term language of instruction is used interchangeably with medium of instruction (MOI) and it refers to the language of teaching and learning. In other words, both terms describe any language that has been chosen to communicate the school curriculum content. The LOI, in the context of this study, is viewed as a hindrance to social justice education practices. This is because English, which is a second language to all Grade Three learners in Chivi District, problematises their understanding of subject matter.

The above definitions for the LOI or MOI are in line with Trudell (2016: iv) and UNESCO (2013: 5), who view the LOI/MOI as the language in which curriculum content is taught in a public or private school setting. In this study, English is the LOI/MOI under investigation. This is against the backdrop that Chivi District is a multilingual community where Ndebele, Shangani and Shona languages are spoken but they are not the languages of education. The researcher observed that Grade Three learners were struggling to use English in learning. Subject content communicated in a foreign language with which the learner is not familiar with 'tortures' the young learner (Kioko, Ndung'u, Njoronge and Mutiga, 2014: 3). In other words, the foregoing statement points that the use of English as the LOI at primary school communicates injustice in the education system. Therefore, this study is an endeavour to find out the extent to which English as the LOI promotes social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools.

The following subsection reflects on international studies on the LOI.

2.3 INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ON LOI

Studies on the LOI have been conducted across nations. To a large extent, findings of the studies on the LOI indicated that the use of a non-indigenous language as the LOI hampers social justice education practices across nations. However, to a lesser degree, English as the LOI is viewed as an advantage. In one of his studies conducted in the United States (US), Hopkyns (2014:10) alluded to the fact that 75% of the teachers referred to greater opportunities in English as it promotes enhanced self-esteem and communication with various nationalities across the globe. This implies that the use of English as the LOI unites people across continents and nations under one language flag in the name of English.

On the other hand, researches on the LOI conducted in Uganda, South Africa and Zanzibar indicated that the use of non-local languages as the LOI does not foster social justice education practices since culture and identity of the learners are threatened (Klawijk and Walt, 2016:70; Wilhite, 2013:2001; Tembe and Norton, 2008:33). The above-mentioned African studies are critical about use of English as the LOI with regard to culture and identity. Their findings revealed that using English as the LOI disadvantaged learners at all levels in the school system because English did not promote learners' culture and identity which are embedded in their language. Brock-Utne (2014:5) contends that language expands its scope and horizon to culture and identity. This means that, apart from defining one's culture, language also incorporates a person's identity. To that end, language, culture and identity are inseparable. Therefore, the above African studies on English as the LOI imply that social justice is not a reality in an education system where the LOI is not the local language of the learner.

Furthermore, researches conducted across nations on the LOI revealed social justice education malpractices in the form of xenocentrism and exclusion of mother tongues in learning and teaching (Erling et al., 2017:37; Wilhite, 2013:2008; Klawijk and Walt, 2016:68). The findings of the above Indian, Ghananian, South African and Zanzibar studies concur that ILs were extensively marginalised in becoming the MOI. Both learners and teachers used English as the LOI despite the fact that English was their

second language. Sidelining mother tongues to become the MOI exposed them to exclusion and xenocentrism in the education arena in those respective countries. The above scenario is not different from the Chivi District in Zimbabwe. Learners and their teachers in Zimbabwe are obliged to use English as the LOI from Grade Three. There is exclusion of home languages and the practice can potentially exacerbate xenocentric tendencies in learners. Magwa (2021: 2) laments that many people and societies are discriminated against on grounds that their heritage languages are not recognised in various spheres, including education. Distancing the young learners from their heritage languages fosters a dislike of the mother tongue. Thus, social justice education practices are compromised.

The studies conducted in Malaysia, Philippines, Canada, South Africa and Zimbabwe on the use of English as the LOI indicated the possible extinction of local languages in those countries (Paauw, 2009: 12; Groff, Pilote and Fort, 2016: 11; Klawijk and Walt, 2016: 79; Magwa, 2021: 2). The findings revealed that continued use of English as the LOI has the potential to impose language genocide. This is because learners use English, a second language in all the subjects in the school curriculum from primary to tertiary level. The mother tongues occurring in the above mentioned nations are not part of the language of education. In that way they are bound to die a natural linguistic death. Klawijk and Walt (2016: 79) postulate that African languages face a form of self-genocide particularly as languages of teaching and learning. Similarly, Magwa (2021:2) contends that 43% of the estimated 6 000 languages spoken globally are endangered and every two weeks, a language becomes extinct. This implies that heritage languages are not the MOI in most countries across the globe. As a result, mother languages are at the verge of extinction.

Furthermore, Paauw (2009: 12) lamented that in both Philippines and Malaysia, the Dutch language, which is the official language, is viewed as a threat by other linguistic groupings in those societies. This means that among other languages existing in Malaysia and Philippines, only Dutch was used as the LOI. This practice exposed other languages to attrition. The scenario in the respective nations above is similar to Zimbabwean context, particularly Chivi District. Ndebele, Shangani and Shona indigenous languages are spoken in Chivi District. However, the above three local languages are not the MOI. English, the second language, is the LOI. Thus, the three ILs are gradually phasing out, hence the need to critically explore the degree to which

English as the LOI champions social justice education practices at Grade Three level in Chivi District.

Findings from Canadian and Tanzanian studies on the LOI further revealed widespread monolingualism in most education systems (Groff et al., 2016: 3; Brock-Utne, 2014: 13). This implies that the majority of the education systems promote use of one language as the LOI. In most cases the language used as the LOI is a second or foreign language. Prah (2009: 8) argues that Africa is not Anglophone, Francophone or Lusophone. Africa is Afrophone. Nevertheless, no school is using African languages as the LOI. Thus, in most African schools, languages spoken in Europe, France and Portugal are usually the LOI. ILs are excluded in the education system. This hampers linguistic diversity in the education system. The situation in both Canada and Tanzania is similar to Chivi District. Learners use only English as the LOI from Grade Three in spite of the existence of several ILs.

In line with the above, Brock-Utne (2014: 6) argues that African learners speak African languages, however, learning and teaching is done in a foreign language. Brock-Utne's study (2014) was conducted in various African states, for instance, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa. The findings were almost similar and pointed to a dearth of language diversity. African children acquire their education in either a second or third language. The practice can disadvantage the learners to a greater extent. Wilhite (2013: 1996) postulates that quality learning in African counties would not be attainable without curricula that use indigenous languages as the MOI. The practice that foreign languages dominate learning and teaching across Africa implies that social justice education practices are mythically conceived.

It is now well established in many schools around the world that when a learner is granted the opportunity to learn in his/her mother language, he/she is more likely to succeed academically (Webley, 2013:203; Magwa, 2021: 2). The study findings above indicate that social justice education practice is imposed as necessitated by the use of foreign languages as the LOI. This practice deprives ILs the opportunity to take central position in driving the school curricula. The ILs and their speakers are both despised. Hadebe (2019: 7) argues that a person's attitude towards a certain language in most cases reflects one's culture toward speakers of that language. This implies that the more learners are exposed to foreign languages as the LOI, the more they

are distanced from their ILs, culture and identity. Overall, the ILs will die naturally. To that effect, social justice may not be achieved in the education arena.

In line with the above, researches on the LOI also indicated incompetence on the part of both teachers and learners (Wilhite, 2013: 206; Brock-Utne, 2014: 6). The studies revealed that despite extensive use of English as the LOI, learners and teachers experience difficulties in communicating in English. The decision to use English as the LOI at the expense of ILs is unfair as it violates linguistic rights of the learners. The findings of the above Tanzanian and Zanzibar studies resonate with the Zimbabwean situation, particularly Chivi District primary schools, where English is the LOI. Learners are not using their home languages. Hence, the researcher 's desire to conduct this study to find out how English impedes social justice education practices at primary school level in Chivi District.

Studies on the LOI conducted globally, particularly in Asia, Africa, America and Europe revealed some opportunities that come by using non-indigenous languages as the MOI. For instance, English is viewed as the language of employment opportunities by both learners and parents (Erling et al., 2017:37; Klawijk and Walt, 2016: 68; Cholakova, 2014: 43; Groff et al., 2016: 11). The learners and parents have a strong belief that mastery of English can be an advantage for them after school. They may get good jobs due to their ability to communicate effectively in English.

In addition, studies on English as the LOI in Malaysia and Philippines revealed that English can be regarded as the language of unity (Paauw, 2009: 12). This is because English can be used for inter-ethnic communications. In other words, use of English as the LOI can unite learners from different ethnic groups who speak different languages. These findings could be related to the situation in Chivi District primary schools, where learners affiliate to three different ethnic languages, namely Ndebele, Shangani and Shona. The use of English as the LOI can go a long way to unite the learners. Communication becomes easy. However, the question of effective communication still remains because Grade Three learners are young to master English fully.

Studies conducted in the US, South Africa and Tanzania converge to embrace bilingualism in teaching and learning (Buttaro, 2014:119; Brock-Utne, 2014: 80;

Klawijk and Walt, 2016: 68). This implies that in as far as classroom instruction is concerned, bilingualism should be employed since it promotes respect and equality for all the learners in the school. In other words, the research findings of the aforementioned studies articulate that bilingualism fosters social justice education practices. No learner is left behind in dual language programmes like bilingualism. Both English and ILs are used as the LOI. While these studies were conducted for upper primary, secondary and tertiary learners, this study focuses on Grade Three learners who are introduced to English as the LOI for the first time. In that context, the dual language programmes might be relevant and instrumental in fostering social justice education practices.

Having discussed studies on the LOI conducted in the US, Europe, Asia and Africa under this section of the research, the next section pays attention on education language policy in Zimbabwe.

2.4 POLICY IN ZIMBABWE

Various research studies were carried out on education language policy, for instance, Shizha (2012), Muchenje et al. (2013), Dube and Ncube (2013), Thondhlana (2013), Gudhlanga and Makaudze (2012) and Magwa (2019). The findings from the above-mentioned scholars reveal both strengths and weaknesses of the education language policy in Zimbabwe.

2.4.1 The Nature of the Zimbabwe Education Act

The language of education policy in Zimbabwe has never materialised. It is inferred in the Education Act and is characterised by amendments (Siwela, 2018: 36; Muchenje et al., 2013: 60; Shizha, 2012; Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225). Implicitly, there is no clear language policy in Zimbabwe. The absence of a clear language policy has compromised the recognition of ILs in teaching and learning.

The 1987 Education Act states that Zimbabwe has three major languages, namely, Shona, Ndebele and English which should be taught from Grade One in all primary schools. In areas where the majority of the people speak indigenous Shona, English and Shona will be taught (Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225;

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), 2016: 90). What can be quickly identified from this initial sub-section of the language policy is its divisive nature. The policy does not unite the indigenous Shona and Ndebele speakers. It seeks to maintain a gap between the two heritage languages. What is also visible from this section of the 1987 Education Act is the idea that English 'dines' with both Shona and Ndebele heritage languages yet it is the language of the minority. These are some of the gaps the researcher aimed to explore in this critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice.

The Zimbabwe education act also categorically states that from Grade Three downwards, the MOI may be English, Ndebele or Shona. The determining factor is population number versus language spoken (Muchenje et al., 2013: 60; Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225). This implies that the language with the highest number of speakers will be the MOI. However, the researcher has observed that teachers in infant classes (Grades 1-3) do not apply this rule. Instead, they use English as the LOI despite that the learners have not yet developed proficiency in English. It is against this backdrop that the researcher decided to embark on the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools.

Sub-section three of the 1987 Zimbabwe Education Act says that the MOI beginning from Grade Four in primary schools is English. Shona and Ndebele will be taught as learning areas, however, on equal time allocation with English (Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225; Nhongo, 2015: 6). There are two things to note here: first the Zimbabwean education language policy in the primary school sector is characterised by marginalisation, alienation, avoidance and linguistic imperialism (Chimhenga and Chivhanga, 2013: 59; Phillipson, 2008: 251; Plonski et al., 2013: 15; Dube and Ncube, 2013: 250; Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225). This is because ILs are absent as the MOI for four (4) years (primary 4-7). ILs will only be functional to Grade Three downwards where English may also be the MOI. Secondly, ILs are recognised as taught subjects and the granting of equal time allocation is an appeasement. The education language policy lacks linguistic diversity.

The fourth sub-section of the Zimbabwe Education Act propounds that the Minister responsible for education is mandated to authorise the teaching of ethnic languages

in areas where they exist. Nevertheless, they are to be taught in addition to English, Shona or Ndebele (Totemeyer, 2010: 10; Nyathi-Ramohobo, 2004: 43-44). Implicitly, in a predominantly Ndebele or Shona speaking community, ethnic languages may be taught up to primary Grade Three. From Grade Four, ethnic languages speakers switch on to English as the MOI and Ndebele or Shona as subjects. The researcher's experience as a teacher in one of the communities where ethnic languages exist in Zimbabwe is that learners who speak ethnic languages grapple with two second languages, namely, English and Shona or Ndebele. This happens under one roof and in the same four walls with learners who affiliate to either Ndebele or Shona languages who only deal with one second language (English). These are some of the gaps that have motivated the researcher to embark on this critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District.

2.4.2 Reactions to the Zimbabwe Education Act Amendments

Certain sections of the Zimbabwe Education Act were amended several times. This section of the literature review will focus on 2006 and 2015 Education Act amendments (Education Act, Amendment Bill 2019). For its part, the 2006 amendment dwelt on sub-sections 2 and 3 where it underlines that ILs may be the MOI from primary Grade One to Seven, together with English. The 2006 Education Act amendment was never adopted in primary schools. English continues to enjoy the instructional dominance (Djite, 2008:150; Erling et al., 2017: 137; Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe as amended, 2006). The question is: why is English given a full mandate to educate indigenous learners who have their own languages.

The 2015 education act amendment is the brainchild of the Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Curriculum Review Framework instituted by the then standing Minister of Education, Dr Lazarus Dokora. Like the 2006 amendment, the 2015 amendment does not seek to overhaul the Act to come up with a clear education language policy but it shifts the sub-sections 2 and 3. Instead of introducing English as the LOI at Grade Four, the 2015 amendment recommends English as the LOI from Grade Three upwards (MoPSE, as revised, 2015: Education Act amendment Bill, 2019: 10). The researcher's observation is that the 2015 Education Act amendment is retrogressive in that it has robbed learners of their one year of using an

IL as the LOI in primary school education. The question is: what are the implications for this downward policy shift for the third graders?

2.4.3 Concluding Remarks on the Zimbabwe Education Act

The language policy issue in Zimbabwe is still pending. There is a need to overhaul the Education Act so that a clear and well-defined language policy is crafted. This is because the standing Education Act renders prominence to one language (English) in sharp contrast with the dictates of the national constitution which officially recognises sixteen (16) languages, namely, Chewa, ChiBarwe, English, Kalanga, Khoisan, Nambya, Ndau, Ndebele, Shangani, Shona, Sign Language, Sotho, Tonga, Tswana, Venda and Xhosa (Constitution of Zimbabwe Act (No.20), 2013: 17). However, these languages are not fulfilling an instructional function similar to that of English. Instead of being promoted to become the MOI, ILs are further immersed by introducing English as the LOI from Grade Three.

Having discussed various theorists' views on English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools under this section, the ensuing section deals with the relationship between the LOI and educational achievement.

2.5 THE LOI AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Under this section of the literature review, the research focuses on literature that relates to the role of the LOI in the educational attainment of learners. That is to say, to what extent does the LOI influence the academic performance of learners?

A report by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) noted that Grade Three learners performed much better in Mathematics lessons that were conducted in mother tongue than those conducted in English (UNEB, 2012: 76). The above is indicative that the home language is an asset when used as the LOLT. According to the UNEB (2012), home languages displayed far better results than English at Grade Three. This was probably because the learners at that grade level were better versed with mother tongue than English. Against this background that a critical investigation of the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District in Zimbabwe is carried out.

Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ, 2016: 8) conducted a quantitative study and concluded that there is a relationship between speaking the LOI and learner achievement, especially in reading, in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Zimbabwean situation whereby ILs are sidelined in teaching and learning negatively affects learner achievement. While the Ugandan case study was based on Mathematics and English (UNEB, 2012: 76), the Chivi District scenario focused on Indigenous languages and English. The idea is to explore which language motivates learners better in terms of performance. The purpose of embarking on this study was to explore how to create a democratic learning environment where there is language diversity.

In his qualitative study conducted in Namibia on the LOI, Harris (2011: 7) indicated that a substantial number of learners were not coping well with the L2 (English) as language of teaching and learning. Learners could not perform in their academic work because the language barrier thwarted their grasp of the concepts. Educational attainment is determined by the mode of communication. The communication mode in Namibia and Zimbabwe alike is English. Most learners have problems in learning in English and the LOI becomes a barrier for their academic success. The question is why do schools resort to foreign languages as LOI when they prove detrimental to academic success. Motala (2013: 200) in his South African study concurs that lack of proficiency in English contributes greatly to the failure of learners yet the majority of parents choose English as the LOI for their children. Moreover, many teachers are also non-English speakers. The adage that the blind cannot lead the blind applies in the foregoing discussion. This is a result of the colonial mentality that regards English as the *lingua franca* (global language). Despite the negative results that are attributed to English language instruction, it has surprisingly gained great recognition.

In the same vein, Dube and Ncube (2013: 250), in their qualitative study of the IL Ndebele conducted in Zimbabwe, posit that language and education cannot be separated from one another. If education is to be achieved language is automatically the vehicle to success, and educational achievement is based on the effective use of language. The survival of any language is vested in its use as the LOI. Thus, learner educational achievement is maximised when the language of teaching and learning is the learners' first language. Linguistic diversity in education is pivotal for learners to enjoy their learning. In accordance with the above, Shizha (2012: 787) argues that the

marginalisation of ILs as the MOI and undervaluing of indigenous perspectives is a threat to educational achievement and success, cultural identities and self-perceptions of African school graduates. For maximum benefits of the school system to be realised, ILs should be incorporated in the education system of the learners who speak these ILs. Similarly, in a mixed method study done in Mozambique between the years 1993-1997 among Grade One to Three learners using Cinyanja and Xitsonga, Trudell (2016: 101) established that bilingualism and literacy skills, self-confidence and extended classroom learner participation is a prerogative of mother tongue instruction. The foregoing discussion demonstrates the need to take home languages seriously. Researchers concur that heritage languages are an integral part of the educational achievement of learners, especially at the primary school level.

Of importance to note is the need to consider other approaches to language usage in education, notably, translanguaging, bilingualism and code-switching. The above language usage approaches are fertile grounds for incorporating heritage languages in teaching and learning as proved by the Mozambican Cinyanja and Xitsonga study. This means both Cinyanja and Xitsonga were the LOI in this success story. Against the above backdrop, one can ask: what prevents educators and learners from adopting home languages as the LOI, except attitudes? Hence, a critical investigation of English as the LOI in Chivi District primary schools was a study to explore this issue and find relevant solutions to the debate.

By and large, the decision to continue with international languages, especially English as the LOI in Africa is a cause for concern. Ironically, the teachers' level of English is also low (Brophy, 2014: 335). Teacher incompetence affects the performance of learners to a larger degree. Learners acquire those linguistic competencies necessary for excellent academic performance from the teacher since he/she is the only role model in the classroom. This is because research has shown that, more often than not, local languages produce positive results in teaching and learning (Hopkyns, 2014: 10; Tembe and Norton, 2011: 33; Said, 2011: 191). Learners and their teachers at any level in the education sector display excellent performance when being instructed in their languages together with English in teaching and learning.

In the forthcoming section, it is imperative to discuss perceptions of learners on English as the LOI and its implications for social justice.

2.6 PERCEPTIONS OF LEARNERS ON ENGLISH AS THE LOI/MOI

Under this section of the research, the literature related to the attitudes of learners on using English as the LOI was reviewed. Ntshangase (2011) in South Africa concludes that the implications of learning in English for a learner whose mother tongue is neither English nor Afrikaans are devastating when the child is expected to switch to English as a language of learning (Ntshangase, 2011: 18-19). This applies also to Grade Three learners in Chivi District who are introduced to English as the LOI. This scenario does not augur well with these young learners because they struggle with internalising the new language and new subject content. This is because in ECD and through Grades One and Two, learners are using their heritage languages as the LOI. The dramatic shift from mother tongue to a new language, in this case, English, is a cause for concern. Schaefer (2010: 8) argues that anybody, when introduced to a new culture for the first time, is likely to experience culture shock. To that end, social justice practices in education at the primary school level where the LOI is not the primary language of learners are mythically conceived.

In line with the assertion above, Gora (2013: 125) established that one's mother tongue is an indispensable asset. The role of a good education system is not to discourage or destroy the learners' mother tongue, but to enrich and help them to develop the ability to cope with changing environments (Gora, 2013: 125). Although, Gora's (2013) views relate to the local language and its use in the education situation, the education language situation in Zimbabwe is deplorable. The learners, especially at Grade Three in the primary school sector, are supposed to use English in learning. This has put them at a disadvantage since English is a foreign language. This implies these young learners are to part with their mother tongue, which is a social haven for culture and identity. Culture is not neutral (Monnier, 2010: 19) but shaped by Western powers to create hegemony and maintain the status quo. The transition to English so early has negative cultural consequences for the learners. Hence, the quest for social justice cannot be realised.

Muchenje, Goronga and Bondai's (2013: 48) qualitative study on Grades 1-7 learners in Zimbabwe also commented on the views of learners on English as LOI. They (Muchenje et al., 2013) found that one learner said that occasionally he was reluctant to read the charts and textbooks as they were not written in his home language.

Learners wished to use their own language in learning. Although the study by Muchenje et al. (2013) focused on primary school grades, this study focuses on Grade Three. However, the studies are similar in that they are critical of the LOI in use in Zimbabwe. They both view the current LOI as a 'monster' in the education system of Zimbabwe. There should be a vigorous study on the LOI for the nation to produce a lasting solution to the language of education policy in Zimbabwe.

Further, Klawijk and Walt's (2016:77) and Erling et al.'s (2017:34) studies indicated that learners hold the view that English Medium Instruction (EMI) policies contribute from keeping learners from non-affluent backgrounds from learning English. Poor children from the non-affluent backgrounds are not accorded the opportunity to study English outside the classroom and neither is the school environment conducive to developing their home languages. Most Grade Three learners in Chivi District come from non-affluent backgrounds; as a result, it is difficult for them to engage in English at home. The majority of parents are illiterate and they cannot procure reading material for their children to study English on their own. Mlay ((2010:100) argues that some rural parents lack educational awareness and they cannot afford to purchase supplementary reading materials as well as pay school fees. The introduction of English as the LOI at Grade Three level in Chivi District is fundamentally gate keeping. This is because learners from affluent backgrounds have relevant skills, a better chance to study English outside the classroom and have greater access to resources to further English than their counterparts. Thus, an unequal environment has been created and the gap is further widened. In that context, social justice is further compromised in the education system in Chivi District schools.

Learners do not only perceive English as the LOI in terms of expanding their knowledge, but also in granting them employment opportunities and access to further studies (Hann, Timmis, Alkhaidi, Davies, Troncoso and Yi, 2014: 10; Groff et al., 2016: 11; Pennycook, 2001: 81; Erling et al., 2017: 38). This implies that learners prefer English as the LOI to ILs based on the belief that English proficiency guarantees one a prestigious occupation or job opportunity and entry into higher academic courses in Zimbabwe. Post-Ordinary Level life is determined by having a pass in English, be it to get a job or to further one's education. Nevertheless, numerous studies across nations revealed that mother language instruction bear positive academic results in learners (Brock-Utne, 2014: 10; Wilhite, 2013: 204). ILs, therefore, can enhance learner

academic achievement. Thus, the situation in Chivi District primary schools where Grade Three learners largely use English as the LOI manifests social justice in the education sector.

In his study of English as the LOI in the United Arab Emirates, Hopkyns (2014: 1) warns that while English can produce the benefits of western cultures, it is a notorious partner. This is because the introduction of English has become a threat to several home languages and cultures (Modiano, 2001: 345; Badry, 2011: 85; Pan and Seargent, 2012: 49). The above assertion implies that English can be a source of language attrition and cultural demise. In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Arabic is the dominant language and source of culture. However, the introduction of English has introduced some challenges in communities (Hopkyns, 2014). Al-Issa and Dahan (2011: 3) concur that the key function that English plays is to finally do away with Arabic as the mode of communication by UAE citizens in their social activities and the education system. This underrates the home language of the learners which has negative consequences for both the local languages and the cultures they portray. The emphasis on English as the LOI leads to language death and cultural erosion thereby giving English a dominant role in the education sector. This is because losing a language is losing both culture and one's identity (Said, 2011: 191). The fact that local languages are not the LOI in Chivi District primary schools implies that learners are gradually losing their culture and identity. This is in line with critical theorist, Carnoy, who postulates that a metaphor of colonialism (annexation by and control of one nation by another) is employed (Marimba, 1994: xxvii). Thus cultural behaviours dominate the developing countries and their cultures. To that effect the LOI, in this case, English is a threat. The replacement of local languages with English as the LOI communicates social injustice.

In line with the above, English affects people's identity and the way we think and talk. One respondent in a UAE study revealed that English affects learners and everything they think, write and speak is in English; this causes them to think like foreign people (Hopkyns, 2014: 10). The above perception of learners on English as the LOI points to the fact that the denigration of heritage languages in educating learners hampers social justice. This becomes the mental colonisation of learners. Chimhenga and Chivhanga (2013:59) postulate that people relegate their heritage languages to a second class status in comparison to English. Their identity and line of thinking are

affected negatively to a greater extent. Ntshangase (2011: 11) highlights the role of language in cognitive functioning; language is a vital thinking tool. However, problems emanate when a person thinks in his/her heritage language and communicates in a second language. Contextually, learners in Zimbabwe's education system, particularly in Chivi District primary schools, speak Shona, Ndebele and Shangani. This means they think in these languages and when it comes to talking and writing, they resort to English. Basing on the idea that heritage languages are an integral part of a people's culture and identity, English as the LOI is a threat to their culture and identity. The use of English in the education system is a dangerous practice because it sends the message to the learners that ILs are less important (Badry, 2011: 85).

Commenting on the pros of English as the LOI, Hann et al. (2014: 15) established that most learners believe that English is associated with achievement, high culture and self-esteem. This implies that learners despise local languages in learning and teaching on the basis of the false impression that proficiency in English produces self-esteem, high culture and achievement. In other words, learners hold the belief that lack of English proficiency is associated with backwardness and a lack of civilisation.

Hann et al.'s (2014) assertion is in line with the Freirean idea that cultural defeat cascades to the inferiority of the invaded, hence they commence practising the values, beliefs and the goals of the invaders. For the invasion of culture to be a reality, it is ideal that the invaded come to terms with their inferiority (Freire, 1980: 122). The high self-esteem associated with English is a result of looking down upon local languages in the education sector. Lack of language diversity in the education sector facilitates local languages' demise and English plays a dominant role. All the local languages are regarded as inferior. Thus, social justice is mythically perceived in the education system. This is because learners think that having high English proficiency gives them high self-esteem and culture, but in fact, they are being stripped of their identity and culture.

2.7 PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS ON ENGLISH AS THE LOI/MOI

Owu-Ewe (2013: 68) found that teachers agreed that the learners grasp concepts quicker when they use home languages as the LOI. The above teacher sentiments on English as the LOI is an attempt to convey the message that local languages should

be given first preference to become the languages of the curriculum instruction. The primary languages of the learners should be espoused as they give advantages to them in learning. Following the foregoing discussion, Ochshom and Garcia (2007: 16) argue that literacy in a second language is a difficult task. For English second language speakers to overcome English language barriers, the mother tongue should not be ignored in the teaching. This implies that the early immersion into English as the LOI of Grade Three learners in Chivi District primary schools is a manifestation of social justice malpractices in the education sector. It would be more advantageous if they were allowed to continue with local languages as the LOI. The heritage languages could assist them to learn reading and writing in English with ease. The teachers' abrupt shift to English to English Medium Instruction (EMI) at Grade Three in primary schools causes confusion and anxiety and learners experience cultural shock (Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84; Schaefer, 2010: 8).

Teachers' perceptions point to dual-language programmes as the panacea to the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) issue. Given the above, Buttaro (2014: 119) in his research carried out in the US concludes that teachers believe that the reason dual-language programmes are beneficial is that they include all learners; hence they promote bilingualism which is a recipe for social justice education practices. Buttaro's findings are relevant to this study where one language (English) dominates other languages in teaching and learning. There is a gross violation of linguistic rights and respect for other cultures. For social justice to be a reality there is a need for the introduction of bilingualism education in Chivi District schools. In other words, both English and local languages, namely, Shona, Ndebele and Shangani, should be given equal opportunities to become the LOLT. The current LOI situation in Chivi District does not accommodate dual language programmes (Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225).

In another qualitative study by Dube and Ncube (2013: 52), which focused on the Ndebele indigenous language in Zimbabwe, teachers established that heritage languages were crippled by limiting them to infant grades. This means that it is illegal to use ILs as the LOI in upper grades through secondary education. To make matters worse, the Zimbabwe education system does not regard English as a foreign language, equating it to ILs which are undervalued by curriculum designers (Dube and Ncube, 2013: 251). These barriers prevent ILs from becoming the LOI, limiting their

use to certain lower grades (ECD-Grade Two). The strategies are meant to maintain a status quo. This has since violated linguistic diversity human right and the desire for social justice in education. This is the backdrop of this study which aims to create a conducive learning environment where ILs are recognised in championing the school curriculum in Zimbabwe.

Although the acquisition of English proficiency by Grade Three learners so that they can communicate globally is a positive aim, the question arises whether teachers mandated to teach these classes are competent to teach in English. In his study Buttaro (2014: 28) found that a cross-check of teachers' work indicated several grammatical and spelling mistakes in lesson delivery. Inscriptions on the chalkboard and some charts with instructions for the learners had spelling and grammatical errors. Thus, teachers' lack of English proficiency greatly compromises the Grade Three learners' quality education. Against the above background a critical analysis of English as the LOI was undertaken to find out how its influence may facilitate social justice in education. The question is: does the choice of English as the LOI at the expense of local languages place learners at their best advantage or not?

The teachers' views were also echoed in Shizha's (2012) qualitative research study, where he argued that teachers perceive local languages, African children's stories and parental experiences as deficit and ill-informed, while English and other western languages are regarded as enriching and enhancing learning experiences (Shizha, 2012: 787). The above testifies to the colonial mentality in that the former colonisers of Zimbabwe who imposed English as the LOI have propagated the devaluing of local languages. The cultural products of the developed countries 'invade' the less developed countries and 'vanquish' local cultures (Drysdale, 1975: 378; Monnier, 2010: 19). The notion that ILs have a deficit is a colonial mentality. Africans in Zimbabwe have been brainwashed to believe that their local languages cannot deliver in education.

Regarding communication breakdown and the difficulties both learners and teachers face during lesson delivery, Erling et al. (2017: 13) in their study conducted in India and Ghana established that the LOI has drawbacks for communication. In both instances, some teachers had problems in communicating in English during lesson delivery. English communication was fragmented and code-switching was rampant.

This is a result of avoiding home language in educational instruction. The Indian and Ghanaian study is an eye-opener to the education fraternity across nations and points to the consideration of ILs as LOI. Erling et al.'s (2017) findings indicated that effective communication in the classroom is very important. Freire (1980: 99) comments that to limit communication is to reduce people to the status of objects and that is the goal of oppressors, not liberals. The question is why is English the LOI in Chivi District primary schools when it hinders effective classroom dialogue?

In line with the above, teachers' perceptions of English as the LOI revealed that communication breakdown among teachers and learners was a common feature in most linguistically diverse classrooms across the globe (Davila and Linares, 2020:9). The above scenario is prompted by the fact that classroom environments are usually multicultural. Therefore, the teacher who is proficient in a particular language is not always competent to communicate with learners who affiliate to various languages, different from his/her own language. In that context, language barrier is problematic for both the teacher and the learners. Davila and Linares' (2020) study involved a Spanish teacher who was teaching non-Spanish speaking learners. The Spanish teacher had problems in using Spanish to teach English, French and other language speakers. This study is conducted in a linguistic environment where Ndebele, Shangani and Shona are spoken by both the teachers and learners. However, both learners and teachers are supposed to conduct teaching and learning in English. While the Davila and Linares's (2020) study found that teachers were concerned about their inability to speak the languages of the learners, there is a strong possibility that teachers and learners in this current study may experience challenges in using English as the LOI because it is the second language for both learners and the teachers in Grade Three in Chive District. The emphasis put on the use of English as the LOI impedes social justice education practices.

In the same vein, Djite (2008: 150) in his research conducted in Ghana on English as the LOI, concluded that teachers view English as the language of the power elite who have forsaken heritage languages. The heritage language is associated with inferiority, while English is regarded as superior. Accordingly, Monnier (2010: 19) posits that indigenous cultures, especially from less developed nations undervalue customs, beliefs and values, thereby jeopardising their identity. Local languages assume a second position to English in teaching and learning, hence they are

regarded as primitive languages whilst English is associated with first-class knowledge and power (Magwa, 2019: 27). The above teacher attitudes can be a hindrance to social justice education practices.

In her qualitative study in Zambia, Ndeleki (2015: iv) established that teachers associated the use of ILs with an inferiority complex while the use of English enjoys high status because English is considered the language of the elite. In other words, Ndeleki's (2015) study associated ILs with developing low self-esteem in learners, while gaining English proficiency assimilates learners into the elite group. The above Zambian study focused on ILs as the MOI at Grades One to Four in private primary schools. This study endeavours to explore English as the LOI at Grade Three level in public rural primary schools in Zimbabwe. Therefore, it is not yet certain whether Ndeleki's (2015) study findings would be similar to the findings of this study. However, the two studies are similar in that they attempted to find out whether there is social justice education practice or not in using unfamiliar languages as the MOI, particularly in the early years of schooling. Assumptions of this study are that Grade Three learners are too young to be alienated from mother tongues, which they still need to master. Therefore, the introduction of English to Grade Three learners poses a threat to their culture and identity. To that end, the teachers' perceptions of English as the LOI points to social justice malpractice in the education system.

The situation described above is not unfamiliar in Chivi District and Zimbabwe as a whole. The education system in Zimbabwe demands that learners from primary Grade Three should be taught in English. Local languages should be the LOI from ECD to primary Grade Two (MoPSE, 2015: 7; Education Act, Bill, 2019: 10; Mashangwa, 2017: 7). The language policy above does not liberate learners, especially at Grade Three. Rather, it is an instrument of exploitation that seeks to erase learners' identity as represented by their heritage languages and to assimilate them into English-speaking society portrayed as the elite who possess better future outcomes.

In his study conducted in Lebanon, Bacha (2011: 1324) established that teachers stressed the importance of cultural background on learning especially where a foreign language is being acquired. This implies that learners at lower grades can communicate more easily in local languages grasp new concepts better than they can do in second languages. In accordance with the above view, a study conducted in the

US n by Ochsom and Garcia (2007: 16) established that teachers believe that engaging learners in reading using their mother language enhances reading achievement extensively. Proficiency in the mother tongue is a great asset for understanding other languages and learning new concepts. Having a sound background of the mother tongue is likened to the possession of cultural linguistic capital, which is a necessary to deal with school work for better educational achievement (Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84). The fact that learners are exposed to foreign and unfamiliar languages at Grade Three or Four in countries like Ghana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, among others, points to the view that they are deprived of the opportunity to use their home languages (Owu-Ewie and Eshun, 2015: 72). Thus, they lack the cultural capital to suit their educational environment. This is the genesis of a differentiated curriculum where education assists to maintain and legitimise an unequal divided society (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73). Therefore, the focus of this qualitative research is to expose the disadvantages imposed by English as the LOI and make an attempt to improve instructional practice in primary schools.

The researcher will focus on the perceptions of parents on English as the LOI in the following section.

2.8 PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTS ON ENGLISH AS THE LOI

The need for social justice in the education sector is a collective effort. Apart from the learners and teachers, parents also expect to see justice practised in the education system in Zimbabwe and in other countries. This section discusses the findings of the research done by various theorists on perceptions and attitudes of parents on English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in the education arena.

In his study entitled *The LOI on Learners' Academic Attainment in Secondary Schools in Tanzania*, Mlay (2010: 10) revealed that African emancipation, culture and freedom cannot be fully realised and espoused where the LOI is not the mother language of the local people. Any independent society communicates in its heritage language since it enhances fluency and promotes their thoughts (Prah, 2003: 17; Magwa, 2019: 27). Parental perceptions point to a violation of the learners' fundamental human right of cultural freedom. This is largely because the language of communication in education which is English does not convey the African culture. It is a vehicle of

European and foreign culture. Also, parents believe that the mother tongue promotes creativity and innovation among learners at any level. The idea to resort to English as the LOI communicates the exploitative nature of the education system. Parents are also of the view that cultural freedom cannot be realised in an environment where people do not practise their home languages in teaching and learning. They think that learners cannot perform to their full capacity since English limits their creativity and innovation.

The foregoing discussion is an analysis of the finding of a quantitative research study on the influence of the LOI at the secondary school level. However, this study on a critical investigation of English as the LOI specifically focuses on the primary school particularly at transitional Grade Three. This is a gap in the research since many educational policies in Africa and beyond set the transitional grades at primary Grade Four or Five. Owu-Ewie and Eshun (2015: 73) concur that the majority of African nations introduced education language policies which recognise home languages as the LOI in the first three years of learning and where the second language takes over as from Grade Four upwards. The policy aims to rob learners of their languages and gradually immerse them in European culture. This is demonstrated by the Zimbabwean education language policy which, instead of switching to English as the MOI at Grade Four, took one step backwards to Grade Three (MoPSE, 2015: 7: Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 10). This has implications for indigenous languages and their culture.

Parental attitudes towards English as the LOI reflected the dominant role of English in textbooks, examinations and tertiary learning. Parents argue that the dominance of English in examinations, tertiary learning and the publication of textbooks is a barrier to the recognition of home languages (Tackie-ofusu, Mahama, Vandyck, Kumador, and Toku, 2015: 163). This implies that reading materials in schools, be they textbooks, charts and other audio-visual aids, are English codified. No other language is used as the mode of communication in producing such literature. Further, in Zimbabwe examinations are written in English. In the Zimbabwean context, a full certificate at Ordinary Level should have a pass in English yet the majority of the people speak ILs. This also applies to further education, where a pass in English is required. Hence, the above situation resonates with Schaefer (2010: 43) who argues that the dominant class can impose meanings on what counts as worthwhile

knowledge and legitimate that which they regard as knowledge. English is regarded as the superior language and the home languages are inferior and powerless. This is also the case in Chivi District primary schools.

In a South African study on English as the LOI, Cholakova (2015: 43) argues that the need for English language proficiency eliminates the motivation for learning other languages. Cholakova (2015: 43) maintains that parents view English as the language of job opportunities. This is the reason for the demise of the ILs. In other words, the failure of ILs to become the LOI is both an attitudinal and life experience in various societies where learners come from.

Mutasa (2004: 304) in Chimhenga and Chivhanga (2013) opined that English functions to empower both parents and their children economically, socially and politically as English is the gateway to success in all spheres of life. English as the language of power and economic opportunity has led to the subjugation of ILs. This has created confusion and lack of direction in terms of the language of education policy in Zimbabwe. Instead of progressing in terms of language policy development, the education language policy promotes language immersion. This is evidenced by the 2015 Education curriculum review which suggests the introduction of English as the MOI at Grade Three instead of Grade Four (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015: 7; Education Act, Bill, 2019: 10). This leads to the immersion of learners into foreign languages and culture and the gross loss of their identity.

Heugh's (2011: 53) study conducted in South Africa concluded that about 78% of IL speakers use English as the LOI beginning at Grade Four. However, the policy provides an opportunity for English-speaking learners to use their mother tongue throughout their learning. This means their creativity, innovation and thought processes are enhanced. Heugh's (2011) study is in line with the situation obtaining in Chivi District primary schools where learners at Grade Three are introduced to English as the LOI (MoPSE, 2015: 7). The Zimbabwean situation is different from Heugh's (2011) study in that ILs are phased out as the LOI and English begins at Grade Three instead of Grade Four. The unequal treatment given to English and ILs, reveals unfairness in the education system. Phillipson (2008: 251) argues that the absence of language diversity is the major aim of some nations with the agenda of

promoting monolingualism. Linguistic policies are in tandem with lingua frankensteinia and lead to language erosion. The above assertion refers to 'language genocide' or a death situation where language attrition is created which is a gross violation of people's linguistic rights.

UNICEF's (2016: 3) study on the LOI in African nations revealed that using mother tongue in education consolidates learner and community participation in the child's education. The mother tongue promotes the learners' understanding of concepts under study. Moreover, home languages when used as the LOI are likely to incorporate parents in the child's education. This is because they will be able to effectively communicate with the learners since they can speak the same language. In other words, parents believe that English as the LOI in schools alienates them from taking part in the education of their children.

Tembe and Norton (2011: 33) trace parental attitudes towards English as the LOI to identity and cultural maintenance thrust. Tembe and Norton (2011: 33), in their study conducted in Uganda, indicated that parents recognised the role of local languages, for instance, for cultural maintenance and identity. However, priority was given to their children's upward social mobility and the enhanced interaction with the global world. Thus, the dominant role given to English as the LOI at the expense of local languages is a temporary measure. It is a myth because almost every African learner realises the importance of his/her heritage language in understanding concepts in learning.

In line with Tembe and Norton's (2011) research findings, Chimhenga and Chivhanga (2013: 59) in their qualitative study on the LOI in Zimbabwe revealed that the African ILs are denigrated in the schools and demonised outside the community. This unfortunate scenario emanates from English as the MOI, yet ILs like Shona, Shangani and Ndebele appear to be suitable as the LOI which will promote mastery of concepts and application of knowledge (Chimhenga and Chivhanga, 2013: 59). Other Zimbabwean researchers on the LOI, for instance, Muchenje et al. (2013), Shizha (2012), Gudhlanga and Makaudze (2012) and Chimhenga and Chivhanga (2013) concur that ILs can compete effectively with English in assuming the LOI role. However, ILs bear a demonic and inferior image. The critical investigation of English as the LOI in primary schools explores the relevance of both ILs and English in fostering social justice in the education sector.

The desire to be associated with the language of the power elite circumvents the role that should be given to local languages, hence, the denigration of local languages in educational instruction. Freire (1980:122) cited in Nyirenda (2016) opines that the more invasion is appraised and institutionalised and alienation of the culture of the invaded is formalised, the more the invaded want to imitate the invaders in almost every aspect of human life. The desire for upward mobility and participation in the international community through English proficiency has led parents to sacrifice their home languages for English. The foregoing discussion points to cultural domination and language attrition. African societies are gradually losing their languages and cultures. Africa has not effectively decolonised its main agents of suppression, one of which is the language of colonialism (Simpson, 2014: 2). The LOI in Chivi District primary schools represents an instrument of subjugation. Local languages are suppressed and they do not stand a chance to become languages of instruction. Parents who are the custodians of home languages and culture are at the forefront of championing the promotion of English as the LOI. This is done in the hope that their children may obtain high paying jobs after school and become associated with the power elite (Kamangamalu, 2013: 161).

Kamangamalu (2013: 161), in a study carried out in Botswana, established that parents resist the use of Sesotho in lower grades since they do not see any economic advantage for learners afforded by this language. This implies that parents doubt the local languages' ability to enhance the learners' social upward mobility. As a result, they support the absence of local languages as the LOI in the lower grades. Their belief in English as the language of economic opportunity undermines heritage languages in the education system. In accordance with the above sentiment, Widin (2005: 587) cited in UNICEF (2016: 76) argued that the education environment violates the rights of children to use their heritage languages in the classroom. Linguistic diversity in the education system is a thorny issue to the extent that it violates democratic principles in the classrooms. There are seeds of neo-colonialism in that colonial languages dominate the education system. Colonial languages propagate remnants of colonialism in post-independent Africa. While parents like any other stakeholders cherish education, tacitly, education is a source of cultural hegemony (Nyirenda 2016 citing Freire, 1980: 122). Cultural imperialism through English as the LOI is rife in Chivi District primary schools.

In the next section of this second chapter of the study, the researcher will focus on the educational authorities' perceptions and attitudes towards English as the LOI.

2.9 PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES ON THE LOI/MOI

The above heading relates to various views emanating from theorists on educational administrators, for instance, heads of schools, District Schools Inspectors (DSIs) and Provincial Education Directors (PEDs) at both national and international levels who deal with the language of education policies at school, district, provincial or regional levels. The literature related to such studies is considered vital for this study. Throughout this section of the second chapter, educational authorities' attitudes towards English as the LOI were critically explored.

UNICEF (2016: 9) indicated that the recognition of home languages in the education sector is largely minimal. This suggests political will as the sole factor that denies local languages the opportunity to become the LOI. It is against the above backdrop that this study was undertaken to critically examine the disqualifying of the mother tongue as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District. The question to be explored was: does the use of English as the LOI at the expense of ILs guarantee fairness and equity in the teaching fraternity in Zimbabwe and the world at large? Other countries, for instance, Ghana and Zambia, propose Grades Four and Five in primary schools as transitional grades (Erling et al., 2017: 34). To that end, there is a need for research to address this issue in Zimbabwean context in order to improve practice.

Moreover, in his Burundian study, Rwantabagu (2014) observed that Kirundi is the language of cultural identity, especially in infant grades. The second language, in this case, French, is prioritised as the LOI and is necessary for promotion in some occupations (Rwantabagu, 2014: 38). This stance displays a similar colonial mentality among Burundians and the Zimbabwean education authorities. Zimbabwe for its part resorts to home language from ECD to Grade Two (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015: 7; Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 10) and switches to English as LOI at Grade Three up to tertiary education. The Burundian study focused on replacing home languages with French as the LOI. Both French and English are foreign languages. The cultural identities embedded in them differ from the cultures of the heritage languages. English and French cast their long cultural

hegemony shadows over local cultures. This constitutes cultural imperialism (LinkedIn Corporation, 2018: 1)

Schaefer (2010: 80) posits that education officials communicate Bourdieu's principle of symbolic violence, where the dominant class is said to impose meanings on what counts as knowledge and to legitimate that which it regards as knowledge. The power elite determines the worthwhile culture. They regard it as the standard of measure for knowledge. The idea that foreign languages, in this case, English and French, dominate in the education sector in Zimbabwe and Burundi respectively, is a testimony of who wields power. However, because the power elite in the two nations favours English and French, they become the languages of knowledge and power. In other words, they become 'symbolic because they are a symbol of power and prestige (Haralambos, Holborn and Heald, 2013: 73). Thus, the linguistic rights of local people are violated.

In line with the above, Bereketeab (2010: 174), in a study of English as the LOI in Eritrea, concludes that most governments in Africa and even beyond regard attending school in home language as a democratic fundamental right and important in developing the child holistically. The stance taken by the government to regard local languages as an important component in educating learners is a positive movement towards democracy and the promotion of linguistic rights. However, the situation obtaining in primary schools in Chivi District is not in line with the above assumption. While education officials are vying for the education that holistically develops learners, practitioners follow a monolingual type of education. Furthermore, the LOI that is at the forefront (English) is not the home language of the learners and it is introduced to learners in Grade Three in Zimbabwe (MoSPE, 2015: 7). The above negates local languages' capacity to develop the child holistically. The learners are likely to be linguistically malnourished. In accordance with the above, the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) of Zambia (2013: 5) posits that children arrive at school on day one with proficiency in mother tongue, indigenous knowledge and the dynamics of the mother language. However, they are short-changed and fail to develop these linguistic skills because they are obliged to use English. This implies that there is no language diversity with regard to the LOI because the language environment in schools lacks linguistic diversity. In such a context, the education system cannot promote the social justice agenda.

Likando and Wolhuter's (2013: 161) Namibian study discussed educational authorities' attitudes towards the ILs. They noted that the critical drawback that characterises the Namibian education system includes the idea that teachers and learners speak different languages which are not the LOI. Likando and Wolhuter's (2013) views relate to language proficiency and competence which the teachers are required to possess for them to be able to utilise the language effectively in teaching and learning. Educational authorities opine that there is inefficiency on the part of the teachers in using the LOI since it is not their language (Mwinsheikhe, 2002 in Mlay, 2010: 17; Shizha, 2012: 787). Moreover, there might be inconsistencies in learning because the LOI is not the language of the learners. The obtaining situation impacts negatively on the nature of education rendered to learners. The teachers' incompetency in English is also a problem which is inevitable in Chivi District primary schools. This is because teachers and learners are English second language speakers. Likando and Wolhuter's (2013) findings imply that both teachers and the learners are at a disadvantage because they use a language that is unfamiliar to them. It is against the above backdrop that this study is being carried out. It aims to explore why ILs are not the LOI and to what degree the use of English as the LOI fosters or impedes social justice educational practices in Chivi District.

The attitude of educational authorities negates the key functions of language in any given society, namely, cultural identity, expressive, aesthetic and communicative functions. Mlay (2010: 48) asserts that educational authorities argue that in this globalisation epoch, English is unavoidable since heritage languages are not effective for interaction with the global world. The idea that English is regarded as a *lingua franca* by educational authorities positions ILs to the periphery yet they champion indigenous heritage and culture. Sidelining of ILs in the education system means African culture and heritage is doomed. The declaration that ILs would get us nowhere signifies their termination in the school system, together their benefits to the learner. The local languages and culture are sacrificed for the sake of globalisation. Culture and language are intertwined (Said, 2011: 191; Das, 2016: 12). In that regard, the dominant role assumed by English in educational instruction is a counter to social justice practices.

Furthermore, Plonski, Teferra and Brady, (2013: 15) established that heads of schools, DSIs and PEDs face stiff resistance to introducing heritage language among

rural communities who view it as inferior to English which enhances their chances for better employment opportunities and further education. Much as indigenous languages are without a doubt necessary in the education system, their roles are limited. The school and society at large do not attach the importance that these ILs deserve in espousing local culture and heritage. They see them as incapable of carrying out important tasks.

In accordance with the above, Panizzon (2016: 1) argued that learning centres are manned by powerful people who dictate what should be included in the curriculum, who should be educated and which language should be used. Countries, Zimbabwe included, tend to shun local languages in instruction. It is the education system in these societies which decides what should be taught and in which language should that knowledge be disseminated. English is prioritised and society regards it as the language of education and economic opportunities together with prestige. Learners are forced to master English to guarantee them better employment opportunities and further education. This means the school environment is a mismatch to the home environment because the language the learners speak at school differs from the one they speak at home and the culture of learners is gradually eroded.

Contrary to Plonski et al. (2013) and Mlay (2010) who espouse the use of English as the LOI, Tambulukani and Bus (2011) established that the use of English in Zambia is a disservice to the nation. The use of English as the LOI instead of ILs is viewed as a failure in Zambia. Tambulukani and Bus's (2011) research findings are in favour of linguistic diversity in classrooms. Panizzon (2016:1) concurs with Tambulukani and Bus (2011) and he argues that the school curriculum denigrates cultural and personal differences thereby promoting class division and social inequality. Panizzon (2016) points out that the school environment does not create level ground. Learners who belong to different linguistic groups are treated differently. The inequality given to languages transcends to learners themselves. Those learners who speak English are at an advantage over those who speak ILs. Haralambos, Holborn and Heald (2013: 73) postulate that English speakers have the keys to unlock the academic content in the classroom. They possess the culture of the school and the school is an extension of the home. Hence, class division is likely to happen where there is a lack of language and cultural diversity.

Having explored the literature on educational officials' views on the MOI in this section, it is imperative to discuss the theoretical framework which underpins this study in the forthcoming section of this chapter.

2.10 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The previous sections discussed the extant research on the LOI and its implications for social justice education. The reviewed literature enabled the researcher to choose a relevant theoretical perspective for this study. Therefore, this section shifts attention to a brief outline of the theoretical framework which informed this research.

This research on the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice practices at Grade Three level is informed by critical theory. This is because issues of language usage and the attaining of social justice practices are found in social institutions like schools and colleges which are epistemologically social constructs. Thus, the determination of the language of education and the social terrain is the prerogative of the schools and the Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. According to Wood (2008: 8), critical theory is the brainchild of the Frankfurt school of thought, embodied in neo-Marxism. Also, Mthethwa-Sommers (2014: 10) posits that critical theory defines the role of learning institutions such as schools in championing the socio-economic and political inequalities. Critical theorists explore social, political and racial dimensions. These assertions put together point to critical theory as a search for conscientisation, an endeavour towards the achievement of social justice (Freire, 1970) cited in Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014: 10). The theory has several adherents, among others, Bourdieu, Foucault, Freire, Carnoy, Habermas, Marcuse, McLaren and Ladson-Billings. Critical theory exposes a society that benefits the minority, leaving the majority in poverty, a situation that promotes inequality. The critical theory explores injustice, inequalities, and exploitation that communicate unequal distribution of power in any given society. In educational discourses, critical theory explores the organisation of the school system and the process and nature of the education process (Wood, 2008: 8). The introduction of English as the LOI at Grade Three reveals injustice in terms of lack of linguistic diversity

The two critical theorists selected to inform this study are Martin Carnoy (1975) and Pierre Bourdieu's (1977). In particular, Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural

imperialism and Bourdieu's (1977) theory of education as cultural reproduction will be discussed. The two critical theories are instrumental for this research because they can be used to analyse educational institutions which practise inequality in various forms. In other words, they reflect a society which serves the interests of the minority at the expense of the majority. This is relevant for this study where English is used as the LOI at Grade Three, where the majority of the learners speak Shona, Ndebele or Shangani. Before the outlining of the major principles of critical theory, the definition of a theory will be given.

2.10.1 Definition of a Theory

Landberg (2005: 9) describes a theory as a set of ideas and assumptions arranged in such a way that it informs about the world, ourselves or an aspect of reality. Theoretical framework, therefore, positions research in a particular discipline. This study is embedded in the critical theory perspective of Carnoy's (1975) education as cultural imperialism theory and Bourdieu's (1977) cultural reproduction theory.

2.10.2 What is Critical Theory?

Critical theory emanates from the Frankfurt school of thought which is embedded in neo-Marxism (Wood, 2008: 8). Jansen (2015: 21) describes critical theory as concerned with the critical meanings of experiences about social oppression in terms of class, race, language, gender or any other creed. Thus, critical theory in education circles explores the function of institutions, for example, schools, colleges and universities in propagating socio-economic and political influences on human relations. A critical theory critiques the sanitisation of oppression that exists in various forms in various societies, in a quest for justice to prevail. As already mentioned, critical theory is posited by several scholars, among them, Bourdieu, Foucault, Freire, Carnoy, Harbermas, Marcuse, McLaren and Ladson-Billings. Critical theory exposes a society that benefits the minority, leaving the majority in poverty, a situation that promotes inequality (Wood, 2008: 8). For this study, critical theory is relevant because it endeavours to arouse awareness among primary school learners and other education stakeholders of the value of linguistic diversity in teaching and learning.

2.10.3 Basic Assumptions of Critical Theory

Critical theorists assume that social reality is historically produced and reproduced by human beings (Niewenhuis, 2015: 62). This implies that human life, be it social, economic, cultural and political, is exposed to the domination of some kind. The foregoing principle communicates Bourdieuan theory which advances the idea that education serves as a mechanism for cultural reproduction. It reproduces the culture of the dominant class (Schaefer, 2010: 80). For this study, language is the human trait that is exposed to domination. The efforts to free ILs to become the LOI in primary schools, especially at Grade Three level has yielded no results. Thus, critical theory is relevant for this study.

Critical theory also argues that the field of knowledge is the source of consciousness and identity (Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014: 11). In other words, when an individual knows, he/she is aware of the do's and don'ts of the society or system in which he/she is operating. The individual can define his/her culture and identity because he/she is knowledgeable. This assumption is inconsistent with Carnoy's principle that contends that African cultures forsake their customs, beliefs and value systems and in the process, they lose their cultural identity. For this study, English as the LOI is used to misguide learners in as far as their languages, culture and identity are concerned. The linguistic environment experienced by Grade Three learners in Chivi District does not enable them to define their culture and identity. Critical theory in this context, therefore, serves to conscientise learners to be aware of the importance of their local languages which are important in defining their identity.

Also, the critical theory postulates that each historical epoch produces particular rules that are used to define what counts as worthwhile knowledge (Jansen, 2015: 62). This assumption is in line with critical theorist Bourdieu's (1977) principle of symbolic violence which entails that the dominant class is entitled to impose meanings on what is worthwhile knowledge (Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84). This is also in consistent with critical theorist Carnoy's (1975) principle which posits that cultural imperialism can be an active policy (Priya, 2012: 2). The introduction of English as the LOI at Grade Three is emanating from the Zimbabwe Education Act, Amendment Bill of 2019. This implies that it is a formal policy currently working to define the worthwhile language in

teaching and learning processes. Critical theory, in this instance, is relevant for this study.

Furthermore, critical theory strives to reveal the antagonistic relationship that exists in societies and institutions. It dismisses the notion of neutrality in any situation (Jansen, 2015:62; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014: 11). According to critical theory, human relations are not symbiotic but antagonistic. There is the domination of one group by another. This assumption communicates Carnoy's principle which maintains that culture is not neutral but influenced by western powers to create hegemonic tendencies and maintain the status quo (Drysdale, 1975: 378; Monnier, 2010: 19). For this study, the linguistic environment is not neutral. ILs are sidelined despite that they command the greatest number of speakers. English dominates in teaching and learning in Chivi District.

Critical theory embraces dialogue because it discloses the oppressive nature of the system. Critical theorists believe that through dialogue, people acquire knowledge and the understanding of the oppressive nature of institutions. This will act as a basis for finding solutions to the problems (Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014: 11). This critical theory assumption is in line with the Bourdieuan principle of cultural capital to some extent because through dialogue, people gain knowledge to deal with the oppressive systems in their institutions. In other words, this can be likened to 'cultural capital' since this knowledge obtained through dialogue empowers them to solve their daily problems. The dialectic principle is relevant for this study because it will equip learners with the knowledge to do away with linguistic segregation and impress language diversity, a recipe for social justice education.

Having discussed some basic tenets of the critical theory above, the ensuing section discusses the two critical theories that inform this study, namely, Carnoy's theory of education as cultural imperialism and Bourdieu's (1977) theory of education as cultural reproduction.

2.10.4 Carnoy's (1975) Theory of Education as Cultural Imperialism

Drysen (2016) in LinkedIn Corporation(LC) (2018: 1) explains cultural imperialism as the sum of the processes by which a society is immersed into the modern world system

and how its powerful stratum is attracted, pressured, forced and sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to the values and structures of the powerful centre of the system. Similarly, Priya (2012: 2) posits cultural imperialism as the practice of promoting, differentiating, separating, or artificially injecting the culture of one society into another. Thus cultural imperialism for this study is linked to the LOI in that English is used to control the education system in Chivi District. This is a reality despite that English is the language of the minority in Zimbabwe. Shona, Ndebele and Shangani are the languages of the majority in Chivi District. LC (2018: 1) reiterates that language is an important aspect of cultural imperialism and today English is the *lingua franca* of global communication. The dominating role given to English in educational instruction deprives local languages of the opportunity to become languages of learning and teaching (LOLT). The reviewed literature has pointed to this deprivation as manifestation of social justice malpractice (Said, 2011: 191; UNEB, 2012: 76; Hopkyns, 2014: 1; IL-Issa and Dahan, 2011: 3).

One principle of Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural imperialism posits that cultural imperialism can be an active formal policy or a general attitude as it reinforces cultural hegemony (Priya, 2012: 2). This principle applies in Zimbabwe's education system, especially at Grade Three, where there is a formal policy which states that English is the LOI in most of the school subjects (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015: 7; Mashangwa, 2017: 6) This has since relegated ILs - Shona, Shangani and Ndebele - spoken in the district to a peripheral position. Hence, these language policies that dictate and position English as the sole LOI among various local languages, manifests cultural hegemony. The dominating nature of English has necessitated the coining of the statement by Carnoy (1975) that education is cultural imperialism (Drysdale, 1975: 378). Education has facilitated the control of African cultures by granting English a key role as a vehicle for teaching and learning. Another assumption of Carnoy's theory of education as cultural imperialism postulates that the metaphor of colonialism (annexation by and control of one nation by another nation) (Marimba, 1994: xxvii). This implies that cultural traits of the westerners invade the less developed nations and their local cultures. This principle is relevant to this study in that reviewed literature has shown that English has dominated three local languages, namely Shona, Ndebele and Shangani. The English language has taken control of the education system at Grade Three in Chivi District. Freire (2005: 5) argues that, to a larger extent, what normally takes place in different societies across

the world is that the ordinary person is vanquished, despised and converted into a spectator manoeuvred by myths which powerful social forces have artificially created. The mere fact that local languages are sidelined in the choice of LOI at Grade Three level in Chivi District means they are diminished and moving towards extinction. On the other hand, the situation above points to the fact that English as the LOI compromises the practice of social justice in the education system in Chivi District.

Carnoy's theory also argues that African cultures, especially from the less developed nations, will forsake their traditional values and lose their cultural identity when they are exposed only to European and White nationalism (Marimba, 1994: xxvii; Drysdale, 1975: 378). This is because English as the LOI at Grade Three occupies a key role. Learners are exposed to English over above local languages. Since language is embodied in culture, it means, therefore, that people's identity is greatly affected (Das, 2016: 6; Said, 2011: 191). Crystal (2003: 20 in Cholakova, 2015: 36) posits that, to a larger extent, the major concern about the negative effects of English are closely related to the threat to other languages and/or ethnic languages. The reviewed literature advances the notion that replacement of local languages with English as the LOI at Grade Three leads to the loss of cultural identity. The loss of one's identity is a clear manifestation of social injustice.

Carnoy's theory also maintains that culture is not neutral but influenced by western powers to create hegemonic tendencies and maintain the status quo (Drysdale, 1975: 378; Monnier, 2010: 19). This foregoing assumption of Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural imperialism follows the Freirean view which states that education processes are never neutral. They have double functions that are regarded as a tool for freedom or domination. The existence of a powerful culture produces docile generations which accept whatever is given to them by the power elite (Freire, 1970: 30 in Nyirenda, 2015: 6). A critical investigation of English as the LOI at primary school level in Chivi District is embedded in Carnoy's (1975) education as cultural imperialism theory, since the western powers, through English as the LOI, have created hegemonic tendencies in the education system. At Grade Three, in Chivi District educational instruction is dominated by English. The current situation demonstrates that education is an instrument of domination because local languages and cultures have been silenced and their role in education instruction has been ignored.

2.10.4.1 Relevance of Carnoy's Theory to the Current Study

Carnoy's critical theory of education as cultural imperialism is relevant to this critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District because the theory critiques a society that espouses inequality (Wood, 2008: 8; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014: 10).

Carnoy's principle which states that cultural imperialism can be in the form of an active formal policy that is meant to perpetuate cultural hegemony is very closely linked to this study (Drysdale, 1975: 378). The introduction of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools is a result of the adoption of The Zimbabwe education language policy (Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225; Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015: 7). This policy shift from Grade Four to Grade Three further alienates learners from their heritage languages and cultures. Carnoy's theory, therefore, functions to oppose the idea of advancing foreign languages at the expense of local languages in educational institutions. This is because the learner's home language is the flesh and blood of his/her culture (Das, 2016: 12; Said, 2012: 191).

Furthermore, Carnoy's theory argues that African cultures forsake their customs, beliefs and value systems and in the process, they lose their cultural identity (Monnier, 2010: 19; Marimba, 1994: xxvii). Language and culture are intertwined, and they cannot be separated. The promotion of English to become the LOI beginning at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools immerses the learners in English language and culture. ILs and culture are being phased out and in the process, the learners lose their identity (Pan and Seargent, 2012: 63; Das, 2006: 12). This study is embedded in the critical theory of Carnoy (1975) because it explores English as the LOI and its implications for social justice. The marginalisation of ILs in education has the potential to develop xenocentric attitudes to Grade Three learners (Mlay, 2010: 10; Tembe and Norton, 2011: 33).

Carnoy's theory is relevant for this study because it coins a metaphor of colonisation, explained as control of one country by another country (Marimba, 1994: xxvii). Metaphorically, English is a 'nation' that has annexed another nation, the ILs. The language of education in Chivi District primary schools is English. ILs are marginalised

and alienated (Muchenje et al., 2013). Critical theory in this context functions to critique the inequality rife in educational institutions. Hence the LOI situation in Chivi District can be explored using critical theory as a theoretical framework.

Having outlined Carnoy's critical theory as the key theoretical framework for this study, it is imperative to shift attention to Bourdieu's critical theory to complement Carnoy's theory.

2.10.5 Bourdieu's (1977) Education as Cultural Reproduction Theory

This critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District is also embedded in Bourdieu's (1977) Education as Cultural Reproduction Theory. Bourdieuan theory advances three basic principles, namely, cultural capital, symbolic violence and cultural shock (Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84; Schaefer, 2010: 80). Bourdieu's theory argues that education serves as a mechanism for cultural reproduction. It does not transmit the culture of the whole society but it reproduces the culture of the dominant class. Bourdieu refers to this dominant culture as cultural capital because through the education system it can be converted to power and wealth (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73). Haralambos et al. (2013) reiterate that there is an imbalance in the distribution of cultural capital. It is not evenly distributed through the classes; hence social class differences are created in educational achievement. Learners with affluent backgrounds have an advantage over their counterparts from non-affluent backgrounds who lack relevant cultural capital. The introduction of English as the LOI from Grade Three gives it the dominant role in the education system. To that end, it is used as an instrument to subjugate other languages and their cultures. The local languages are deprived of the opportunity to portray the cultures, values, beliefs and customs they possess (Shizha, 2012: 787; Chimhenga and Chivhanga, 2013: 59). Thus, social justice is mythically conceived.

Following the above, Nieuwenhuis (2015: 62) argues that critical researchers assume that social reality is historically created and that it emanates from people. Although people can consciously act to improve their lives, they are denied the opportunity by those in power. Upon realisation of the importance of local languages, educational language policy in Zimbabwe declares English as the LOI from Grade Three. This is a testimony that the dominant class has the power to dictate what worthwhile

knowledge is at any level in society is. In this study, the power elite has the responsibility to decide the language to use in educational instruction. Hence their children on arrival at school on day one have the necessary cultural capital which allows them to do well in education, thereby reproducing their culture (Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84).

Bourdieu's sociological principle of symbolic violence is also relevant to this critical investigation of the LOI at primary school in Chivi District. The concept of symbolic violence entails that the dominant class is entitled to impose meanings on what is worthwhile knowledge and to legitimate that which it regards as knowledge (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73; Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84). They determine the culture that is worthwhile and possessed and they endorse it as the basis of knowledge. Thus, the educational authority in Zimbabwe imposed English as the LOI at the expense of the heritage languages. This has espoused English as the 'master' vehicle of instruction from as early as Grade Three. Its legitimacy has since been approved by the power elite. This is the reason why in Zimbabwe English is the only compulsory language required for further study in various occupational sectors although it is the fundamental human right of every linguistic group that its language should be usable (Banda, Chivore, Zindi, Muchenje, Chemhuru, Nenhwe and Chikoto, 2014: 238). The definition of English as the sole worthwhile LOI is a gross violation of the aforesaid fundamental human right. Therefore, it is the prerogative of this critical research to analyse how English can be an instrument of social justice education against the backdrop of marginalising ILs.

Bourdieuian theory had also coined the assumption of cultural shock which means when immersed in an unfamiliar culture, a person may feel disoriented, uncertain, out of place and even fearful (Schaefer, 2010: 80). This sociological principle is relevant for this research study. This is because the early introduction of English as the LOI to Grade Three learners is a cause for concern. An abrupt shift from primary languages to English as the LOI sends shock waves through learners, especially in a rural setup. Children from the working class may experience cultural shock because they have two problems to solve: language and subject content (Schaefer, 2010: 8). Exposure to English for the first time as well as exposure to new concepts at Grade Three leaves learners frightened and out of place, hence cultural shock ensues.

2.10.5.1 Relevance of Bourdieu's Theory to the Current Study

Bourdieuian theory is suitable for this study through the application of its three assumptions namely, cultural capital, cultural shock and symbolic violence (Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84).

For its part, the Bourdieuian theory envisages that the education fraternity does not transmit the culture of the whole society but it reproduces the culture of the dominant class. The dominant culture refers to the cultural capital which can be converted to both power and wealth (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73). The cultural capital principle is visible in this study because the reviewed literature indicated that English as the LOI dominates the education system (Gudhlanga and Makaudze, 2012; Muchenje et al, 2013; Shizha, 2012). In this context, English is the 'cultural capital' which is reproduced through the school system. The languages of the majority (ILs) are marginalised. The critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District can be explored through the Bourdieuian theory since it critiques the organisation of the education system in any given society.

The current study can adopt Bourdieuian theory through its symbolic violence principle. This is because the principle advances the idea that the dominant class is mandated to impose meanings and legitimate what is pure knowledge (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73; Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84). The situation obtaining in Chivi District is that from Grade Three to Grade Seven, English is the MOI, regardless of it being the learners' second language (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015: 7). The learners' first languages (ILs: Shona, Ndebele and Shangani) are not languages of education. In that context, English is the 'worthwhile' language. The application of critical theorist Bourdieu's theory provides relevant answers for the current study.

Moreover, the Bourdieuian cultural shock principle is in line with several theorists in the reviewed literature who argue that English is a disservice to the learners (Ochshom and Garcia, 2007: 16; UNEB, 2012: 76; Buttaro, 2014: 28; Hann et al., 2014: 17; Harris, 2011: 7; Motala, 2013: 200). The introduction of English at Grade Three for the first time can confuse learners as they lack proficiency. Learners become 'shocked'

after being immersed in a new language completely different from their mother tongues.

Having introduced the theoretical framework for this study in this section, the researcher will now focus on the conclusion.

2.10.6 Social Justice

A vigorous analysis of some social justice perspectives can assist to position this research on the LOI in line with the social justice niche area. The researcher believes that theories on social justice expose social justice educational practices as well as malpractices. The social justice educational practices and malpractices can determine the extent to which the LOI impresses fairness and equity in education. The following social justice theorists are to be discussed: John Rawls' (1971) theory of social justice, Miller's (1999) theory of social justice, Sturman's (1997) theory of social justice, and Gale and Densmore's (2000) theory of social justice.

2.10.6.1 Conception of Social Justice

Bell (2010: 8) in Harrison and Clark (2016: 231) defines social justice as a "process that allows all groups of people to participate equally in society and enables them to fulfil their needs". Taylor, Culp and De-Coninck (2013: 17) argue that conception of social justice encompasses equality, distribution, and redistribution, solidarity, inclusion, fairness, equity and nation-building. Thus, social justice education is a reality where there is inclusion, fairness, equity and equality in terms of language usage. The situation in Chivi District primary schools is in contrast with the above explanations for social justice. This is because home languages (Ndebele, Shangani and Shona) are not the languages of education. English is the LOI (Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 4). The current study is an attempt to explore how feasible is it to realise social justice education practices in a situation where a second language is the LOI/MOI despite the multilingual nature of the community.

2.10.6.2 John Rawls' (1971) Theory of Social Justice

This section focuses on Rawls' (1971) theory of social justice assumptions of the liberty principle, where every individual should have the right to an extensive system of equal basic liberties and the economic principle, where socio-economic inequalities should be rearranged so that they also benefit the disadvantaged (Nelson, Creagh and Clarke, 2016: 4). These principles of social justice are relevant for the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District because they act as a standard of measure that positions this research within the social justice education niche.

In essence, Rawls' (1971) theory campaigns for freedom and equality in the education system (Popov, Wolhuter, Hilton, Ogunleye and Niemczyk, 2015: 21). The idea behind his theoretical principle of liberty is that learners should be introduced to the liberating pedagogies in an academic environment. These are learning strategies that give learners total freedom. Freedom is realised when learners engage in learning using their mother language. Moreover, freedom is a reality where there is equality of opportunities. Prah (2008: 17) cited in Mlay (2010: 10) argues that African emancipation and cultural freedom may not be realised, enhanced and developed when people do not use the language they speak as the LOI. The alienation of indigenous languages in Chivi District primary schools leaves the researcher in doubt as to whether freedom and equality exist. This is because learners in the aforementioned district use English as the LOI instead of heritage languages, namely Shona, Ndebele and Shangani, so they lack the freedom to use their mother tongues in learning. More so, they do not experience equality of opportunity in terms of language use. To that end, the social justice principles of liberty and equality of opportunity are not visible in Chivi District primary schools.

2.10.6.3 Miller's (1999) Theory of Social Justice

Miller's (1999) theory contends that humanity and institutions have the mandate to practise principles of social justice for the society to achieve a culture of social justice (Popov et al., 2015: 20). Miller (1999) defines social justice from the standpoint of distributive justice. The following are the assumptions of Miller's (1999) social justice theory: Desert, a claim that an individual's reward should be performance-based;

Need, a claim that one is lacking necessities and is being harmed or is in danger of being harmed; and Equality, which refers to the social ideal that society regards and treats its citizens as equals and that benefits such as certain rights should be distributed equally (Nelson et al., 2016: 4-5, Nieuwenhuis, 2011: 192; Popov et al., 2015: 21). This implies that institutions should practise social justice in that context; schools should be at the centre in propagating the seed of social justice. Miller's (1999) social justice principle of the desert is relevant to this study in that, currently, the LOI in place (English) determines one's opportunity to get high paying jobs and entry into higher learning institutions. The desert principle is a claim that one has earned a reward based on performance. Erling et al. (2017: 111) argue that English proficiency is advantageous in terms of employment opportunities. Excellent performance in English in Zimbabwe may position somebody at a good higher learning institution for further education or earn him /her a prestigious job.

The principle of need, a claim that one lacks necessities and is being harmed or is in danger of being harmed, is also relevant to this study on LOI in a primary school in Chivi District of Zimbabwe. This is because English plays a dominant role in education. The home languages occupy peripheral roles in school (Chimhenga and Chivhanga, 2013: 59; Shizha, 2012: 787). Modiano (2001: 345) cited in Hopkyns (2014: 1) concurs that to take part in the global movement, the introduction of English can be a threat to some languages and cultures. While it can reap the beneficial fruit of western cultures, English is a notorious partner. Local languages are harmed or are endangered. The foregoing discussion portrays English as a bad fellow, that is, English is a threat to local languages because it denies them the opportunity to take the position of LOI and erodes the cultural traits that they possess.

Miller's (1999) social justice principle of equality, which refers to the social ideal that society regards and treats its citizens as equals and that benefits such as certain rights should be distributed equally, is also embedded in this study (Nelson et al., 2016: 4-5). However, the above view is in contrast with what is on the ground. Citizens are not treated as equals in that their languages are not considered as the LOI. Instead, they are introduced to English for the majority of the subjects. According to Wright (2004: 92, cited in Paauw, 2009: 10), children from an affluent background are separated from those from a non-affluent background by their linguistic power. The idea that rights should be distributed equally is mythically perceived. The researcher has

observed that learners in schools are treated unequally and one of the strategies to differentiate learners is the introduction of English as the MOI, a language different from their languages.

2.10.6.4 Sturman's (1997) Theory of Social Justice

The following are the principles of Sturman's (1997) theory on social justice: a distributive component that entails equipping learners so that they receive equality of opportunity both within current and post-education; curricular justice, denoting that curriculum design and enactment communicates the principles of social justice; and the non-material component which means equipping learners with non-material goods and skills such as decision making (Sturman 1997 in Nelson et al., 2016: 5-6; Nieuwenhuis, 2011: 192).

Sturman (1997) is of the view that three aspects of social justice are required to achieve equity for the most disadvantaged. The distributive component principle articulated above about the LOI is absent in Chivi District primary schools where monolingual pedagogy dominates teaching and learning. It is the prerogative of English to communicate knowledge. Learners do not enjoy equality of opportunity since they are using a foreign language (English) in learning. They stand little chance to enjoy equal opportunities to excel in both current and future educational endeavours. Learners are hindered from educational achievement when they use the MOI which is not the language they speak at home (Erling et al., 2017: 84). While schools attempt to champion social justice, there are education policy dynamics which retard them which surround the education sector. Against this backdrop it was necessary to carry out a study on a critical investigation of English as the LOI to find out how it influences the practice of social justice.

The principle of curricular justice is yet another contested area. This is because curriculum formation in most countries is done on top-to bottom basis. A top-down approach permeates curriculum design and, in that context, the issue of social justice is a non-event. Policy formulation with regard to the LOI is the province of those who occupy higher offices and teachers and learners are mere recipients of their decision. Erling et al. (2017: 34) allude to the fact that English content and reading materials cause problems to the learners which leads to low achievement levels. There is a lack

of wide consultation during curriculum design. If teachers and learners were consulted, a relevant and appropriate LOI and resources could have been suggested. Due to the top-down approach to curriculum design, both the LOI and teaching and learning resources become irrelevant to the learners. Above all, both students and teachers should be part and parcel of curriculum design, implementation and evaluation. This will allow them to participate in decision-making, a non-material component of Sturman's (1999) theory (Nelson et al., 2016: 4-5; Popov et al., 2015: 21). However, limited opportunities are given to the input of learners and teachers and this poses a challenge to social justice in the education system.

2.10.6.5 Gale and Densmore's (2000) Theory of Social Justice

Gale and Densmore's theory of social justice proposes the following assumptions: Distributive: fairness which is achieved through the redistribution of basic resources; Retributive: entailing that fairness is addressed through competition for social goals and materials; and Recognition which means fairness is achieved through appreciating the differences between cultural groups (Nelson et al., 2016: 6; Nieuwenhuis, 2011: 191). Furthermore, Gale and Densmore (2000: 268) reiterate that, in effect, a recognitive approach to social justice encompasses processes and action to attain socially just structures over the current state and form of those structures. For this study, the third principle of recognitive justice was examined. This is largely because of its link to people's culture. Educational institutions are a haven for different cultural groups. These cultural groups are visible because of various languages attached to them. In other words, it is the language which they speak that enables us to identify each cultural group. The identity function of language is an integral part of any given society. That is, language and culture are interwoven (Das, 2016: 12; Picower, 2012: 5).

However, cultural differences are not positively recognised as alluded to by Gale and Densmore (2000). Certain cultural groups are privileged as revealed by the use of languages in teaching and learning. Other languages, especially local languages, are not regarded as important. In accordance, Cumming-Potvin (2009: 84) argues that the education system should embrace equity and not be associated with segregation of any kind. The situation in schools views cultural differences negatively. Language is used as an instrument of repression. What counts as the noble mode of

communication is English in the Zimbabwean context. To this end, home languages are not recognised as the LOI and cultural differences are a reality in the education system.

Having reflected on the general theories on social justice education and its definition in the context of education, it is imperative to pay attention to the relationship of English as the LOI to social justice educational practices.

2.10.7 Link to the LOI

The purpose of this section is to establish if English as LOI can foster social justice in schools or not. The assumption is that, through English, society may experience fairness (i.e., linguistic diversity is observed) or there may be a fundamental violation of linguistic diversity.

In articulating the function of language, Paauw (2009: 5), in his Indonesian research, concludes that the choice of Indonesian as the official language rests upon its capacity to unite Indonesian nationals and give them an identity in the process of nation-building. Where there is unity or togetherness, equity and equality of citizens are assured. The Indonesian example is a case in point where the home language has been successfully considered as the LOI in education. The Indonesian language was envisaged as serving the identity function and being instrumental in nation-building. Wright (2004: 88) concurs that the Indonesian language has several purposes: national identity, upward social mobility, the language of education and modernisation. In a way, local languages promote fairness as they are a means to peace, harmony and democracy, which are the principles of social justice.

In contrast with the foregoing example, Shizha (2012: 787) argues that the retention of the dominant role of English language in all educational and economic spheres is likely to impact negatively on the development of ILs in Zimbabwe. While every learner may cherish the advantages that come by English as the LOI, the overemphasis of its role in instruction compromises the ILs. The stage at which it is introduced (Grade Three) to learners, places ILs at risk of attrition.

Concerning how the LOI influences social justice in the classroom, Owu-Ewie and Eshun (2015: 72), in their study conducted in Ghana, found that the LOI functions to enable effective learning in the classroom. This is a reality when the mother tongue is the LOI. The Ghanaian study posits, in essence, the idea that local languages should be the LOI if the education sector is to be associated with social justice practices of equity and equality, unity, fairness and democracy. This is because local languages are prerequisites for effective communication which are the recipe for a sound, quality education. Home languages enable learners to carry out their learning activities in reading, writing and oral lessons with ease, unlike in an unfamiliar language (English). Language diversity, therefore, necessitates social justice which is fairness and equality among various cultural groups.

The Asmara Declaration (2000: 130) argued that every African child has a democratic right to enrol at school where he/she uses the mother tongue in learning. Maximum effort should be made to develop heritage languages in the school system. The Asmara Declaration (2000) calls for the total infusion of ILs in education on a par with English. This is because the avoidance of heritage languages to become the LOI has an alienating effect and this negates cultural diversity in the education system. The prolonged utilisation of English as the sole LOI makes the Zimbabwe education system an uneven playing field. Hence, it is against this backdrop this study is undertaken.

In a study carried out in the East, South and Central Africa Region (ESAR), Trudell (2016: vii) established that classroom participation is high, family members get involved in the children's learning and language death is reduced when the mother tongue is the LOI. To a large extent, local languages when used as the LOI can promote fairness and equity in the education system because this avoids cultural imperialism since learners use their home languages to carry out educational tasks. In the process, the growth of the culture is enhanced and cultural identity intensified. Maximum participation is realised because learners master the LOI and family members can take part in their children's education. Whenever children bring homework from school, family members can assist them since they understand the LOI. However, the researcher observed that Trudell's (2016) study findings are contrary to the situation in Chivi District primary schools. Learners are deprived of the opportunity to use mother languages in learning. The reasons are not known, hence, the rationale for embarking on this research.

In accordance with the Asmara declaration (2000), the Harare declaration (1997: 1) argues that the use of heritage languages in schools is highly appreciated as it enables a more natural transition from the home to the school and makes formal education accessible to a larger percentage of the young population. This implies that learning and teaching in one's language is an incentive to the learners and teachers alike. Both feel empowered and recognised. The result is that learners attend school in numbers almost every day. The promotion of a language unfamiliar to the learner acts as a gatekeeper and the bond that exists between the community and the school may be weakened.

Erling et al.'s (2017: 137) study in ESAR on the LOI indicated its negative influence on social justice promotion and concluded that the use of only English in examinations, tertiary learning and textbooks was a major drawback to the enhanced promotion of heritage languages. Development of literature in various subjects for the education system is done mostly in English as the mode of communication. Since language carries a people's culture (Das, 2016: 12, Magwa, 2019: 27-28, Said, 2011: 191), educational literature fails to transmit local culture. Indigenous literature is scarce and culture is diminished. Learners use English textbooks and write examinations which determine their life opportunities in English. Moreover, further/tertiary education is wholly through medium of English.

Masuku and Peresuh (2002: 29) established that Zimbabwe has an advantage in promoting home languages in its primary schools because its home languages are already rooted in the physical environments of the local community. Nevertheless, the challenge is that the school curriculum is currently highly centralised, elite-culture oriented and insensitive to the cultural and linguistic concerns of the subcultures of the various linguistic groups. The Zimbabwe language of education policy espouses English and denigrates the ILs. Therefore, there is no linguistic diversity due to the colonial legacy. Monnier (2010: 19) alludes that cultural imperialism assume the form of an active formal policy or general attitudes as it reinforces cultural hegemony. The Zimbabwe language of education policy is permeated by the colonial legacy. ILs are avoided, giving precedence to English as the only MOI.

The foregoing discussion is in line with this study - a critical investigation of English as the LOI at Grade Three in primary schools in Chivi District. From Grade Three,

learners are supposed to learn in English up to tertiary education. Local languages are the LOI from ECD to Grade Two. However, the researcher has observed that the ECD to Grade Seven syllabi are written in English and the teacher has the task to interpret and translate them into local languages (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Indigenous Languages Syllabus, 2015; Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education: Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education, 2015: 31). Why has English been used to develop the syllabi for local languages? Do all teachers have equal competencies to interpret and translate the content in these syllabi? Why are the ILs, for instance, Shona, Ndebele and Shangani not pertinently mentioned in the primary school syllabi? Instead, they are grouped under the umbrella Indigenous Languages code. These questions are addressed in this study.

In accordance with the above, critical theorist Freire (2005: 5) laments that the world is divided into several societies in which the weak are underrated, silenced and regarded as useless. The fact that local languages have been sidelined in developing the curriculum they champion is evidence that local languages and culture are doomed and have no chance to unfold the curriculum. While English represents high knowledge and culture, local languages are associated with ignorance and incompetency. In line with this, Chimhenga and Chivhanga (2013: 59, citing Bamgbose, 2005: 111) lament that African countries' policies on language are punctuated by declarations without implementation, avoidance, vagueness and fluctuations. The Zimbabwe case study represents the negative influence of the LOI in the education sector. The non-recognition of ILs in the education curriculum is a gross violation of linguistic rights in spite of various conferences hosted and declarations made in Zimbabwe, which have had the theme of recognising African languages in teaching and learning. This has been to no avail.

The role of LOI is central in the contested area of social justice educational practices. Bacha (2011: 1326), in a study carried out in Lebanon, argues that school children in Lebanon are made to believe that English proficiency is a vehicle for a better learning future. The learners have no option in terms of which language to use in teaching and learning. They resort to English simply because it is the only language given the mandate to act as a vehicle for the school curriculum up to tertiary education. This view points to the gross violation of linguistic diversity rights since it champions culture

and identity loss. Said (2011: 191) states that when one loses his/her language, he/she has lost his/her culture. Hence, a person's language is important for maintaining one's culture and identity. The absence of local languages in instruction in primary schools in Chivi District is a cause for concern since this may affect their culture and identity in one way or another.

2.11 SUMMARY

The review of related literature on the LOI indicated that global education practice, Zimbabwe included, is a melting pot of cultures. However, dominant cultures, through their languages, are hegemonic. The MOI is the province of the power elite. Over and above, the education environment is xenocentric and there is evidence of a gross violation of linguistic diversity. Related literature also revealed that the pivotal role granted to English as the LOI from Grade Three to university indicates the inferior positions that ILs play in education. The ILs are only regarded as the LOI in infant grades. There is an imbalance in terms of the time frame in which ILs and English are used as languages of education. Therefore, this current research seeks to explore this gap so that justice can be realised in the education arena.

Locally, studies on ILs and instruction by Gora (2013), Shizha (2012), Gondo and Gondo (2012), Muchenje et al., 2013), among others, indicated that ILs and instruction in education, take a peripheral role. The system promotes subtractive bilingualism (replacement of ILs with English) and subtractive submersion (phasing out of ILs) in the education system. In the process, local cultures are also under graded since language and culture are intertwined. Thus, the related literature implicates that the Zimbabwe education language policy is a contested area. Globally, the LOI has been viewed as playing a major function in the educational achievement of learners. The literature review has indicated that one's language can enhance the understanding of concepts even in the second language. Nevertheless, the fact that ILs have been demonised, avoided and prejudiced has led to their relegation to peripheral roles in the education of their speakers.

Implicitly, the related literature has revealed a big gap between ILs and English as the LOI at Grade Three. Globally, English dominates classrooms; ILs are alienated, undervalued and side-lined yet they possess the largest number of speakers,

especially in Zimbabwe and across Africa. To that end, this study is an endeavour to strike a balance from a micro perspective point of view. Examining the LOI at Grade Three level may contribute to finding lasting solutions for the imbalanced role of ILs and English in the education sector.

The examination of both national and international literature on perceptions and attitudes of learners, teachers, parents and education officers on the use of English as the LOI exposed both positive and negative attitudes towards English as the LOI. The reviewed literature established that English functions positively in the following areas: for job opportunities after school, for further education, for global interactions, for tests and examinations and increased access to academic information. On a negative note, the review of related literature revealed that the use of English as the LOI at primary school level leads to low self-esteem, language attrition, teacher-learner incompetence, monolingualism and it is a threat to one's culture and identity as well as poor participation, slowness in thinking and difficulty in reading and writing.

The chapter also discussed four theories of social justice, namely, the theories of Rawls (1971), Miller (1999), Sturman (1997) and Gale and Densmore (2000). An attempt was made to establish how they relate to classroom activity and how social justice is a reality in the education system.

Finally, attention was given to a discussion of critical theory as the theoretical framework for this study. The relationship between the current study and critical theory was extensively explained.

Chapter 3 will discuss the methodology for this study. Attention will be granted to the research design, methods of data collection and analysis, population and sampling procedures, the geographical location of the study and some ethical considerations as well as the justification for their selection.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the literature review related to the current study. Both national and international research on perceptions and attitudes of learners, teachers, parents and education officers on the use of English as the LOI was discussed. The chapter also gave attention to the benefits of English acquisition in learners' educational achievement, social justice theories and their relationship to English as the LOI in the classroom at Grade Three in primary schools. Chapter two also articulated the characteristics and relevance of the theoretical framework adopted for this study.

This chapter highlights the research design employed in the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District of Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe. The study is guided by the following main research question:

How does the use of English as the language of instruction impede social justice education practices at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools?

The sub-questions derived from the main research question are:

- i.** How do Grade Three learners, teachers, education administrators and parents perceive English as the language of instruction and its implications on fostering social justice practices in Chivi District primary schools?
- ii.** How does English as the language of instruction at Grade Three influence the practice of social justice in Chivi District primary schools?
- iii.** What role does English as the language of instruction play in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners in Chivi District schools when it comes to fostering social justice?

The study hinges on qualitative research methodology to a large extent. Under this chapter, constructivism as philosophical world view will also be discussed. Qualitative research methodology relates to phenomenological research strategy which calls for data generation methods such as semi-structured, open-ended interviews, observations, document analysis and FGIs. Attention is also directed to population, sampling techniques and data collection and analysis procedures. Also, Chapter Three deals with measures undertaken to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of this research and the geographical location of the study. Chapter Three ended with a discussion of the ethical issues relevant to qualitative research.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan and procedure that comprises the steps of broad assumptions, detailed method of data collection and analysis and interpretation (Datts, 2016: 1, Creswell, 2014: 47: Magwa and Magwa, 2015: 19). Thus, research designs are born out of world views and they act as a roadmap to the whole research under study. To a larger extent, research designs guide the researcher to the choice of data collection methods and the approaches to data presentation and analysis.

This study adopted a qualitative research design which embraces the constructivist research paradigm. The qualitative research approach is a way of knowing that assumes that the researchers gather, organise and interpret information usually in words or pictures, using their eyes and ears as filters. It is a way of doing research that often involves in-depth interviews and observations of humans in natural and social settings (Walliman, 2011: 38; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 3). This study adopted a qualitative research design in an attempt to find the answer to the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice at Grade Three in Chivi District. In exploring English as the LOI in primary schools in Chivi District, the researcher embarked on in-depth interaction with twelve (12) learners in FGIs, four (4) teachers, two (2) parents, two (2) heads of schools and two (2) education officers. Multiple data gathering methods like class observations, semi-structured, open-ended interviews and documentary study were employed to enhance research rigour. The multiple data gathering techniques together with multiple senses of sight, hearing, among others, would take place in a natural setting. The participants were contacted in their respective places and lived experiences. El-Gohary (2010: 42) concurs that

the qualitative approach is hinged on words and observations to express reality and it attempts to describe people and research phenomena in natural settings. Therefore, the critical investigation of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District took place using a qualitative research design. This is largely because it calls for the participants to air their views of English as LOI while they were in their natural settings.

Furthermore, it demands that the researcher be neutral and calls for multiple methods of data generation. Whilst other research approaches, namely, quantitative and mixed methods could have been suggested to carry out this research study, a qualitative approach was more suitable. This is because quantitative and mixed methods by nature quantify issues to a larger extent and the results are pre-determined. In contrast, the qualitative approach depends on lived experiences in a naturalistic environment, that is, it seeks to explore phenomena in context or real-world settings and, in general, the qualitative design does not manipulate the problem under investigation (Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 78). In this study, the perceptions of teachers, learners, parents and education officials were explored without manipulation. This is the reason why this study opted for a qualitative research design instead of another research approach, for instance, quantitative or mixed methods.

3.2.1 Principles of Qualitative Research

Chapter one highlighted the qualitative research design, constructivist paradigm and phenomenological research strategy used in this research. This section of the study aims to give a detailed explanation of qualitative research design and its basic tenets adopted to inform this research.

Qualitative research hinges on the constructivist research paradigm. A research paradigm is a philosophical worldview (Mertens, 2015: 7). Qualitative research peculiarly views issues. In this critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice education practices in Chivi District, the constructivist paradigm was adopted as the research paradigm. The constructivist paradigm assumes that knowledge is the product of people or socially constructed (Creswell, 2014: 37). As such, qualitative research provides the opportunity for people to air their views of an issue under investigation based on their experiences. In line with the above sentiment, Ponterotto (2010: 583) alludes that researchers attempt to understand the

worldview of participants through intensely listening to and respecting their voice and their interpretation of life events.

Thus, qualitative research is informed by a philosophical world view that explores lived experiences of the participants. For this study, the lived experiences of Grade Three learners, teachers, school heads, parents and education officers were important to explore social justice issues in the classrooms.

Qualitative research uses phenomenological methodology where multiple data generation methods are used for trustworthiness. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011: 1), phenomenology advocates the study of direct experiences taken at face value and it sees behaviour as determined by the phenomenon of experience rather than by laboratory studies. As a result, phenomenology as methodology includes open-ended interviews, FGIs and document analysis as data collection methods. This is chiefly because they allow the research participants to interact with the researcher directly and issues are discussed openly without inferring. In accordance with the above, Huseyin (2017: 4) and Toptas and Gozel (2018: 22) argue that the phenomenological design focuses on facts we are well aware of but we do not have adequate information about. The use of face-to-face interviews assists the researcher to obtain the details of the phenomenon under study. Moreover, the use of more than one source of data enhances data trustworthiness and credibility.

Qualitative research depends on non-random sampling techniques unlike its counterpart, the quantitative approach, which is informed by random sampling methods. Non-random sampling methods are important because they use small numbers of participants who are easy to deal with. Pizarro (2014: 59) argues that qualitative research is often small-scale and/or micro-level as it focuses on the thick description of a particular phenomenon. This implies that qualitative research is concerned with collecting authentic data from a small number of participants. More information generated from a few participants is preferable over obtaining very little information from a large number of research participants, hence, the use of purposive and convenience sampling techniques in qualitative research. The aforementioned sampling methods enable the researcher to approach research subjects who are informed about the issue under study. For this phenomenological study of the use of English as the LOI in primary schools and its implications for social justice, twelve (12)

primary third graders, four (4) teachers, two (2) heads of schools, two (2) parents and the two (2) education officers were the sources of data because they were information-rich and easily accessible in their respective working areas.

A pilot study is also an integral part of qualitative research. According to Kneebone and Fry (2010: 4), piloting entails a 'dry run' before conducting a series of interviews, for instance, to detect if the interview questions are easy to grasp, if any are ambiguous, and how long the interview will take. The essence of piloting is to ascertain that data collection instruments are relevant for the exercise. This study was conducted at research sites A and B. The pilot study exercise was done at school C. Thus the 'pseudo' data collection at school C was important to this study because all the limitations of the data collection instruments were solved before the actual task of data collection.

In other words, the pilot study functions to dictate the strengths and weaknesses of the data generation instruments. For this study on the use of English as the LOI in primary schools and its implications for social justice, a pilot study was planned to take place at research site school C, which had the same characteristics to those of schools A and B where the actual data collection would be done. This went a long way in assisting the researcher to obtain reliable data since all the obstacles were identified before the actual data collection process.

Qualitative research considers ethical issues also an integral aspect of carrying out research. This is because qualitative research deals with human beings and most critically children under the age of eighteen (18). Their assent should be considered seriously. Ponterotto (2010: 587) asserts that researchers should consider ethical issues at every stage of the research process. This is important because research work is not meant to harm anybody in any way. Participants' privacy, freedom to take part or withdraw and the right to be informed, among others, should be assured.

It is also important to highlight that qualitative research envisages emergent themes and categories. The emergent themes and categories are derived from the verbatim data transcriptions from interviews and other data sources, for example, document study and observation. Huseyin (2017: 5) notes that data is organised according to

themes generated from research questions or can be arranged in line with questions or dimensions used in the interview and observation process.

Identifying themes and categories from what is obtained in the process of data collection is imperative in qualitative research because it gives the credit that theories emerge during and after the research process. The findings or results of qualitative research are not pre-determined. It is what the research participants inform the researcher which emerge as themes and theories for the research.

For this critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice, themes, categories and theories emerged as the researcher and participants interacted with each other. In other words, qualitative research is dialogical. The researcher and the participants collaborate and engage one another. In the process, they come up with relevant themes and theories for the issue under investigation.

The above qualitative research characteristics are not exhaustive. However, they are meant to highlight the major features of this type of research design and its place in research of this nature. The next section is going to discuss some of the above characteristics of qualitative research in an endeavour to give the rationale for using qualitative research in this research.

3.2.2 Rationale for Choosing Qualitative Research Approach

There are various reasons for adopting qualitative research in this study. The title of this study is 'The use of English as the LOI and its implication for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation'. The research can be categorised as social research which sought to explore the perceptions of learners, teachers, parents and education officers on how English as the LOI promotes or impedes social justice in the education system at Grade Three level. To that end, this study adopted a phenomenological research methodology. Phenomenology is a qualitative research strategy which encourages the researcher to interact with the research participants in their natural settings. In other words, phenomenology demands researchers to deal with the lived experiences of participants. Huseyin (2017: 4) argues that in phenomenology, research data sources are individuals or groups experiencing the fact the research focuses on and experiencing or reflecting

this fact. Therefore, qualitative research was relevant for this study because individual learners, teachers, parents and education officers were the sources of data. Of importance to note is that the above-mentioned research participants used English as the LOI at one stage or another. Learners, teachers, parents and education officers are stakeholders in the education system at the primary school level. Therefore, the researcher came face-to-face with the participants and got first-hand information as to how the use of English as the LOI promoted and/or impeded social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools.

The use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District was intended to deal with small numbers of participants. For instance, two (2) FGLs of six (6) learners each participated in the study, four (4) face-to-face open interviews were held with teachers, two (2) face-to-face interviews with school heads and another two (2) face-to-face interview with parents and the final two (2) face-to-face interviews with education officers. Thus, an approximate number of twenty-two (22) participants were dealt with. For the above reasons, the qualitative research design was suitable for this study because it deals with small numbers to acquire more data for the research. Pizarro (2014: 89) alludes that qualitative research is often small-scale and micro-level as it focuses on the thick description of a particular phenomenon, culture, social reality, and experience. In other words, this research study involved sampling techniques that are non-random, for instance, purposive and convenience, to locate information-rich sources of data. Hence non-random sampling techniques mentioned above affiliate to qualitative research. Thus, qualitative research was a relevant approach to the current study.

The critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice at primary school level in Chivi District involved minors under the age of eighteen (18), notably the third graders. The young learners cannot decide for themselves to participate in research. Their parents and guardians needed to be notified in writing. The young learners also needed to be informed. Thus consent of the parent or guardian and the minor's assent were integral in this study. This relates to ethical considerations, such as the right to be informed and to privacy. Ponterotto (2010: 587) argues that ethical issues should be observed throughout the research process. In this study the third graders in Chivi District schools needed to be protected and respected. Their protection had to be guaranteed before the research process.

Another key feature of this research design are interviews. Both semi-structured open-ended and FGIs were used to generate data. For their part, semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted with teachers, school heads, parents and the education officers. FGIs involved the primary school third graders. Arslangilay (2018: 588) asserts that interviews provide the possibility to investigate every aspect with flexibility and by using probes when necessary.

Hence semi-structured, open-ended interviews lead to data saturation, a point where every aspect of the phenomena under investigation has been scrutinised and exhausted. The critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District is deeply immersed in qualitative research design because qualitative research depends on semi-structured, open-ended interviews and FGI's for data generation. Public Health Support Team (PHAST) (2020: n.p.) concurs that qualitative methods are used precisely because of their ability to investigate and explain complex and diverse social phenomena, and therefore a report or presentation which focuses only on one element of findings will be misleading. In line with the above, qualitative research design was relevant for this study because it calls for multiple data collection methods. Several data sources are interviewed to either complement or refute issues regarding the phenomenon under study.

Based on the arguments above, qualitative research was the most suitable approach to the current study because in qualitative methodology the pilot study is an integral aspect. Qualitative researchers need to test their data generation instruments, for example, interview guides, observation checklists and document analysis checklists, before the actual data generation process. This is important for producing trustworthy and credible data.

In line with the issue of trustworthiness and credibility of the study discussed above, the current study also embraced the triangulation principle of qualitative research. Farmer, Robinson, Elliot and Eyles (2006: 377) define triangulation as a methodological approach that contributes to the validity of research results when multiple methods, sources, theories and investigations are used. Triangulation, therefore, is an endeavour to compare results from different sources of data to embrace conformability or trustworthiness of the data. In this study, various data generation methods, for instance, interviews, document analysis and observations

were used. Also, the research involved various sources of data, for example, learners, teachers, parents and education officers.

Apart from the above, the study was informed by two critical theories, namely, Martin Carnoy's 1975 theory of education as cultural imperialism and Pierre Bourdieu's 1977 theory of education as cultural reproduction. Also, as part of triangulation, the study was conducted at two research sites, namely, school A and B. Basing on the above discussion, qualitative research was an appropriate research design for this study because a successful qualitative researcher needs to employ triangulation principles in his/her research process to come up with authentic data for the research. Cailee, Weich, Bradly, Eppelheimer, Kenneth and Nottingham (2017: 667) concur that data triangulation occurs through member checking and multiple types of research to ensure accuracy during data analysis. Hence, triangulation is an important qualitative research feature that could not be ignored in this current study.

The next section focuses on the methodology of this study.

3.3 METHODOLOGY

3.3.1 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm is a shared world view that communicates the beliefs and values in a discipline and it directs how problems are solved (Chilisa and Kawulich, 2015: 1, Mertens, 2012: 7). A paradigm, therefore, denotes a master plan or roadmap to look at a problem to find the answer to the problem. A paradigm gives guidance and a general layout of the depth of the problem and procedures to be followed to reach the answer to the problem.

This study adopted the constructivist paradigm. Constructivism assumes that reality is socially constructed. That is, there is no single, observable reality. Rather, there are multiple realities or interpretations of a single event (Walliman, 2011: 38, El-Gohary, 2010: 38, Kothari, 2004: 33; Mertens, 2015: 16; Creswell, 2009: 10). In line with the above, the constructivist paradigm is suitable for this study. This is a worldview that affiliates to the subjective creation of meanings. In other words, what counts as truth is dependent on one's perception and is relative. The critical investigation of English

as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi district is embedded in a constructivist research paradigm because the research participants, in this case, Grade Three learners, parents, educational officials and teachers were interviewed so that they air could their perceptions of English as the LOI at Grade Three level, where a multiple of ILs namely Shona, Ndebele and Shangani exist. Elaborating on constructivism, Creswell (2014: 37) argues that the research depends on the participants' perceptions of the phenomenon under investigation. The use of English as the LOI is the situation under study in this research and the research findings were reached after a thorough open discussion among research participants. As such, epistemologically, what counts as knowledge in the findings of this study is largely subjective. The findings in this study of English as the LOI in Chivi District primary schools are not pre-determined.

3.3.2 Basic Tenets of Constructivist Worldview

The constructivist paradigm includes various principles that are used to describe its nature and horizon in research. In this study, only those characteristics of constructivism that apply to this research will be discussed. First, the constructivist school of thought posits that knowledge is socially constructed (McLeod, 2019: 24). In other words, in constructivism, new knowledge is obtained through interaction with other social beings. People need to collaborate to create new information to solve problems in their everyday lives. For this study, the researcher engaged learners in FGIs, where they collaboratively discussed their experiences in using English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District. The interaction among learners in FGIs and their interaction with the researcher enhanced collaboration and new ideas were exposed. Olusegun (2015: 68) asserts that one of the aims of the constructivist school of thought is to embed social learning in social experience. The social experience is realised through interaction with others.

In constructivism, an individual research participant is distinctive, that is, he/she possesses his/her point of view based on his/her existing knowledge and past life experience (Fox, 2001: 30). A critical investigation of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District used face-to-face semi-structured interviews. This data generation method is in line with the foregoing constructivist tenets because it grants the research participant as an individual the opportunity to contribute his/her lived

experience in connection with the phenomenon under study. For instance, four (4) teachers, two (2) heads, two (2) education officers and two (2) parents were interviewed face-to-face narrating their practical experiences in using English as the LOI at Grade Three level in the primary schools. The constructivist paradigm encourages ownership and voice in the learning process (Olusegun, 2015: 68). The individual participant's voice is of utmost importance in this respect.

According to the constructivist paradigm, knowledge is a social construction, rather than a discovery (McLeod, 2019: 25). The above principle articulates subjective meaning in research. After going through the research processes, the researcher and the research participants reach insights which point to various meanings as aligned to their distinctive lived experiences. People create knowledge and attach meaning from their experiences (Olusegun, 2015: 66). For this study, research participants shared their lived experiences of using English as the LOI with the researcher through semi-structured and FGI's, open observations and document analysis. This was an active process rather than a passive one, where divergent views and trends emerged. In the end, new knowledge was created which could be interpreted differently by different participants.

The constructivist paradigm encourages the use of multiple data collection strategies (Mertens, 2015: 17; Olusegun, 2015: 68). The adoption of multiple data collection methods is important because it enhances rigour in research. The fact that four data generation methods, namely, face-to-face interviews, FGIs, observations and documentary study were used qualifies this study to be informed by the constructivist school of thought.

Constructivism also defines the role of the researcher as that of interpreting meanings research participants have about their lived experiences (Creswell, 2014: 37). In this study, the researcher assumed the position of a moderator during FGIs. The 12 learners who participated in FGIs were the custodians of the discussion. Moreover, in face-to-face interviews, open-ended questions were asked. This enhanced the participants' freedom to discuss their life experiences about the use of English as the LOI in primary schools. In the process, the researcher attached meaning to the participants' actions and narrations of their lived experiences.

The epistemological characteristic of a constructivist research paradigm also points to how ontology (truth) about the situation is discovered. Through epistemology, a paradigm gives direction to the researcher on how to gather data that may assist to explore the topic under study. Chilisa and Kawulich (2015: 3) postulate that epistemology helps to define knowledge that forms a researcher's perception of a research topic, how he/she institutes research procedures, processes and data generation methods. Thus, constructivist research paradigm data generation methods, for instance, semi-structured interviews, observations as well as documentary study, are incorporated in this research. This is because they provide a fertile ground for participants to interact and relate their lived experiences. The lived experiences give subjective truth about the matter under study. In this research, lived experiences on using English as the LOI at Grade Three of teachers, Grade Three learners, education officers and parents were explored. The exploration of English as the LOI phenomenon brought to the fore knowledge and truth about the existence of social justice in education practice.

Apart from the social construction of knowledge (ontology), epistemological (knowledge subjectivity) and axiological (ethical considerations) characteristics are also important aspects of this research paradigm. Chilisa and Kawulich (2015: 11) assert that the researcher has to gain participants' confidence for their maximum participation in research. Thus, the researcher needs to build trust and ensure anonymity, protection, consent and privacy of research participants. The researcher should not force him/herself onto research participants. They need to be consulted fully before the study. Permission should be sought first before entering into the institutions of learning.

In this study, the researcher gained access in two (2) rural primary schools in Chivi District. Therefore, permission to enter and carry out the research in these schools was essential. Furthermore, the critical investigation of English as the LOI in primary schools research included twelve (12) learners, two (2) parents, two (2) education officers, two (2) heads and four (4) teachers. Since the study dealt with human beings, it was necessary that due respect should be given them. To ascertain respect, ethical issues were observed. Entry into schools was only done after the researcher had been granted ethical clearance by the UNISA Ethical committee. The

nature and form of the aforesaid ethical issues will be extensively dealt with in Subsection 3.11.

3.3.3 Phenomenology

This research adopts phenomenology as research strategy. Phenomenology is a theory that deals with lived experiences of people who are or were involved in a situation under investigation (Groenewald, 2004: 4; Creswell, 2014: 42). This theory is associated with Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) and his student, Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) who claimed that the objective of phenomenology is to concentrate on the concrete, a claim they sloganeered as 'back to the things themselves' or 'being there' (Groenewald, 2004: 4). In other words, the phenomenological research strategy is hinged on the research participants' lived experiences in their natural settings. The researcher should endeavour to interact with the participants in their social and cultural environments. This study explored English as the LOI and its implications for social justice at Grade Three level. The views of various research participants were gathered by using various data collection methods. Chief among them were semi-structured, open-ended interviews, focus group discussion, observations and documentary study. The phenomenological study was therefore an appropriate research methodology to engage research participants so that they could provide credible information. This is because the phenomenological research strategy depends on the lived experiences of the participants. Phenomenology capitalises on how the research participants give meaning to their line of thinking instead of pre-empting the research findings. Phenomenology takes place in the undisturbed natural settings of the research participants' environment (Walliman, 2011: 12). Taking into consideration the participants' lived experiences in their natural environment, the researcher interacted with them flexibly and in person and heard their views on using English as the LOI at Grade Three.

Furthermore, phenomenology as research strategy was employed to champion this research study because it embraces qualitative research data generation methods that call for inductive data analysis approaches, multi-methods and subjective research findings. Following the above, Lester (1999: 1) argues that the goal of the phenomenological research strategy is to inform the specific, to identify phenomena in a situation and humanity; this cascades into gathering deep information and

perceptions through inductive, qualitative methods like interviews, discussion and participatory observation while considering perceptions of the research participants. Therefore, phenomenology as research strategy enabled the participants to air their views on using English as the LOI by way of interviews and discussions which are key data collection methods in qualitative research.

Also, qualitative methods provide flexibility to the research stakeholders through open-ended interviews and focus group discussions. Both the enquirer and the participants have the opportunity to elaborate on their views. Further probing of participants will lead to data saturation. In this study this led to the credibility of the research under study since divergent views were gathered and followed as well as analysed step by step to such a point of saturation where valid data were generated. This was made possible by the engagement of several data collection methods.

Another major characteristic of phenomenological research is the use of various sources and techniques in the data generation (Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 71). Hence this research adopted a phenomenological research methodology since it called for research participants' lived experiences in using English as the LOI at Grade Three. Phenomenological research provided an opportunity to employ varied methods of data generation in which crystallisation and dependable, credible and trustworthy principles of research were assured.

Another basic tenet of a phenomenological research design relevant for this study is that it refutes the concept of deductive research. Expressed differently, it does not promote pre-determined research findings (Lester, 1999: 4; Moustakas, 1994: 3). This is a research strategy which seeks solutions to the problem under study through interaction with the participants in their everyday lives and the findings are not obvious and limited but divergent views are gathered. A critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools engaged Grade Three learners, teachers, heads, parents and education officers to gather their divergent views. Thus, phenomenology was a relevant research strategy for this study.

Phenomenological research strategy encourages the use of research methods that are flexible (Moustakas, 1994: 4). For this study, various methods of collecting data, for instance, semi-structured, open-ended interviews and FGIs, observation and

document analysis were used to collect data. These qualitative data methods allowed the researcher to interact with the participants in their natural environments.

Phenomenologists also assert that individuals should be explored because they possess distinctive traits in societies they live (Moustakas, 1994: 3). This phenomenological tenet points to the need for a relevant sampling procedure in research. A correct and relevant selection of participant criteria enhance the trustworthiness of a particular study. This study was informed by a qualitative research design. The purposive sampling technique was used to select both the research participants and research sites. This was because information richness and convenience of research participants were of paramount importance. Lester (1999: 4) asserts that the phenomenological approach is good at bringing deep issues to the surface and making voices heard, hence, the need to employ purposive sampling in this research.

Having outlined the basic tenets of phenomenology and its relevance for this study above, the next section of the research focuses on the research methods.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODS

3.4.1 Data Collection and Instruments

The research methods for this study emanate from the constructivist research paradigm. Datts (2016: 3) argues that deciding on a methodology depends on the worldview that informs the study. As such, the constructivist paradigm embraces qualitative data generation methods. A research method is a framework or plan for a study used to generate and analyse the data. It is a blueprint guiding the research process (Pandey and Pandey, 2015: 18; Kothari, 2004: 32; Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 70). To a larger extent, this section of the research focuses on focus group interviews, semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis and participant observations as data gathering methods. The above qualitative data generation methods go hand in hand with the constructivist paradigm, qualitative research design and phenomenological research strategy as they encourage subjectivity and flexibility in generating data. Also, they require the researcher to carry out the research inductively. Kothari (2004: 8) defines a research method as an approach to provide the answer to

the research problem. Thus, the research method envisages methods and procedures to carry out the research study. A variety of methods will be discussed in this phenomenological based research.

3.4.2 Focus Group Interviews

A focus group interview is an organised discussion between six (6) to eight (8) people, on a particular topic, in an environment where they are allowed to debate with each other (Chitsaka, 2014: 11; Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 90; Walliman, 2011: 100; Carey, 2015: 273). The critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District focused on two (2) primary schools. The two schools are rural-based and are located in a multilingual community where English (the LOI) is a foreign language. The introduction of English as the LOI in such an environment is a fertile ground to explore how English as the LOI influences social justice education practices. Participants were purposively sampled (Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 90). This is because they were information-rich since they are using English as the LOI at Grade Three. Their experience was vital in exploring the influence of English in fostering social justice in Chivi District primary schools. Permission from the school authorities was sought to use separate rooms away from disturbances and the participants were organised in a horseshoe formation sitting arrangement where the researcher was part of the formation. This was important to give participants the full mandate of the discussion.

However, FGI might not be representative of all Grade Three learners and the researcher (moderator) had to guard against more talkative participants as these would dominate the discussion (Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 91). The researcher intended to interject and interrogate every member of the FGI to minimise dominance during debate sessions. The FGIs were held at respective schools with twelve (12) Grade Three learners, whose age range was 8-10 years. The FGIs took place at the participants' convenience. The interviews were scheduled to take 45 minutes long. This, therefore, means that two FGIs were held with learners, one from each research site. Each of the two FGIs consisted of six (6) learners. The focus was on exploring the degree to which English promotes and/or impedes fairness in terms of language diversity in schools in Chivi District. Of importance in FGI is that participants debate

on a given research topic under the guidance of the moderator, who is usually the researcher.

3.4.2.1 Justification for Using FGIs in this Study

FGIs were relevant for this study because they generated data in a short space of time and involve low costs (Cohen et al., 2011: 346). This is because the interviews were conducted with a group of participants under one roof and at the same time, using the equipment available. Therefore, the time and costs needed to conduct the research were less.

The use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in a primary school in Chivi District aimed to explore how learners, teachers, parents and education officers perceive the use of English at Grade Three. FGIs were applied to the learners in groups of six (6) learners in each of the research sites. Mertens (2015: 382) argues that FGIs are suitable when the researcher is interested in participants' perceptions of a problem under study. Since this study explored the perspectives of learners as well as teachers, parents and education officers, FGIs were suitable data collection technique for the current study. Qualitative research involves the saturation principle whereby the phenomenon under study is analysed and scrutinised to a point where no further information is emerging (Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 92). For the above reason, FGIs were suitable for lively debates which would produce important findings for the study (Barbour, 2013: 132). The critical investigation on English as the LOI and its implications to social justice in primary schools in Chivi District engaged two FGIs, one at each research site with third graders. In these FGIs, the learners discussed on issues to do with the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three. Learners were given ample time to explore the topic while the researcher was moderating the sessions.

3.4.3 Face-to-Face Interviews

This study used semi-structured, open-ended interviews as a data generation method. An interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer probes the participants to collect data to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, options and behaviours of the participants (Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 87; Chitsaka, 2014: 11; De Vos, 2003: 269). Therefore, the interview refers to face-to-face interaction between the enquirer and

the research participants. In an interview, there is provision for dialogue. It is dialogical. There is flexibility between both parties of the research study. The dialogue necessitates subjectivity in research findings. In exploring English as the LOI and its implications for social justice at Grade Three, there was a need to respect the divergent views of the various research participants of the study: four (4) teachers, two (2) parents, two (2) heads of schools, and two (2) education officers. The phenomenological approach necessitates the inclusion of qualitative data generation methods, for instance, semi-structured, open-ended interviews. The lived experiences of the teachers, learners, parents and education officials provided information about the nature of reality and knowledge of English dominance in teaching and learning among Grade Three learners in Chivi District. Semi-structured open-ended interviews, therefore, were instrumental in exploring the lived experiences of the research participants.

Data generation through interviews may take various forms. The structured interview entails standardised questions asked by the inquirer using an interview guide where the answers are in a closed format. The unstructured interview provides a liberating format usually based on an interview schedule. However, the format remains the prerogative of the interviewer who allows the interview to proceed freely to obtain insights into perceptions of the participants. The questions usually call for inductive responses. Interviews may be organised in a semi-structured, open-ended interview form, entailing open-ended questions that call for inductive responses that contain structured and unstructured sections with standardised and open-ended type questions (Walliman, 2011: 99). The critical investigation of English as the LOI in primary schools holistically adopted the semi-structured open-ended interview because it allowed for open-type questions. The open-type questions are in tandem with the constructivist paradigm which characterises flexibility and subjectivity. The aforementioned constructivist paradigm is fertile ground for an inductive research study, which allows for divergent views from the research participants. Hence, various themes and sub-themes emerge as the research study unfolding, pending a generalised theory or world view of the phenomenon that provides opportunities for further studies that will pursue each distinctive view.

In addition to their flexibility and subjective nature, interviews were relevant for this study because they applied to various participants and situations and were more likely

to provide credible and dependable findings. Face-to-face interviews can be conducted under varied situations, for instance, in homes, at work, outdoors, while travelling and in groups (Walliman, 2011: 100; Lichtman, 2006: 46). A critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice at Grade Three included teachers, parents, learners and educational officials as research participants. These participants were varied and they were located in different places. For their part, parents were found in homes, while teachers and the learners were located at workplaces. Furthermore, the above research participants were interacted with as single individuals. Hence, the flexibility in terms of interview venues enhanced the trustworthiness of the data generated through the interview method.

3.4.3.1 Justification for Using Face-to-Face Interviews

In this critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, face-to-face semi-structured, open-ended interviews were the main source of generating data. This was largely because semi-structured, open-ended interviews provided the opportunity for an intense exchange of ideas between the researcher and the participants (Barbour, 2013: 128). Since the current study was phenomenological, it called for dealing with the participants in their natural settings. Therefore, the use of semi-structured interviews enhanced dialogue on the issue under study between the researcher and the participants.

Interviews were functional in this study because they enabled the researcher to solicit information through non-verbal cues. Not all research participants were articulate. Some used gestures and other various non-verbal actions to emphasise a point. The body language assisted the researcher to infer the meanings as related to the phenomenon under investigation. In that way face-to-face interviews were significant in soliciting authentic data which could not be obtained from other data generation sources used in this study.

Moreover, the semi-structured open-ended interview formed an integral aspect of this qualitative research because it enabled the researcher to consider the research participants as key components of the study. The data depended on the research participants. In the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, data was generated from Grade Three

learners, teachers, parents and the education officers. Individual interviews with participants provided data for this qualitative study. The participants provided the researcher with information and the researcher used the interview guide to ask questions. For this reason, the interviews were suitable data generation methods for the current study.

Apart from face-to-face interviews, the current study also used FGIs to generate data. This is discussed in the next section of this research.

3.4.4 Interview Protocol Used in the Study

Preliminary procedures leading to the actual data collection process denote that the researcher introduces himself/herself to the participants and authorities at the research sites. For this study, the researcher sought permission from the school heads at research site A and B to meet the potential research participants who included primary third graders, teachers and parents. After acquiring permission, the enquirer introduced himself, that is, his full name and surname, profession and any other detail about himself. The introductions were necessary for gaining confidence from the school authority and would be research participants.

Moreover, before data collection, the researcher outlined the purpose, significance and delimitation of the current study. This step was important in that it would open the minds of the participants with regards to the phenomenon under study. This would also give the participants the chance to decide to participate or not. In other words, the stage answers the rhetoric question; does this exercise matter to this institution and the education fraternity in general?

Furthermore, preliminary sessions to the data collection process demand that ethical issues are communicated to the aspiring participants. It is important to confirm participants' confidentiality, privacy and informed consent (Magwa and Magwa, 2015: 107). The critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District includes primary school third graders as participants. The research, therefore, sought for minors' assent before they were engaged in research. For their part, adult participants were asked for their consent and for their children to take part in the research. Having introduced himself, he

outlined the purpose of the research and explained ethical issues to be applied, the researcher engaged aspiring research participants in the signing of the assent and consent forms. Similar to privacy was the need to inform the participants that their real names would not be used. Pseudonyms would be used.

The other aspect to be considered was the contact details of the researcher. It is crucial to ending the preliminary sessions by giving the physical address and contact numbers so that during the period between dismissal and the actual day of the interviews, participants may have issues to be clarified. Moreover, some participants may want to withdraw or else to shift the day, time and place of the interview. Therefore, contact details of the researcher were given to reduce the chances of missing some participants or enhance participants' confidence.

Last but not least, before the data collection process, the researcher intended to prepare a thorough interview guide. The interview guide was related to the research questions outlined in Chapter One and the reviewed literature in Chapter Two of this study. In other words, the interview guide consisted of questions developed from the research questions to obtain answers which would either complement or refute what has been already researched by other people. The most important thing is that interview guides for both semi-structured and FGI's would be inductive. McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 346) advocate for the frame and structure in interviewing to keep in the focus of the phenomenon under study. The researcher needs to be careful not to formulate closed-ended questions. Rosenthal (2016: 510) hints that given qualitative design's characteristic of being more subjective and fluid than quantitative design, it is understandable for ordinary inquirers to think that in-depth interview and focus group questions need not be carefully designed. This means when conducting interviews and focus group discussions in generating qualitative research data, there is a need for flexibility. The researcher should not aspire for objective questions that give predetermined responses. The questions should be just guidelines to the intended goals. The questions should give room for elaborations and for the participants to think outside the box. The interview guides' effectiveness was pre-tested in a piloting exercise that was carried out at school C.

3.4.5 Document Analysis

Documents are the records kept and written by actual participants or eyewitnesses of an event which include primary and secondary sources of data (Walliman, 2011: 46; Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 84). Primary documents like pupils' exercise books, school reports, minute books, schemes of work, plans of work, progress record books, Education Acts and the attendance registers are to be analysed. Examination of the aforementioned classroom documents is imperative in reflecting the extent to which linguistic diversity is observed and the quest for social justice in the education arena is practised.

Apart from primary data sources, secondary data sources were explored. For instance, published textbooks for both English and ILs in the selected schools were analysed. A thorough analysis of the teaching and learning resources in the form of textbooks reveals the existence of linguistic diversity in Chivi District primary schools. Textbooks in English and ILs, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele, were analysed. The aforesaid ILs are the ones which are largely spoken in the area of study. The documents to be analysed are intended to inform the inquirer on the degree of fairness in the school system in Chivi District in terms of language usage.

The researcher has observed that at the primary school level, it appears that only Shona learning area documents were prepared in IL. The other nine or more learning areas were prepared and recorded in English. Chimhenga and Chivhanga (2013: 61) argue that in Zimbabwe there is an unbalanced bicultural and bilingual situation in which the H or high-status language is the official language, while the ILs are of L or low-status languages. This means that local languages such as Shona, Shangani and Ndebele are denigrated in Zimbabwean primary schools. A thorough study of learners' performances in the two languages, namely, English and Shona, was done to investigate whether it is fair to use English as the LOI at Grade Three. Both written and oral lessons will be examined to that effect. The fact that the majority of the teachers' documents are prepared in English raises a lot of questions to the researcher. Document analysis was ideal for the researcher because there was no personal conduct with the research participant. It enhanced the opportunity for generating trustworthy data since there was the absence of confidentiality on the part of the document owner.

The table below is a summary of types of documents studied and their relevance in the research study.

Table 3.1: A Summary of Documents to be Analysed

Type of document	Relevance in the study
Progress Record Book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to compare learners' performances in English and other subjects
Attendance Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to assist the researcher to see absenteeism and dropout trends. To ascertain through FGLs and semi-structured, open-ended interviews whether English is the cause for dropouts and absenteeism. An analysis of dropout and absenteeism trends will inform the researcher on the role of English as the medium of instruction in influencing school phobia. The researcher feels that the attendance register is a rich source for revealing dropouts and absenteeism trends in schools.
Scheme of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This classroom record functions to break down syllabi topics into teachable units for every subject in the school curriculum. Therefore, a study of this classroom document will assist the researcher to identify indigenous languages offered at grade 3 in comparison with other subjects. Furthermore, the researcher will be able to see languages dominantly used in interpreting and in preparing the schemes of work for the various subjects in the grade 3 school curriculum.

Plan of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To identify the number of lessons taught per week and also identify several lessons delivered in English and those delivered in indigenous languages. To see the extent or degree of fairness in language diversity.
Minute book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To assist the researcher to identify the dominant language in school business since the record is used to keep information from staff general meetings, staff development workshops and report backs from heads' meetings, lesson demonstrations and heads' lesson observations about English language and Indigenous languages. An exploration of the above parameters will inform the researcher on which languages are dominant in teaching and learning.
School reports for learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To compare learners' performance in English and indigenous languages and other school subjects. To identify the dominant language(s) used by the class teachers, deputy heads and the heads of schools in commenting learners' performances.
Exercise books and textbooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To find out the common languages used to communicate subject content in both written work and literature codification
<p>Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987</p> <p>Education Amendment Bill, 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To explore the nature of the primary school curriculum and the LOI/MOI recommended teaching the curriculum - Find out similarities and differences between the 1987 Act and the 2019 proposed bill about education language in the school curriculum at the primary school level

The researcher requested the documents from the school head of the schools after permission from the relevant authorities, for example, the District, Regional and National Education Officers have been sought.

3.4.5.1 Justification for Using Document Analysis

Several documents are used in the classroom by teachers at the primary school level. Among these are schemes and plans of work, progress record books, attendance registers and the remedial and extension records. In the classroom records mentioned above, teachers use language(s) to record information for lesson delivery. To that end, an analysis of the above classroom records sheds important light on this current study's core research question which reads, 'How does English as the LOI reflect social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools?' Document analysis explored the use of English and ILs in the various classroom documents. Document analysis revealed how the use of English as the LOI at primary school level in Chivi District reflects social justice practices in the classroom. For these reasons, it was imperative to engage documentary study.

The documentary study was also useful to this current study because it does not disturb both the teacher and the learners (Mertens, 2015: 363). This is because the researcher simply requested for the classroom records and work through them away from the classroom activity. On the other hand, the documentary study does not waste the researcher's, the teacher's and the learners' time. The approach serves time for both the researcher and the participants.

Document analysis was also a suitable method for collecting data in this study because the language and exact words of the participants are obtained (Creswell, 2014: 241). Not only the language competency is revealed, but it also assists the enquirer to see the effectiveness of English as the LOI in learners' academic achievements. Classroom records like the Progress Record Book, children's exercise books and the report books provide the best information. Furthermore, evaluation of the Education Act, the document which represents education language policy in Zimbabwe, is vital to find out how the LOI/MOI issue is championing social justice education at Grade Three in selected Chivi District primary schools.

The current study also employs document analysis because it is an unobtrusive source of data (Creswell, 2014: 363). The researcher can scrutinise any part of the documents freely and record the relevant information from the documents. The information from the documents is useful to the researcher because it serves to authenticate the data as the researcher will be in a position to see how the codified data from the classroom records are in line with other data generation methods.

3.4.6 Observation

Observation implies the collection of information by way of the investigator's observation, without viewing the participants (Nieuwenhui, 2015: 83; Kothari, 2004: 17). The critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice at Grade Three employed observation because it provides the opportunity for the inquirer to use various senses in gathering data, for instance, the senses of sight, hearing, among others. In addition to that, various situations were observed, for example, wall charts, chalkboard work and verbal communication between learners and teachers and among learners. Observation method was administered to both the teachers and the learners at both research sites. Each of the four (4) teachers was observed twice. First observation was done during lesson delivery from 0800 hours in the morning and the second observation was conducted after lunch from 1400 hours during co-curricular activities. Thus eight (8) observations sessions were done for the teachers altogether. The above translates to four observation sessions for each research site. Learners were observed from the assembly in the morning around 0800 in the morning, during lesson delivery and after lunch hour from 1400 hours up to dismissal time. From 1400 hours, they would be involved in sporting activities and general work with minimal supervision from their teachers. Lesson delivery sessions were conducted in their respective classroom and co-curricular activities took place at sports grounds for sporting activities and around the school grounds for general work. The research had free interaction with the learners. Nieuwenhuis (2015: 84) argues that before using observation as a data generation technique, one should define the goal and focus of the observation and should also know exactly what he/she wants to observe. For this critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice, wall charts, chalkboard work, lesson delivery, one to one communication interactions of learners and between teachers and learners are observed. The net idea is to explore the dominant language of communication.

Observation technique assumes different forms notably complete observer, observer as a participant, participant as an observer and complete participant (Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 84). A complete observer looks at the phenomenon from a distance. Observer as a participant entails getting into the situation and sticks to one's role uninvolved in the dynamics of the setting. Also, participant as observer entails that the researcher gets involved and immersed to get the news for the participants (Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 84). However, participant the inquirer gets involved in the situation and hides his/her identity. The participants do not know that they are being observed. For the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice at Grade Three in Chivi District, participant as an observer is adopted. This is largely because it allows the researcher to take part in the process and get the emic perceptions of the research participants on the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three. This allows the researcher to record the behaviour of participants as it occurs.

Also, observation method creates opportunities for identifying unanticipated outcomes since the researchers are directly in contact with the participants. For instance, the researcher, upon getting into the classroom, can study some charts, the classroom records both for the teacher and for the learners, the chalkboard and even the assembly proceedings. Through a close look at the aforementioned items, the researcher picks the dominant language used in all the aforesaid items at Grade Three. Nhongo (2015: 12) posits that most of Zimbabwe's languages are at risk of extinction. Similarly, Mashangwa (2017: 6) opines that if young children are only taught in English they will fall behind in academic subjects. Thus, the extinction of ILs and poor academic achievements due to the use of English is a testimony that social justice is mythically perceived in Chivi District primary schools. Hence, observation assists the enquirer to practically observe learners and teachers carrying out their educational discourses in English. This will empower the researcher to critically explore the influence of English in promoting social justice education practices in the District schools. Moreover, participant as observer informed this research because it immerses into some ethical issues, for instance, informed consent, respect and the right to privacy, among others. Consideration of some ethical issues enhances data credibility and dependability.

The tables below summarise observation schedules for teachers and learners.

Observation schedule for the teachers

Timeline:

The observation process took about 1 working day.

Table 3.2: Observation Focal Areas for Teachers

Focus area	Mode of communication
Wallcharts	
Chalkboard	
Lesson delivery	
Co-curricular activities	
Assembly proceedings	

Observation table for learners

Timeline

The observation process took about 1 working day.

Table 3.3: Observation Focal Areas for Learners

Focus area	Mode of communication
Teacher-pupil interaction during lessons	
Pupil-pupil interaction during lessons	
Pupil-pupil interaction during break, lunch and co-curricular activities	
Assembly proceedings	

3.4.6.1 Justification for Using Observation

The current study is entitled, 'The use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation.' A close look at the research title reveals its phenomenological traits of exploring an issue from the point of view of the participants' daily lives. For that reason, the current study

employs observation because the inquirer has the opportunity to collect information from the participants in their natural settings (Cohen et al., 2011: 456, Mertens, 2015: 382). Data generated from the participants' lived experiences is credible since it is first-hand information. Hence observation enhances the opportunity of collecting credible data for this research.

Furthermore, the observation method of data generation was suitable for the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice because it enables the enquirer to record non-verbal behaviours. This is because it is common for people to display some mannerisms. Some of these mannerisms assist researchers to obtain meaningful information for the phenomenon under investigation.

In a nutshell, this section of the study expounded the rationale for choosing certain data generation methods in this qualitative study. The next section discusses criteria for the selection of data.

3.4.7 Criteria for Selection of Data

This section is an endeavour to discuss what takes place before the collection of data. It is a stage where all preliminary work is done to define how data collection is going to take place. The stage involves data collection instruments, data sources, sampling techniques, delimitation of the study and alignment to the research questions and the reviewed literature. In a nutshell, the criteria for the selection of data communicate the piloting principle of a qualitative study.

Data collection instruments usually include interview guides for both semi-structured, open-ended interviews and the FGI's, checklists for document analysis and observation methods. It is imperative for the researcher to pre-test his/her interview guides to check if they are in line with the research questions. For this critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, interview guides for both semi-structured, open-ended interviews and FGI's were prepared in line with the research questions which were crafted following the literature review in chapter two of this study. This was aimed at obtaining the relevant data to either complement or refute what other researchers had already found out in the process of creating new knowledge.

Data sources for this study were purposively and conveniently selected. This is because the study calls for experts in the use of English as the LOI in primary schools, particularly at Grade Three. Purposive and convenience sampling techniques provide information-rich and easily accessible participants. For this study, Grade Three learners, teachers, school heads, parents and education officers were selected as data sources. The above participants used English as the LOI at various stages in the school system in Chivi District.

The use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District was conducted at research sites A and B. Since primary school education is an expanded programme that begins in ECD and extends to upper-grade Seven (7), the study focused on the Grade Three classes. The motivation for this grade level was the practice whereby English is first introduced to the learners as the LOI at Grade Three (MoPSE, 2015: 7; Mashangwa, 2017: 6; Education Act, Bill, 2019: 10). Therefore, third graders and teachers at schools A and B were the main sources of data. The heads, parents and education officers came in to complement the learners and teachers' efforts. The focus on Grade Three was aimed to give the researcher ample opportunity to explore English as the LOI and its capacity to influence the practice of social justice in the education system in Chivi District.

It is important to mention that the pilot study took place at school C, which neighbours schools A and B. The justification of using school C for the 'pseudo' interviews, document analysis and observations was intended to revise, adjust and align the data collection instruments according to the research questions and the reviewed literature. This facilitated the researcher's task during the actual research work and credible data were guaranteed.

Also, observation is a fertile ground for exploring group norms, meanings and processes effectively (Barbour, 2013: 133). It is one of the best approaches to elicit information from groups of people to find out how they conduct their daily lives. In the process, inductive data was generated from the participants.

In this section, a criterion for the selection of data was proposed. The next section focuses on questions used in the collection of data and justification.

3.4.8 Questions Used in the Collection of Data and the Justification

The critical investigation on English as the LOI and its implications for social justice at Grade Three has three sub-questions drawn from the fundamental research question which reads as follows:

How does English as the language of instruction impede social justice education practices at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools?

Research sub-question one

How do Grade Three learners, teachers, education administrators and parents perceive English as the language of instruction and its implications on fostering social justice practices in Chivi District primary schools?

This research sub-question is attempting to investigate participants' views and attitudes on the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three level.

Research sub-question two

How does English as the language of instruction at Grade Three influence the practice of social justice in Chivi District primary schools?

The research sub-question explores the LOI (English) and its potential to influence or impede the practice of social justice in education. Participants' lived experiences were sought to determine the place of English as the LOI in fostering social justice in the education sector. In other words, through the research question, the inquirer intended to explore the extent to which fairness is observed in the education system. This is with due consideration of the fact that in Chivi District, learners come from diverse linguistic environments. However, they resort to English as the LOI as early as Grade Three. The semi-structured, open-ended interviews provided the participants with ample opportunity to air their views.

Researches sub-question three

What role does English as the language of instruction play in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners in Chivi District schools when it comes to fostering social justice?

The focus of research sub-question three is on providing empirical data on the functions of English in teaching and learning. The research question aims to find out how helpful the English is in academic performance, in an endeavour to 'preach' social justice in the education system.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The actual collection of data demands that the researcher first obtains permission, informed consent and assent from the aspiring research participants. The current study is purely educational qualitative research. For this reason, the researcher first sought permission from the parent Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE), the Provincial Education Office, the District Education Office, School heads and prospective individual research participants. Before the aforementioned institutions and individuals, the researcher applied for a clearance certificate from the College of Education Research Ethics Committee (REC) at the University of South Africa (UNISA) because the current study is under the guidance and supervision of UNISA. Informed consent was sought from adult participants who were above eighteen (18) years of age. The critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District included four (4) teachers, two (2) parents, two (2) heads of schools, two (2) education officers and twelve (12) Grade Three learners as sources of data. Before these participants engaged in the research activity, their consent was negotiated and agreed upon. Moreover, the current study involved third graders as research participants. To that end, their assent was essential before they participated in the research process. Below are the steps and procedures which were taken by the researcher to obtain permission, informed consent and assent from the research stakeholders:

Procedure 1:

The first step to be taken was to apply for an ethics clearance certificate from UNISA's REC. It is mandatory for anybody who is undertaking research under the auspices of

UNISA to first get an ethical clearance certificate before data collection. Therefore, the researcher liaised with his supervisor, a professor in the Department of Educational Foundations, at UNISA to chart the way for obtaining the ethical clearance certificate.

Procedure 2:

After UNISA approved the ethical clearance, the researcher tendered the application letter requesting permission from MoPSE to research Chivi District. The contents of the application letter outlined the title of the study, the purpose of the study, the number of proposed participants and their categories. The researcher also attempted to explain the significance of the study, ethical issues and the geographical location of the study. It was also in this application letter that the researcher stated the type of documents to be studied and the MoPSE was fully informed that the aspiring research participants were not going to be rewarded financially or in-kind for taking part in the study.

Procedure 3:

Having been authorised by the MoPSE to carry out the study in Chivi District primary schools, the researcher proceeded to the district offices for the endorsement of the application letter to undergo a study in the district schools. The researcher asked permission to enter the two schools selected as the research sites. The District Schools Inspector (DSI) and his/her team were briefed on the purpose and significance of this study.

Procedure 4:

After the district office mission, the next targets were the respective school heads at which the collection of data was done. At the research sites, the researcher introduced himself fully, outlined the research title, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study and its aims and objectives. Ethical issues, for instance, the right to privacy and respect, informed consent and confidentiality, were explained to the school authorities. At this juncture the researcher identified his targets, that is, categories of participants to take part in the study. Having succeeded in obtaining permission to collect data at these schools, the researcher proceeded to meet and discuss the study with the research participants.

Procedure 5:

Meeting individual research participants to sign consent and assent forms was done at the end. Consent forms were meant for adult participants who are above eighteen (18) years of age while assent forms were for the minors below eighteen (18) years of age. A total of ten (10) informed consent forms were signed by four teachers, two parents, two head teachers and two education officers at the district offices. The process took place at the convenient places and time of the research participants. Also, assent forms involved twelve (12) Grade Three learners at the two research sites. A group of six (6) learners from each school signed assent forms. However, it is important to note that minors were only asked to sign the assent forms after their parents or guardians had been consulted, agreed and signed the informed consent to include their children in the study. No learner was included in the FGI prior to his/her parent/guardian's consent and signature.

Having described how permission, informed consent and assent were obtained under this section of the study, the next section of the study focuses on the population of the study.

3.6 RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLE**3.6.1 Research Population**

Lammers and Badia (2013:2) define a population as "all members that meet a set of specifications or a specified criterion". Banerjee and Chaudhury (2010: 1) concur that a population is a complete set of people with a specialised set of characteristics. In research, population means the entire group of people who possess some characteristics which tally with the phenomena under investigation. For this study, population, therefore, encompasses two (2) head teachers, thirty-six (36) classroom teachers, 1 200 Grade Three learners, twelve (12) SDC members (representing the rest of the parents) and five (5) District education officers, to make a total population of 1 255 people. Of significance about this population is the fact that all the members were deeply immersed in the phenomenon under study (English as the LOI) in that teachers and learners use English as the mode of communication almost every day. SDC members worked together with the school authorities, for instance, in procuring the equipment to be used in teaching and learning. Apart from that, SDC members

are parents of the learners, therefore, they are also stakeholder number one in the affairs of the school. Educational officers are policymakers and watchdogs of the education policies. To that end, the suggested population possesses some traits which are of interest to the researcher.

Table 3.4 summarises the population under this study.

Table 3.4: Target Population

Category	Population Size
Head Teachers	2
Teachers	36
Learners	1 200
SDC members	12
Educational officials	5
Total	1 255

3.6.2 Research Sample and Sampling Methods

It would not be possible to carry out this research with the entire population in this investigation. For this reason, a research sample enables the researcher to carry out the research. Walliman (2010: 13) argues that when a portion of elements are chosen from the entire population, it defines a sample. Younus (2014: 46) describes a sample as selecting units, for example, events, people, groups, settings and artefacts in a way that maximises the researcher's ability to answer research questions that are forthcoming in a study. Population sample in research portrays a small section of the entire population intended to supply relevant information following the phenomenon under investigation. The population sample is a key element in research since it makes the researcher's task easy, and economically sound. Pandey and Pandey (2015: 40) argue that population sampling makes exhaustive and intensive study possible without wasting time and money. Every research study demands money, time and equipment for its success. Therefore, working with a limited number of research participants

saves time and money needed to conduct the study, hence, the essence of the research population sample.

The critical investigation of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools had a total population of 1 255 subjects. Among the 1 255 research participants, the research population sample constituted two (2) heads of schools, four (4) teachers, two (2) FGI's of six (6) participants per school for learners, two (2) SDC members and two (2) District Education Officers. This made a sample of 22 participants. The following table summarises the research sample in this study.

Table 3.5: Research Sample

Category	Population Size	Sample Size
Head Teachers	2	2
Teachers	36	4
Learners	1 200	2 FGI's (1 group of 6 pupils per school) = 12
SDC members	12	2
Educational officials	5	2
Total	1 255	22

The research participants were selected using non-probability sampling strategies. The non-probability samples do not allow the research participants to have equal chances of being part of the research study as what happens with the probability samples (Kothari, 2004: 15). Therefore, in this study, purposive and convenience sampling techniques were adopted to select research participants.

The purposive sampling technique was applied to headteachers. Patton (2002: 230) argues that the strength of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for studying in-depth. Information-rich cases are those from which the researcher obtains reliable information about the phenomenon under study. For this study, purposive sampling was suitable for the headteachers because they are policy implementers and supervisors of the national school curriculum and policy in the

district schools. The research included heads of schools with ten (10) and above years' experience. These have the technical know-how in terms of the degree to which English as the LOI influences social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools. Thus, the purposive sampling procedure was a relevant technique since it focuses on elements that possess the required and relevant behavioural traits. However, the purposive sampling technique limits the researcher's ability to produce findings that represent the population as a whole (Chitsaka, 2014: 12). In other words, it is not representative of the population as a whole. For instance, in this study which constitutes a target population of 1 255, only twelve (22) research participants participated in the study.

Two (2) FGIs were conducted with six (6) learners; the latter were selected through the convenience sampling technique. Hammers and Badia (2013: 21) describe convenience sampling as selecting individuals who are readily available at the time of the study. Convenience sampling takes into cognisance that the research participants are near the researcher and they are readily available (Brett and Brett, 2011: 5; Castillo, 2009: 153). For this study, the researcher is familiar with and lives near schools A and B. It was easy for him to request the teachers and learners to volunteer for the study. The technique saved time and other resources since the Grade Three learners were easy to research and were found in numbers at one site. However, the convenience sampling strategy does not lead to a sample which is representative of the population (Lammer and Badia, 2011: 14).

Convenience sampling was also used to select SDC members. Convenience sampling is an information-rich and easily accessible oriented technique (Banerjee and Chaudhury, 2010: 1, Lammers and Badia, 2011: 22). The two SDC members were selected because they were parents who had the knowhow on the language policy applied in classrooms in Chivi District primary schools and were parents of children attending either school A or B in Chivi District. Particularly, one SDC member interviewed was the mother of a Grade Three learner at one of the research sites. On the other hand, purposive sampling technique was applied to educational officers in the district. Banerjee and Chaudhury (2010: 1) and Chitsaka (2014: 12) describe purposive sampling as identifying participants who provide relevant information, because they are open and because they have an in-depth understanding about the phenomenon under study. For this study, education officers in the district were

specialists in the language of instruction at the district level. One by one, the researcher conducted interviews with them at their convenient workplaces and at a suitable time.

Overall, this study adopted a non-probability purposive sampling strategy which includes, among others, purposive and convenience sampling techniques. This is largely because it encourages dealing with readily available and convenient research participants. The idea was to save time, money and other resources without compromising the research findings.

3.6.2.1 Identification of Research Participants

a) Selection of Grades

The Grade Three classes are the centre of this study in the two schools. This is because the Zimbabwean education language policy stipulates that English is the MLOI from Grade Three (Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 10). Thus, the purposive non-probability sampling technique was relevant to select the grades. Therefore, the Grade Three classes were the relevant level at which this study could be studied since it is the transitional grade at which the phenomenon under study is introduced to the primary school grades.

b) Selection of the Learners

Grade Three learners were the research participants for this study. Gender was the yardstick to their selection. In the FGI's which were conducted six (6) learners per FGI participated: half of the learners were girls and the other half were boys. All the learners were in Grade Three. To that end, the non-probability purposive sampling method was employed. The researcher used the Progress Record Book to select the six (6) learners to participate in the FGI since the Progress Record Book displays the learners' performances in all subject areas. I selected two (2) above average, two (2) average and two (2) below average learners using English and Indigenous language mark lists from the Progress Record Book. These learner participants informed the study on how social justice was realised or not through linguistic diversity. Thus the

purposive sampling method was relevant to select learners who participated in this study.

The research participants took part in the study after permission had been sought from both the school administration and their parents or guardians.

c) Selection of the Teachers

Teachers implement school policy, hence their selection for this study. For this study, Grade Three teachers were selected to take part. Qualified and experienced teachers, both female and male teachers with two (2) years and above teaching experience were selected. Out of a total population of thirty-six (36) teachers, four (4) were purposively and conveniently selected to take part in this study. This was largely because the four teachers were teaching Grade Three classes. The four (4) teachers were a good representative number for the study in the two research sites. They were information-rich and readily available in schools. Also, their job dealt with the phenomenon under study which is English as the LOI.

d) Selection of the Parents

The parents who were purposively and conveniently sampled are an integral part of this research. The parents who took part in this study were drawn from the SDC members' pool. The SDC is composed of parents of the learners of any particular school in the Zimbabwean schooling system. As members of the SDC, parents contribute to the teaching and learning affairs of the schools under them. Thus, they have rich information in connection with the LOI in their various schools. One (1) SDC member from each research site was selected using purposive sampling technique because he/she would be information-rich and easily located either at school or respective addresses which are usually kept by the school authority. However, the gender parameter was indispensable in this process. For instance, parent participant from research site A was a mother of a Grade Three learner and a member of the SDC. Parent participant for research site B was a former primary school teacher and a member of the SDC as well. The characteristics of the two parents convinced the researcher to qualify them as rich information sources for this study,

e) Selection of the Education Administrators

Purposive sampling technique was used to select education officers. District education officers and heads of schools are the education 'gurus' who have more knowledge on the language of education policies in their working district. Educational officers have a thorough knowledge of English as the LOI and how it works. A study on English as the LOI might motivate them as it might improve teaching and learning in their respective working clusters. The chief education officer was contacted to introduce the researcher to the education officers who dealt with languages and education at the district level as interviewees. Purposive sampling provided information-rich participants, a stance that enhanced the credibility of the study.

3.7 DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

In this study, generated data were analysed following some themes derived from the research sub-questions. Data from qualitative methods of collecting data were presented in the thematic form to explore English language dominance in classrooms at Grade Three in Chivi District Schools. Nieuwenhus (2015: 99) argues that qualitative data analysis tries to establish how participants define the meaning of a specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of reality. The phenomenon in this study is English. The participants' views on how English influences social justice in the education sector was inductively explored.

3.7.1 Processing and Analysis of Data from Interviews

The raw data from semi-structured, open-ended questions were thoroughly read and classified according to the themes which emerged as the researcher was going through the raw data from data collection methods. The thorough editing of the data from each of the above data collection methods led to a description of data that linked to a common topic with the phenomenon under study. The qualitative raw data was presented, processed and analysed using the thematic content analysis procedure. The generated raw data upon being collectively edited and classified was coded and/or labelled. The code or label assigned to a group of facts about the phenomenon

under investigation formed a major theme. It is important to note that from the major theme, sub-themes and categories emerged and these in totality were meant to answer the research questions outlined in chapter one. Conclusively, all interview verbatim transcripts were analysed according to the descriptive analysis approach to data analysis and interpretation. Narrative analysis refers to a variety of procedures for interpreting or making meaning of the narratives generated in research (Chitsaka, 2014: 13, Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 103). The researcher identified and analysed similarities and differences across the transcripts and sorted them according to the emerged themes which tallied with the research sub-questions as well as the related reviewed literature.

The next section shifts attention to discussing the processing and analysis of data from document analysis.

3.7.2 Processing and Analysis of Data from Documents

The critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District also used written documents to generate data. Document analysis assumed the content analysis qualitative data analysis approach. Content analysis refers to the analysis of such things as codified documents looking for similarities and differences in the text that will corroborate or disconfirm the phenomenon under study (Pandey and Pandey, 2015: 70-71, Kothari, 2004: 19, Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 101). For this study, various documents such as attendance registers, progress record books, the schemes of work, among many others, were analysed to solicit data that was used to explain the degree to which English influences the practice of social justice in the education system in Chivi District.

3.7.3 Processing and Analysis of Data from Observations

The critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District also used an observation data collection method. Before data collection and analysis, the researcher needs to define some aspects to be observed during the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 84). In this study, the area of focus was the teachers' lesson presentation and learners' participation, among other aspects. Generally, the mode of communication was focused on as the researcher

observed wall charts, chalkboard work, lesson delivery, assembly proceedings, co-curricular activities and learner-learner interactions in and outside classrooms. The observation process was key to define the dominant language of instruction and social justice practices in the classrooms in Chivi District. Information from the focus areas in observation was matched to the major themes and categories which were aligned to the research questions.

Generally, the data generated from interviews, observations and the document analysis was used to create some code labels for coding that were used to categorise themes and sub-themes. Creswell (2014: 198) argues that coding begins by reading the data, identifying chunks of text that have similar meanings, classifying these chunks of text together and then assigning them to categories. Thus, data analysis and interpretation for this study adopted Tesch's Interactive Data Analysis Model (TIDAM). TIDAM comprises of the following data analysis steps: data collection, data display, reflection on data, data coding, data distillation/reduction, generation of themes, story interpretation, research conclusion and recommendations (Ganga, 2013: 114).

In essence, the above structural form was applied to the descriptive and content analysis approaches to data analysis and interpretation. The approach guaranteed a thorough description of the phenomenon under study. These narratives could not ignore allegiance to the fundamental research question and sub-questions. The idea behind this endeavour was to explore the degree to which English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District is influencing the practice of social justice.

The next section discusses the pilot study for this research.

3.8 PILOT STUDY

The data collection instruments suggested above were tested and retested for consistency's sake. Eldridge, Lancaster, Campell, Thabane, Hopewell, Coleman and Bond (2016: 17) assert that pilot study refers to the implementation of a programme in part in a manner that it will be done in the long run to ascertain its practicality. In this study, the researcher chose six Grade Three learners, to carry out preliminary

interviews with them. The pilot study exercise took place at the research site School C, different from the ones selected for this study.

The purpose of these pseudo-open-ended questions was to find out the functionality of these interview questions. The pilot study took into consideration gender issues. For this reason, three boys and three girls took part in the pilot study. Among the research participants who participated in this research were one (1) head of school, two (2) teachers, one (1) parent and six (6) learners. The pilot study assisted the researcher to adjust interview questions to the level of each category of participants. Frasser, Fahlman, Arscott and Guillot (2018: 261) contend that the pilot study comprises a risk reduction measure to minimise the rate of failure in the actual research programme. A pilot study is an integral aspect of research because it assists to iron out all the problems that might hinder the process of data collection. It is the duty of the researcher to outline the purpose of this study to the participant, its aims and objectives. In this study participants were also informed about their privacy and confidentiality as well as their right to participate or not to participate in the pilot study. The researcher assured participants that the information obtained from them was only going to be used for academic issues and that it would be kept under lock and key in the researcher's office. Contact details for both the researcher and UNISA were provided for further references in line with this research process.

3.9 TRIANGULATION

The issue of credibility and trustworthiness in all types of research is paramount. However, researchers adopt different approaches to the credibility and confirmability issue and different terms are applied to explain each research type. For its part, the quantitative research approach adopts triangulation to describe issues of trustworthiness of the research. On the other hand, qualitative research approaches apply terms like credibility, dependability, applicability, confirmability, trustworthiness and crystallisation to describe validity and reliability issues (Nieuwenhuis, 2015: 80; Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 991; Tanriverdi, Oztan Ulusoy and Turan, 2012: 28). For this study, the researcher adopted Lincoln and Guba's (1985) approach to the validity and reliability of data in research. In particular, terms such as trustworthiness, credibility, crystallisation, dependability, confirmability, and applicability are used throughout this research in place of triangulation.

Triangulation is the adoption of various data generation methods within one study (El-Gohary 2010: 42; Devos, 2003: 340; Younus, 2014: 174). In this study, semi-structured, open-ended interviews, observations, documentary study and the FGI's were used to generate credible data on the critical investigation of English as the LOI at Grade Three and how it influences social justice practices in the education system. Nieuwenhuis (2015: 80) argues that engaging multiple methods of data generation such as observation, interviews and document analysis lead to trustworthiness. The application of various data generation methods enhances the dependability of the study. The aforementioned data collection methods were applied to learners, teachers, school administrators, parents and educational officers in two selected schools. Yin (2011: 19) posits that the prime goal for enhancing trustworthiness and credibility is that qualitative research should be done in an unbiased social environment. This research was conducted in public primary schools in Chivi District. They were easily accessible. To that end, there were high chances to get credible data.

The credibility of the data is dependent on the use of various flexible methods of collecting data employed. From these data generation methods, similarities and differences are identified. From the comparison of the sources, the findings are crystallised to come up with credible facts. Nieuwenhuis (2015: 81) concurs that what constitutes research findings are those which crystallise from the data. The crystallised reality is credible and trustworthy. In this study, research findings were crystallised on methods of data generation methods, for example, findings from observations were compared with those from interviews. For instance, views of teachers were compared with those of learners, heads of schools, parents and educational officers. A thorough analysis of this crystallised data enhances data trustworthiness and credibility.

3.10 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE STUDY

3.10.1 Physical Boundaries

The study focuses on a critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications on social justice in Chivi District of Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe. The district has a total of ninety-one (91) primary schools. Of the ninety-one (91) primary schools, two (2) were selected as the research sites. Chivi District is between two big rivers, Tokwe

River to the north and Runde River to the south. The two rivers flow due south-east of the country into the gigantic Save River that flows parallel to the Limpopo River into Mozambique, through to the Indian Ocean. The district stretches from north to west for at least 200 kilometres and at 30 kilometres from north to south (Beach, 1994: 42).

Two (2) rural based primary schools in Chivi District were considered as research sites. These schools were selected purposively since they were home area schools. In this regard, proximity and convenience were the parameters guiding their choice. Furthermore, the two schools were purposively selected because their population is homogeneous in that they are multilingual. People in this part of Chivi District speak three of the 16 ILs of Zimbabwe, namely, Shona, Ndebele and Shangani. Therefore, their use of English as the LOI at the expense of the aforesaid ILs is a cause for concern. To that end, their involvement in this research was opportune and proper.

3.10.2 Conceptual Boundaries

The study explores English as the LOI and its implications for social justice education at Grade Three in Chivi District in Masvingo Province. Social justice is mirrored in various spheres such as gender, language, ethnicity, religion, race among others (Cumming-Potvin, 2009: 84). The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of English as the LOI on social justice educational practices in Chivi District primary schools at Grade Three. The research participants comprised primary school learners, teachers, headteachers, parents and education officials. The above research participants were suitable sources of data because they dealt with English as the LOI on a daily basis in Chivi District.

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics is a code of behaviour on the expected behaviour of an individual or group of people in the same profession (Musazi and Kanhukamwe, 2003:4). Thus, ethical considerations refer to behaviour that is acceptable or not acceptable of an individual when carrying out a research study. In this study, the researcher interacted with the research participants through semi-structured, open-ended interviews, FGIs and observations in generating data. Hence, the researcher is obliged to consider ethical issues. Yin (2011: 19) alludes that a researcher needs to possess a sense of ethics in

conducting research. This research was under the supervision of UNISA. As such, the researcher had already applied for the ethical clearance certificate from UNISA's Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee approved the ethics clearance application for this study.

Therefore, throughout this study, ethical considerations took precedence. This is because this research involves human subjects, and as such, the researcher should act responsibly to avoid any possible harm. However, the aim is to maximise benefits of the research to both participants and society at large (Resnick and Shamo, 2015:3). Thus, observation of ethical issues throughout the research fosters fairness, respect, trustworthiness, accountability and credibility in carrying out research.

Informed consent is one of the ethical considerations to be observed by the researcher in this study. The researcher negotiated the participants' consent before gathering data on them (Magwa and Magwa, 2015: 106; Walliman, 2011: 51). Thus participants who took part in interviews were fully informed. Their permission to participate in the study was sought, especially heads of schools, teachers, education officers and parents. For school children, permission was sought from their parents/guardians and the school authorities first and then from the children themselves. The parents/guardians and school authorities' consent was negotiated prior to the learners' involvement in the research. Consent forms of parents/guardians for every learner participant were signed and brought to the researcher before interviews began. The researcher had to ask for the signed consent forms from the school authorities as well. Learners signed assent forms to become participants. Participation was voluntary and they were free to withdraw at any point in time.

Furthermore, all participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality in this study. The right whether to remain anonymous or to be identified lies with the participant (Magwa and Magwa, 2015: 107; Chitsaka, 2014: 7; Tsai, Kohrt, Matthews, Betancourt, Lee, Papachristos, Weiser and Dworkin, 2016: 531). The researcher made an effort to explain to the participants that the information they supplied would be strictly confidential and anonymous and nobody would be granted the opportunity to trace them in any way and anywhere. The names of participants and location sites (schools) of the research participants were not disclosed at any stage of the research process. Where there was a need, pseudo names were given.

Also, the principles of beneficence were communicated to the participants. The risks and benefits of the research to the prospective participants must be fully considered prior to the study (Magwa and Magwa, 2015: 105). Thus, in this study, participants were informed of the potential of this research study to improve the academic arena in terms of linguistic diversity in schools. The researcher attempted to inform participants that the study on the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications on social justice at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools would assist the learners to appreciate and espouse their local languages and culture, in an endeavour to create a socially just school curriculum and society at large. The study can also assist policy-makers to craft relevant curriculum language policies in Zimbabwe.

3.12 SUMMARY

The title of the foregoing research is 'The use of English as the LOI and its implications on social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation'. In an attempt to explore the influence of English on fostering social justice at Grade Three in Chivi District, the researcher adopted the qualitative research design. A research design provides a roadmap to any research and the qualitative research design was chosen for this study, where a phenomenological research strategy was adopted to enable semi-structured, open-ended interviews, observation, FGIs and document analysis as data collection methods to be employed. The aforesaid phenomenological data generation methods are a fertile ground for research participants to interact in their lived experiences.

Attention was also given to the research population and sample. A discussion on population and sample assisted to define research participants and their selection. It was pointed out that the sample to be selected from the population would be relevant for this study because it consisted of Grade Three learners, teachers, parents and educational officers, who have vast experiences in using English as the LOI. Hence, the need for use of purposive and convenience sampling techniques since the learners, teachers, parents and education officers were information-rich and experts at various levels in using English as the LOI in primary schools.

A discussion on data collection and analysis was also part of this chapter. Key issues of tabulation, labelling, coding and classification of qualitative data were discussed. It was also in this chapter that the concept triangulation in qualitative research was discussed. The merits and demerits of the concepts for this critical investigation of English as the LOI at Grade Three were highlighted. The incorporation of plural data generation methods, research sites and participants were notable advantages to this study which were meant to provide dependable qualitative data.

The geographical location of the study was also given attention. Forming part of this section was the physical boundary and location of Chivi District in Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe. It was also in this section where the conceptual boundary of the study was discussed. The last aspect to be discussed was the ethical considerations employed by the researcher. Various ethical issues were discussed and it was imperative to highlight ethical issues because they add value to this research.

The next chapter (Chapter 4) focuses on data collection and presentation. The emphasis is on tabulation, coding, labelling, and classification of data according to secondary questions. Some verbatim transcripts, literature review from Chapter Two and theoretical framework principles were used to substantiate the emerging themes, sub-themes and categories.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Three focused on the research design, research methodology and research methods adopted to address the research questions in Chapter One. It is also in Chapter Three where ethical considerations were discussed. A thorough discussion on population, sample size and sampling techniques were a topical issue as well.

Chapter Four aimed to present, analyse, discuss and interpret the research findings of this study in pursuit of the answers to the research questions which were a guide to this study. The primary research question read: How does the use of English as the language of instruction impede social justice education practices at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools? The researcher used secondary research questions to present the data. The following constitute the secondary research questions:

- i. How do Grade Three learners, teachers, education administrators and parents perceive English as the language of instruction and its implications on fostering social justice practices in Chivi District primary schools?*
- ii. How does English as the language of instruction at Grade Three influence the practice of social justice in Chivi District primary schools?*
- iii. What role does English as the language of instruction play in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners in Chivi District schools when it comes to fostering social justice?*

This chapter is divided into seven sections to enable the researcher to effectively present, analyse, discuss and interpret the research results.

Segment One: Research Participants' Demographic Details

For easy identification of research participants in the data presentation, analysis and discussion process, every research participant was given a code label associated with his/her position in the primary school system in Chivi District. The alphabet symbol 'H'

stands for headteacher participant, 'T' for teacher participant, 'L' for learner participant, 'EO' for education officer participant and 'P' for parent participant. Alphabet symbols 'A' and 'B' represent research sites. This study was conducted at two primary schools in Chivi District represented by symbols 'A' for school A and 'B' for school B. Therefore, the code labels for headteachers are as follows: HA for headteacher participant from school A and HB for headteacher participant from school B. Teacher participants from school A are coded as TA1 for 1st teacher participant from school A and TA2 for 2nd teacher participant from school A. Teacher participants from school B have the following code labels: TB1 for 1st teacher participant from school B and TB2 for 2nd teacher participant from school B. The code labels EO1 and EO2 symbolise education officer participants 1 and 2 from the District Education Office respectively. Participants from parents' category are labelled as PA for parent participant from school A and PB for parent participant from school B. The learner participants who participated in FGI at research site school A are carrying the labels: LA1, LA2, LA3, LA4, LA5 and LA6. Research site school B participants for the FGI are represented by the symbols: LB1, LB2, LB3, LB4, LB5 and LB6. Table 4.1 below illustrates the details of all categories of research participants who were the sources of data.

Segment two: Presentation of Research Findings from the Focus Group Interviews

The two (2) FGIs comprising of six (6) learners per group are part of the presented data under this section. Each research site had one FGI with six (6) participants. Each of the two FGIs carried out in this study consisted of six (6) learners, (3) boys and (3) girls. The gender parameter was considered in all categories of the research participants. The FGIs took part in special rooms recommended by the school authorities.

Segment Three: Presentation of Research Findings from the Semi-Structured Open-ended Interviews

This section of the research presents research findings from the semi-structured open-ended face-to-face interviews conducted with four (4) teachers, two (2) heads, two (2) education officers and two (2) parents from the two schools selected as the research sites for this study.

Segment Four: Findings from Document Analysis

Under this section, various classroom documents were analysed and discussed regarding English as the LOI and its implications for social justice education in Chivi District. The thrust was on the dominant language used to record information and prepare these documents for use in teaching and learning.

Segment Five: Presentation of Findings from Observation Field Notes and Co-curricular Activities

Study findings from teachers and learners' observation during lesson delivery and co-curricular activities are presented under this section.

Segment Six: Presentation of Research Findings According to the Primary and Secondary Research Questions

The findings will be classified and commented under the fundamental and sub-research questions.

Segment Seven: Concluding Remarks on the Research Findings

This section carries the conclusion to the research results of this study.

4.2 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

In line with what was articulated under the sample and sample size from Chapter Three, this study involved four (4) teachers, two (2) head teachers, two (2) education officers, two (2) parents (SDC members) and twelve (12) Grade Three learners. The table below serves to outline the details of each category of the learners who participated in the interviews. A brief discussion of participants' profiles is done immediately below the table.

Table 4.1 Demographic Profiles of Research Participants

No	Code	Description	Sex	Age	Teaching Experience	Research Site	Date and Language of Interview
1	TA1	Senior teacher	M	49	25	School A	20/03/19 English
2	TA2	Teacher in charge	F	38	13	School A	21/03/19 English
3	TB1	Senior teacher	F	51	28	School B	27/03/19 English
4	TB2	Teacher in charge	M	32	10	School B	28/03/19 English
5	HA	School head	M	58	33	School A	20/03/19 English
6	HB	School head	M	60	37	School B	27/03/19 English
7	EO1	Education Officer	M	64	39	District Education Office	06/04/19 English
8	EO2	Education Officer	M	55	31	District Education Office	06/04/19 English
9	PA	SDC chairperson cum Parent of Grade Three learner	F	35	-----	School A	21/03/19 English
10	PB	SDC chairperson and a former Teacher	M	69	40	School B	28/03/19 English

11	LA1	Grade 3 learner	F	9	----	School A	19/03/19 Shona
12	LA2	Grade 3 learner	F	8	-----	School A	19/03/19 Shona
13	LA3	Grade 3 learner	F	10	-----	School A	19/03/19 Shona
14	LA4	Grade 3 learner	M	10	-----	School A	19/03/19 Shona
15	LA5	Grade 3 learner	M	10	_____	School A	19/03/19 Shona
16	LA6	Grade 3 learner	M	9	_____	School A	19/03/19 Shona
17	LB1	Grade 3 learner	F	9	_____	School B	26/03/19 Shona
18	LB2	Grade 3 learner	F	10	_____	School B	26/03/19 Shona
19	LB3	Grade 3 learner	F	9	_____	School B	26/03/19 Shona
20	LB4	Grade 3 learner	M	8	_____	School B	26/03/19 Shona
21	LB5	Grade 3 learner	M	10	_____	School B	26/03/19
22	LB6	Grade 3 learner	M	8	_____	School B	26/03/19 Shona

It was imperative to involve relevant research participants in this study. The researcher selected research participants with teaching experience in using English as the LOI at primary school level in Chivi District of Zimbabwe. Primary school teaching experience was crucial to establish whether English as the LOI was an asset or liability at Grade Three level in Chivi District. To that end, only research participants who were well

informed about English as the LOI could provide relevant information to the research questions guiding this study.

Apart from experience in teaching, gender balance was also observed. It was equally important to hear from both sexes. The composition of the demographic table entails that the selected head teachers, teachers and education officers had vast experience in teaching ranging from 10 to 40 years (see table 4.1 above). Parents were chosen on grounds that they were members of the SDC and they were parents of Grade Three learners at the respective sites. Therefore, their experience in the running of the school qualifies them to become relevant sources of data.

Although Grade Three learners had no experience in English as the LOI, their involvement was unavoidable because they were the main focus of this study. They were the measuring barometer to determine the existence of social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools. The age range of the learners was 8-10 years; the limited number of years in school, using English as the LOI and unfavourable home environments for the development of English did not allow the researcher to use English during FGIs. All the twelve (12) learners engaged in the indigenous language, Shona, during the interviews because it was the language understood by every FGI participant and the researcher.

Having discussed demographic details of the research participants above, the following section pays attention to presentation of research findings from FGIs and face-to-face interviews.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The FGIs involved twelve (12) Grade Three learners. The raw data from FGIs were used to formulate several themes. These themes were grouped into eight (8) major themes with their related sub-themes and categories. Of paramount importance is the fact that the major themes and their sub-themes and categories are linked to the secondary questions of the study. The following sub-section aims to unpack and explore each major theme and its related sub-themes and categories. In addition, the findings were substantiated with excerpts from FGIs done with Grade Three learners.

4.3.1 Participants' views on How English as the LOI/MOI Impedes Social Justice Education Practices in Primary Schools

For the purposes of this research, the researcher saw it necessary to explore the views of Grade Three learners on the use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice education practices. In line with the research questions guiding this study, eight (8) major themes emerged from the FGIs sessions held with learners. The eight emerging themes are as follows: (1) Conceptualisation of the LOI/MOI, (2) the positive perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice, (3) the negative perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice, (4) conceptualisation of social justice, (5) opportunities in English as the LOI in influencing social justice education practices, (6) adversity in English as the LOI in influencing social justice education practices, (7) English as a LOI/MOI, an asset for educational achievement and social justice, and (8) English as a barrier to educational achievement and social justice. The eight themes included sub-themes unpacked below.

4.3.1.1 Conceptualisation of the LOI/MOI

In an endeavour to find out the perceptions of English as the LOI from the participants it was imperative to begin by conceptualisation of the LOI in order to shed more light on the discussions. In conceptualising the LOI/MOI, some participants defined it in various ways. The following constituted some sub-themes of the theme above: the MOI as a mode of communication, the MOI as government policy and the school curriculum and the MOI. The three sub-themes are analysed below.

a) The MOI/LOI as a Communication Mode

A description of the MOI was given by four participants (LA1, LB1, LB5), who viewed the MOI as the vehicle of communication in the academic arena. They perceived the MOI as an instrument for communicating subject matter by both learners and teachers. Comments to substantiate the above findings are as follows:

Semafungiro angu zvinoreva mutauro unoshandiswa naticha kutidzidzisa muclass. Translated as: I understand the LOI as the

language used by the teacher in teaching and learning.

[Participant LA1, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Uyu mutauro unoshandiswa nevana pamwe nematicha pakudzidzisa muchikoro. Translated as: *The MOI/LOI is the language commonly used by learners and teachers during learning in classrooms.* [Participant LB5, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Semafungiro angu zvinoreva mutauro unoshandiswa naticha pakudzidza nepakudzidzisa. Translated as: *The MOI/LOI is the language used in learning and teaching.* [Participant LA4, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019]

The above verbatim transcripts point to the MOI/LOI as the pillar of information dissemination in teaching and learning. This implies that the LOI is a means of communicating the school curriculum at primary Grade Three. It is an indispensable component of the school curriculum. However, of significant was that the LOI in Grade Three in Chivi District was different from the learners' heritage languages, a situation which exposed learners to subtractive bilingualism or the transitional submersion model.

b) The MOI as Government Policy

Findings from the FGIs pointed to the MOI as an appendage of the government policy. In a way, this was the notion that the MOI emanated from the education language policy, which is the brainchild of the government. The comments from one of the learner participants to substantiate these findings are as follows:

Chinonzi mutauro wekudzidza nekudzidzisa, ndinofungakuti rurumi runonzi nehurumende vadidzisi nevadzidzi vashandise pakudzidzisa nekudzidza masubjects muchikoro. Translated as: *I think the MOI means the language recommended by the government for teachers and learners to use for teaching and learning some subjects in the classroom.* [Participant LA5, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Apart from the general view of the majority of the participants of describing the MOI as a mode of communication in teaching and learning, participant LA5, had a divergent view of the LOI. According to participant LA5, the LOI was simply a policy. This means that the LOI was imposed on learners and the school system by the government authorities. In other words, there is no freedom to choose the instructional language at Grade Three in Chivi District but learners have to adhere to the dictates of the government to use English as the LOI.

c) **The School Curriculum and the MOI**

The findings of the study from the FGIs also conceptualised the MOI in relation to the school curriculum. Responses from the learners revealed that English was the MOI for Grade 3 up to 7. However, ILs were also used as the LOI from ECD up to grade 2. Remarks to support these findings are provided below:

Ini ndinoona sekuti ChiRungu nekuti ndicho chine zvidzidzo zvakawanda zvakanyorwa neChiRungu. Translated as:

English language is the MOI because the majority of the subjects in the school curriculum are taught in English. [Participant LB4, from school B, interviewed 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Aaah, vadzidzisi vedu vanonyanya kushandisa ChiRungu pakudzidzisa. Translated as: *Surely, our teachers use English as the LOI in most cases.* [Participant LA2, from school A, interviewed 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The idea that English was used as the MOI from Grade Three depicts that ILs were degraded yet they are spoken by the majority of the learners in Chivi District primary schools. ECD to primary grade two is a short academic calendar in which primary school learners are expected to use ILs as the MOI. In addition to that, at this stage, primary Grade Three learners are too young to be immersed into a second language. They still need to master their heritage languages. Thus, learners' linguistic rights are violated.

4.3.1.2 The Positive Perceptions of English as the LOI

Apart from conceptualisation of the LOI, the FGIs findings revealed some positive perceptions of English as the LOI and their implications for social justice. Three issues pertaining to the positive perceptions towards English as the LOI emerged from learner participants' responses during FGIs. These were as follows: (1) English language as an instrument for global communication, (2) English as a language of employment opportunities, and (3) English as a language for further education. The above issues were critically examined below.

a) English language as an Instrument for Global Communication

Learner participants' views on English as the LOI revealed that English is a global language of communication. Participants (LA1, LB5) viewed the use of English language in teaching and learning as an advantage for them to interact with the rest of the world. The following remarks made by some of the participants support these findings:

Ndinofunga kuti kushandiswas kweChiRungu kunobatsira kuti tinzwanane nevatinotaura navo kana vasingagoni kutaura mutauro wedu. Translated as:

I think the use of English in teaching and learning will enable us to communicate with everybody in the world, especially those who cannot speak our local languages. [Participant LB5, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

(Achinyemwerera) *Zvakanaka kutaura neChiRungu nokuti kana wainda kune imwe nyika unokwanisa kutaura nevagari veikoko.*

Translated as: (Smiling) *It is important to be proficient in English language since it is the international language. We interact with people from other nations.* [Participant LA1, from school B, interviewed on 19 March 2019]

Research participants indicated that the use of English in teaching and learning is an advantage in that learners in future can mingle and interact with people from all corners of the globe. This means learners are empowered linguistically. Their linguistic

environment has been expanded and they fit in the world system since they have the ability to communicate in English which tends to be the global language.

b) English as the Language of Employment Opportunities

Another finding of the study pertaining to the positive perceptions of English as the LOI was that English was regarded as a language of employment opportunities after schooling. Explanations from research participants in tandem with the above findings are as follows:

Kana tikadzidza tikazoitavo maticha, tinokwanisa kutaura neChiRungu.

Translated as: *If we become teachers in future, English language will help us to communicate with learners.* [Participant LB4, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District].

Kana tichitaura neverudzi rweChiRungu, ChiRungu chinotibatsira kuti tinzwane navo pamabasa kana tazokura mangwana.
Translated as: *English will assist us to interact with English speakers at work places in future.* [Participant LB2, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Ini ndinofarira kushandisa mutauro weChiRungu pakudzidzisa nokuti kana ndazokura ndinogona kutaura nevaRungu vangu pabasa
Translated as: *I prefer to communicate in English because when I grow up I will be able to communicate with my employers effectively.* [Participant LB, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

In spite of viewing English language as an instrument for global communication, learner participants (LB2, LB4, LB6) pointed out that mastery of English is pivotal in job opportunities. In other words, English language is essential to the learners' future economic wellbeing. This means the capacity to speak and write in English may assure learners to get good paying jobs.

c) English as a Language for Further Education

Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that participant (LB1) perceived English as the language instrumental for further education. The participant opined that mastery of English language at primary school level would assist them in further studies. One learner participant had this to say:

ChiRungu chinotibatsira kana tava pamatanho epamusoro nedzidzo yedu. Translated as: English language is useful for us when we approach further education. [Participant LB1, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District: p140]

The view of learner participant (LB1) points to English as an advantage in that further education uses English as the LOI. Mastery of English language is an asset in understanding concepts at tertiary level because it is the only LOI in Zimbabwean academic field. This implies that English is the language of education. Any other language is either a taught subject or is non-existent in the education field.

4.3.1.3 The Negative Perceptions of English as the LOI

The findings of the FGIs were indicative of English as a liability in the education system. The four sub-themes emerging from this theme are as follows: (1) English language as a menace to one's culture and identity, (2) teacher-learner incompetency in English, (3) English versus curriculum literature, and (4) home environment not conducive for English acquisition.

a) English Language as a Menace to One's Culture and Identity

The learner participants indicated that the use of English as the LOI had its own problems for the individual learner and the community at large. This was largely because responses from participants (LA1, LA3, LB6) remarked that English could erode one's culture and identity. Some comments to substantiate the above findings are as follows:

Ndinofarira kuti maticha vaticidzidzise nerurimi rwaamai nekuti tinorunzwisisa uye tinodzidza tsika namagariro edu kubva mumutauro wedu. Translated as: I prefer our teachers to use ILs as instructional languages because we understand the local languages better and we tend to be identified with our culture and languages as we learn.[Participant LB6, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Aiwa, ChiRungu chinoshanda pakawanda sokuti kana wasangana neasingagonhi Shona kana kune dzimwe nyika. Asi ini ndinoona rurimi rwaamai rwakandikoshera nekuti ndinodzidza tsika nemagariroevaShona. Translated as: English is functional when you meet someone who does not understand indigenous languages, especially outside Zimbabwe. Personally, I believe that my mother language is important because it is the source of culture and identity. [Participant LA1, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The use of English as the LOI at Grade Three has the capacity to create cultural erosion. Findings indicated that learners at Grade Three were alienated from their heritage languages which are the custodians of one's culture and identity. This means the education system in Chivi District primary schools does not measure up to the social justice standards.

b) Learner Incompetency in English

Research findings from the FGIs indicated learner incompetence in English. Participants (LA2, LB6, LB3) remarked that they frequently experienced stressful moments with English during teaching and learning. To substantiate the above findings, some participants had this to say:

Kufunga kwangu ndekwekuti hapana kumira zvakanaka pakushandisamuturo neChiNgezi nokuti vakawanda vedu hatichinzwisisa muno muimb yekudzidzira (achiseka). Translated as:

My understanding is that the situation in this classroom is very bad in terms of using English language in learning. This is because the majority of us totally do not understand English language (smiling).

[Participant LA2, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

When in a Shona lesson, we use mother language to communicate. In all other subjects we are expected to use English language to communicate. However, what actually happens is that mother language would take over because we do not understand English language totally. The teacher ends up talking to himself.

So he ends up switching to mother language in order to understand one another. [Participant LB3, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Hapana chakashata asi nhamo yedu ndeye kuti hatigonhi kutaura ChiRungu. Saka tinopedzisira tashandisa Shona nemuzvidzidzo zvinoda kuti tishandise ChiRungu. Translated as: *Our problem is that we are incompetent in English language. So we end up resorting to other languages even the lesson demands us to communicate in English language.* [Participant LA6, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The above remarks from the learner participants indicated that learners were incompetent to use English as the LOI. Teachers had to intervene either through code switching or wholly by way of ILs. This implies that learners had challenges in using English in teaching and learning.

c) English Language versus Curriculum Literature

Another aspect pointing to the negative perceptions of English as the LOI revealed by the study findings from FGIs was that the school curriculum literature was dominated by English. Participant (LB4) described the school curriculum as elite centred. Very little was offered in ILs. The remarks below are consistent with the research findings:

Mutauro weChiRungu ndiwo unonyanya kushandiswa pakugadzira zvinyorwa zvinoshanda pakudzidza nekudzidzisa.

Translated as: *English language is the one which dominates in curriculum literature as well as in teaching and learning.*
[Participant LB4, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Participants (LB4) concurred that the codification of subject area content was wholly done using English. It implies that the education system, particularly Grade Three in Chivi District was dominated by English. Nine of the ten subjects taught at Grade Three are the prerogative of English. ILs are not considered as the LOI. Implicitly, the situation does not promote social justice practices.

d) Home Environment Not Conducive for English Language

Research findings also revealed that one participant (LA2) perceived the home environment as a cause for concern on learners' failure to cope with English in teaching and learning. The research participant argued that the linguistic environment in learners' homes was not prudent for English language development. The following comment concurs with the learner's negative perceptions of English as the LOI:

Maonere angu ndeekuti vakawanda vedu hatitauri ChiRungu kumba uye kana tichitamba pangava pabreak kana lunch nekumasports. Translated as: *In my opinion, the majority of us do not speak English language in our homes. Neither do we speak it when playing outside at both break and lunch hours, as well as during sports.* [Participant LA2, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

One learner participant (LA2) noted that challenges in coping with English during teaching and learning emanated from their home background which differs from the school environment. At home, learners are deeply immersed in heritage languages and upon arrival at school, teachers instruct them to use English to communicate. This means the language they use at home is completely divorced from the one they use at school. In the process, learners find it difficult to cope with school work.

4.3.1.4 Conceptualisation of Social Justice

Various views pertaining to the meaning of social justice were echoed by learners during FGI sessions held in Chivi District. These learner views emerged during the discussions of interview questions pertaining to research question two of this study. Research question two of this study explored the degree of influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice education practices. Two sub-themes emerged from this theme, namely, social justice as fairness and social justice as multilingualism. Below are the details of each sub-theme.

a) Social Justice as Fairness

The findings of the study from FGIs revealed that social justice could be conceptualised as fairness. The participants (LA1, LA4) vividly described social justice in connection with the LOI as the execution of fairness in terms of language usage. The following remarks are in tandem with the research findings:

Zvingava zvinodudzira kukosheswa kwemitauro yose iri muzvimbo pakudzidza. Translated as: *Social justice means considering all languages in the area as important and equal in learning.*
[Participant LA1, from school A, interviewed 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Similarly, another learner concurred:

Zvimoreva kukosheswa kwemitauro pakudzidza nekudzidzisa.
Translated as: *Social justice in this context entails involvement of all languages in teaching and learning.* [Participant LA4, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

This implies that social justice in the education system is hinged on fairness in terms of how both English and ILs are treated. This means learners should have the opportunity to learn using their mother tongues as well as English.

b) Social Justice as Multilingualism

The study findings also described social justice as denoting linguistic pluralism. One learner participant (LA1) invoked the term multilingualism in defining social justice as related to the MOI. To substantiate the above findings, the participant had this to say:

Zvingava zvinodudzira kukosheswa kwemitauro yose iri munzvimbo.

Translated as: *Social justice is giving value to all languages in the education system.* [Participant LA1, from school A interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Concerning social justice as including multilingualism in relation to the LOI, participant (LA1) suggested that educational content and knowledge at Grade Three should be accessed in learners' various languages. The education environment should allow cultural pluralism for social justice to prevail.

4.3.1.5 Opportunities in English as the LOI in Fostering Social Justice Education Practices

The above theme affiliates to the second research sub-question in this study of the use of English as the LOI in primary schools. Findings of FGIs indicated that participants viewed English as a facilitator of social justice in the school system to a lesser degree. Therefore, this section of the research study explores two aspects indicative of the positive influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice education practices in two Chivi District primary schools, namely (1) English as the language of unity, and (2) cultivation of a neutral communication environment in the education system.

a) English as the Language of Unity

The findings of this study reflected on English as the language of unity in an effort to explore the influence of English in influencing social justice in the education system. Learner participants (LA6, LB6) remarked that in a multilingual community like Chivi District, the use of English language as the language of education can unite people

from different places as they can effectively communicate with one another. The following comments made by some of the participants during interview sessions support these findings:

Ndinoona sekuti ChiRungu chinotibatsira atichazoenda kumabasa. Vamwe vasingataurirurimi rwedu tinotaura navo neChiRungu.

Translated as: *I believe English can be a force to unite us with other people who do not speak our language since will communicate with the effectively.* [Participant LA1, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Ini ndinofarirakushandisa mutauro weChiRungu pakudzidza nokuti kana ndazokura, ndinogona kutaura nevaRungu vangu pabasa.

Translated as: *I personally prefer to use English as the LOI because it will assist me to interact easily with my would be foreign employers.* [Participant LB6, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

This means participants (LAI, LB6) perceived English as the centre of unity in the classroom and beyond. This is because Grade Three learners in Chivi District affiliate to different linguistic groups. As such the choice of English as the LOI assists to unite learners from these cultural groups and grants them equal linguistic opportunities to communicate curriculum content. In the process, the education environment may realise social justice.

b) Cultivation of Neutral Communication Environment in the Education System

In exploring English as the LOI in influencing social justice education practices in Chivi District, FGI findings indicated the creation of a neutral communication environment in the educational sphere. Research participant (LA4) viewed English as influential in promoting fairness in teaching and learning. Remarks substantiating these findings are provided below:

Vadzidzisi vanotiudza kuti kana isi nguva yeShona tinofanira kushandisa ChiRungu muclass kuti tinzwanane nevasingatauri Shona, veNdebele neShangani.

Translated as: *Our teachers encourage us to speak in English during lessons except in indigenous language lessons. This practice enables us to understand one another as learners since we affiliate to different indigenous languages, for example, Ndebele, Shangani and Shona.* [Participant LA4, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

This implies that participant (LA4) perceived the idea of ILs as the LOI in Chivi primary schools as a fallacy. This was because they could not bring learners together and allow them to operate at the same level. However, the use of English as the LOI was more plausible because it is the second language for everybody at Grade Three. Thus, learners were likely to benefit on equal footing from the educational instruction since they were using one language, although not familiar to them.

4.3.1.6 Adversity of English as the LOI in Fostering Social Justice Practices in the Education System

Apart from perceiving English as the instructional language at Grade Three in Chivi District as an asset, learner participants' responses indicated that English is also a liability. The study findings revealed a number of social justice malpractices with regard to English as the language of education. Under this subsection of the study eight categories were explored, namely, (1) lack of linguistic diversity, (2) language attrition, (3) ILs as custodians of people's culture and identity, (4) the manifestation of xenocentrism, (5) bilingualism, (6) the multilingual nature of the community, (7) low-self esteem, and (8) coercive tendencies.

a) Lack of Linguistic Diversity

First, research findings of this study reflected that there was linguistic monopoly in teaching and learning. Despite the fact that research participants from the two research sites under study affiliate to various linguistic groups, English had dominance

in teaching and learning. The following comments made by some of the learner research participants substantiate the above findings:

Zvinoratidza sokuti vadzidzisi havasikupa mikana yakafana kumitauro pakudzidza kwedu nepakudzidzisa kwavo. Mutauro weChiRungu ndowakabata ushe. Translated as:

It seems languages are not treated equally in our teaching and learning. English is extensively used as the LOI. [Participant LA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Similarly, another learner participant echoed the same sentiment above.

Maonere angu mitauro haisi kupiwa mikana yakainzan pakudidza nepakudzidzisa. Translated as:

Personally I think that languages existing in this community are not treated equally in the learning and teaching situations. [Participant LB6, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The above remarks from the FGIs indicated a dearth of language diversity at Grade Three level in Chivi District Primary schools. ILs were limited to a larger extent. Only one language (English) was the LOI. This implies that the education environment in Chivi District primary schools was not communicating social justice since linguistic pluralism was a flaw. The reality that Shona, Shangani and Ndebele which are dominant in the district were not recognised in driving the school curriculum means linguistic diversity was not observed.

b) Language Attrition

The FGIs discussions also indicated language death as another social justice vice unearthed by the use of English as the LOI. Learner participants (LB1, LB4,) revealed that the use of English language as the LOI at the expense heritage languages is a recipe for the death of the ILs in Chivi District. These remarks from the participants substantiate the above findings:

Pano pachikoro hatidzidzi Shangani. Kana kuitaura hatitonyanyisi nokuti vamwe vanotiseka plus havatohwi Shangani yacho.

Translated as:

Here at school, we do not learn Shangani (IL). We do not even speak it because our classmates mock us whenever we speak Shangani because they do not understand it. [Participant LB4,

from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Ndinobvumirana naLB3 kuti tine mitauro yose (Ndebele, Shangani, Shona) yaadoma asi chokwadi chakazara ndechekuti mitauro iyi yose haishandi mukudzidza. Kunoshanda ChiRungu zvakanyanya uyevo neShona zvisomanana. Translated as:

I agree with LB3 (learner participant) in that we have all those languages. She has mentioned, (Shangani, Ndebele and Shona).

However, the truth of the matter is that all these languages do not work in teaching. It is basically English and a bit of Shona only that are part and parcel of the education system. [Participant LB1, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

During the FGIs, hardly anybody was heard communicating in Ndebele and Shangani, the ILs. This indicated social justice education malpractices in Chivi District primary schools. Participants' analysis of the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three established that among ILs spoken in Chivi District, only Shona is partially recognised as a subject in the education system. Shangani and Ndebele do not feature. This implies that the two ethnic languages are at the verge of extinction in the district. They are slowly disappearing.

c) Indigenous Languages as Custodians of People's Culture and Identity

Another aspect revealed by the research findings of this study was the issue of perceiving ILs as the custodians of people's culture and identity. The research participants (LA6, LA5, LA2, LA3) argued that use of English as the LOI could have the capacity to reduce the ILs's role as the custodians of people's culture and identity. They had this to say:

Kudzidziswa nemutauro wako kwakanaka nekuti unokura uchiugona uye nekuzikanzwa kuti ndiwe ani uye unogara kupi.

Translated as: *Acquiring education in your own language as the MOI, is important because you gain proficiency in your mother language and at the same time, your culture and identity are not compromised.* [Participant LA6, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Ndinofarira Shona nokuti ndiwo mutauro wedu unoenderana netsika nemagariro edu kumba. Translated as:

We usually speak IL Shona because it is our mother language and we understand it better. As well, it is the language that is rich in our African culture. [Participant LA3, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

ChiRungu chinadzo tsika nemagariro asi maonere angu zvakasiyana apo neapo. Isu tionzwisisa tsika dzeChiShona kuburikidza nemutauro wedu weShona. Translated as:

Even English language does incorporate the European culture; nevertheless, the European culture differs from our own way of life. We understand our own culture through our local languages. [Participant LA3, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Pano pachikoro hatidzidzi Shangani kana kuitaura hatitinyanyisi nokuti vamwe vedu vanotiseka plus havatoihwi Shanganiyacho nekuti isu vanoitaura tiri vashoma kwazvo ano. Translated as:

Here at school, we do not learn Shangani and even speak it. This because our classmates mock us whenever we attempt to speak in Shangani. [Participant LB4, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

This implies that, among various functions of language, transmission of a group of people's culture, identity and heritage is important. Exposing Grade Three learners to English as the LOI was viewed as going against ILs' role of the custodians of their culture and identity. This means that as learners continue to use English as the LOI, they are also further alienated from their local cultures, apart from their identity and heritage.

d) The Manifestation of Xenocentrism

The FGIs findings established that exposing learners to English as the LOI develops negative attitudes towards their languages and culture. Learners despise local languages and regard English highly. One research participant made the following comments to substantiate the above findings:

Maonere angu zvinokonzerwa nekuti vanu tinokoshesa mutaura weChiRungu kudarika Shona. Translated as:

My understanding of the issue is that we tend to give more prominence to English language than the mother language.

[Participant LA3, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019]

The above quotation illustrates that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three has created dislike and low regard for one's own language and culture. This means learners give prominence to English which does not promote their language and culture.

e) The Multilingual Nature of the Community

The research findings from the FGIs described Chivi District as a rainbow community. The ILs -Shona, Shangani and Ndebele are dominantly spoken. Learner participants' (LB1-LB3) responses revealed that, despite its linguistic heterogeneity, English dominates the education system. This gross negligence of language homogeneity leads to social justice education malpractice. Some learners had this to say:

Vamwe tinodada nekufarira kutaura Shona. Translated as:

Some of us are proud of Shona. [Participants LB1, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Ini ndinotaura rurimi rweShangani. Translated as:

I speak Shangani and I come from Popi village. [Participants LB2, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Ini ndinotaura ndimimbiri dzinoti Ndebele neShona uye ndiri mugari wemudunhu rekwaBhejani. Translated as:

I speak Ndebele and Shona and I reside in Bhejani village.

[Participant LB3, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The findings indicate that Chivi District is a melting pot of cultures. However, despite its multilingual nature, where Shangani, Ndebele and Shona ILs are spoken, Chivi District is dominated by monolingualism where the LOI is concerned. The situation does not augur well in terms of strengthening social justice in the education sector because learners should be able to enjoy learning in their mother tongues. However, at Grade Three in Chivi District, learners use English for mastering the school curriculum content.

f) Low Self-Esteem

The research findings of the FGIs also indicated the outcome of low-self esteem. Participants revealed that whenever they communicated in their ethnic languages, they were mocked by their classmates who belonged to IL Shona which was partly recognised in the education system. The following are the comments made by some participants in substantiating the above arguments:

It is a fact that we develop inferiority complex when we use English as the LOI. [Participant LA3 from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Vazhinji vedu tikanzi taurai neEnglish tinosvoda nekuti tinovhunavhuna. Translated as:

The majority of us are shy to speak in English because we are not fluent in it. [Participant LA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Vanotaura Shangani tiri vashoma pano pachikoro. Nekudaro hatinyanyi kutaura Shangani nektut vamwe vedu havaigoni uye vanotiseka. Saka tinotoya kuitaura. Translated as: *Those who speak Shangani are a minority at this school. As a result, we rarely speak Shangani because the majority does not understand it and they usually mock us. So we hesitate to speak our language.* [Participant LB4, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019]

Learner participants were of the view that the persistent use of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District led to the development of an inferiority complex among some learners. Implicitly, those learners were not free to express themselves even in their own ILs because they felt that home languages were inferior to English and Shona. In the process, the situation creates a negative linguistic environment in the education sector.

g) Coercive Tendencies

The findings of this study pointed to coercive tendencies as a negative influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice practices in the education system. Learner participants (LA4, and LB6) mentioned that, during teaching and learning processes, learners were exposed to draconian classroom rules which compelled them to communicate in English. The following comments made by some research participants substantiate these findings:

Vadzizisi vanoti musataura Shona inguva yeEnglish. Translated as: At times our teachers instruct us not to speak in home languages but use English language only during learning. [Participant LB6, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]
Ndinobvumirana nemazwi aLB6 kuti muclass tinonzi taurai ChiRungu asi kana tiri panze toga tinotaura zvedu rurimi rwaamai Shona.

Translated as: I confirm LB6's opinion that we are forced to speak in English in the classroom but when outside, we resort to Shona. [Participant LB1, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The above quotations imply a lack of freedom in the choice of the language to use in teaching and learning. This was because Grade Three learners were introduced to certain draconian classroom rules and regulations that played down ILs in favour of English as the LOI. The use of 'force' accounts for social injustice in the education sector.

h) Bilingualism

The findings of the FGIs also identified bilingualism as a dilemma in teaching and learning at Grade Three level. Participants (LB6, LB5)'s responses pointed to bilingualism and code switching as a strategy to end learner incompetency in English, emanating from the dominance of English as the LOI at Grade Three. Remarks substantiating the above findings are provided below:

Vanaticha vedu vanonyanya kushandisa ChiRungu neShona.

Translated as: Our teachers, mostly use English and Shona during teaching and learning. [Participant LB5, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Zvataura LB5 ishokwadi chakazara nokuti panotaura vadzidzisi neShona tinobata zvidzidzo nekukasira kudarika panotaurwa neChiRungu. Tose tinokwanisa kusasimudza maoko.

Translated as: *LB5 is correct to mention that we understand subject matter quickly when the teachers communicate in mother languages. Participation is very low when English is used as the LOI.* [Participant LB6, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Study findings above established that the use of more than one language in teaching and learning was common. This means that English should be used together with ILs as the LOI. In other words, it points to the need to incorporate language teaching strategies that call for language diversity in the education sector.

4.3.1.7 The Benefits of English Language in Educational Achievement

Various views were aired by participants during FGIs with regard to questions related to sub-research question three of this study in an attempt to reveal the extent to which English language champions social justice education practices or malpractices through the educational achievement parameter. The following are the categories under the foregoing theme: (1) English language versus tests and examinations, (2) English language versus educational upward mobility, (3) English language versus

increased access to academic information, and (4) English language versus sifting, selection and allocation of roles.

a) English Language versus Tests and Examinations

The view of learners during FGI discussions revealed that use of English as the LOI at Grade Three was to a certain extent helpful, particularly in examinations. At Grade Three level, learners had to sit for tests every fortnight in all ten subjects. Learner participants mentioned that they discovered that English was practical for the above purpose since it was the communication mode in 9 of the 10 subjects. It made their life easy and enhanced their chances of scoring better marks. Explanations from participants which illustrate these findings are as follows:

(Achiratidza kufunga kwakadzama) Maonere angu ndeekuti sezvo tichinyora bvunzo dzedu dzakawanda neChiRungu, chinobatsira kuti tipase masubjects akawanda. Translated as:

English language benefits us a lot in writing tests, we use English language in many subjects. Therefore, it will help us to score in these subjects. [Participant LA5, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Participant (LA5) pointed out that tests and examinations were easy to tackle when the learner has knowledge of English. Understanding of English facilitates grasping of concepts under examination because the majority of the tests and examinations are written in English.

b) English Language versus Educational Upward Mobility

Apart from tests and examinations, FGI findings also revealed that English was an asset for educational upward mobility. English affords learners an opportunity to advance their education to higher levels anywhere around the globe. Learner participants (LA6, LB2) confirmed that English proficiency is instrumental in performing academically at primary school, thereby giving them an equal opportunity to ascend the educational ladder. Comments supporting these findings are provided below:

Neimwe nzira tikagona ChiRungu hedu zvinotibatsira kuti tinzwisise mamwe masubjects anoshandisa mutauro weChiRungu. Translated as:

In other words, if we internalise English language, it will help us to perform better in other subjects which use English language as the mode of communication. [Participant LA6, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Concerning educational achievement of learners, English is seen as an asset because it is the mode of communication in further education. This implies that for the Grade Three learners to achieve educationally, mastery of English is essential. Globally English is increasingly used in higher education.

c) English Language versus Increased Access to Academic Information

Furthermore, FGI findings of this study confirmed that English is a tool for learners to get more information pertaining to various subjects in the school curriculum. One learner participant had this to say:

Kudzidza neChiRungu kunobatsira kuti tibudirire pamasubjects akawanda. Translated as:

In other words, English language will assist us to get more information that will enable us to understand the content in other subjects which demand English language as the mode of communication. [Participant LA6, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Since most curriculum content is English codified and the official communication is conveyed in English, Grade Three learners benefit from English proficiency. Since academic courses in English, they acquire the content required in examinations and other scholarly activities which they need to perform well and attain educationally.

d) English Language versus Sifting, Selection and Allocation of Roles

The view of learners during FGIs established that employers across economic sectors require academic qualifications to recruit employees. In accordance with the above findings, one learner participant had this to say:

Kana tichidzidza ChiRungu chinorema kutaura asi mangwana chinotibatsira kana toinda kundoshanda kune dzimwe nyika.

Translated as:

It is very difficult to communicate in English during learning but English will help us in future, especially when we go to work in other countries. [Participant LA3, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

After schooling, Grade Three learners are expected to occupy societal roles both in the public and private sectors. Thus, educational credits and qualifications, including English proficiency play a major role in selecting and allocating the learners to occupy various job vacancies. In other words, English is a requirement in selecting people to fill certain posts.

4.3.1.8 English as a Barrier in Educational Achievement

Research findings in this study revealed that English might be a barrier to learners' educational achievement. Under this theme, the following sub-themes emerged: (1) poor performance in class, (2) slowness in thinking, (3) reading and writing difficulties, and (4) learners learn faster in ILs than in English. The rest of this section explores the above sub-theme and its categories in an effort to examine the extent to which social justice practices are a reality in Chivi District primary schools.

a) English Language versus Poor Performance in the Classroom

During FGIs learner participants confirmed that there was poor performance in classrooms. At both research sites. Participant (LA1) mentioned that the use of English as the LOI is associated with poor academic performance as illustrated below:

Hazvina kunaka kuuti tishandise mutauro weChiRungu pakudzidza nekudzidzisa. Izvi zvinodaro nemhaka yokuti zvidzidzo zvakawanda zvinoshandisa ChiRungu semutauro wekudzidzisa, uyo watisinganzwisisi. Translated as:

It is not fair to use English language in teaching and learning. This is because the majority of the subjects use English as the LOI, the language that we do not understand. [Participant LA1, from school A, interviewed on 19 March 2019 in Chivi District]

According to comments from the research participants in FGIs, Grade Three learners had difficulties in dealing with academic work using English as the LOI. This implies that avoidance of mother tongue in teaching and learning puts them at a disadvantage because grasping of concepts is a challenge where the LOI is not the mother tongue. Study findings revealed that assessment of learners' performance where the LOI is English indicated very low marks.

b) Slowness in Thinking

Findings from FGIs confirmed that English was a barrier to academic achievement of Grade Three learners in Chivi District. Learner participants (LB4, LB6) revealed that the cognitive abilities of learners were greatly affected when using English in learning. Two learner participants had this to say:

Kutura mutauro wevamwe hazvibatsiri nekuti wako unosarira sure uye zvinokutorera nguva refu kufunga kana kutaura zvaunoda nekuti unenge uchishaiwa kuti woti kudini.

Translated as: *It is not good to use other people's language in learning because it takes you a long time to think and speak your mind.* [Participant LB4, from school A, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Ichokwadi chirikutaurika, Shona inotibatsira kuti tikohwe zvibodza zvakawanda. Semuenzaniso pakunyora rondedzero tinokaira kufunga nekunyora kupinda zvatingaita pakunyora composition.

Translated as: *Mother language assists us to score better marks, for example, in composition writing, it is easy to come up with*

some ideas when writing indigenous language composition than English language composition. [Participant LB6, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The use of English as the LOI affects negatively the performance of Grade Three learners. These learners first think in their mother tongues before they translate the concepts into English. To that effect, communication between teachers and learners is a challenge. This scenario has a bearing on learner achievement.

c) Reading and Writing Difficulties

FGI findings also revealed that learners faced challenges in both reading and writing using English as the communication mode. The general feeling of the majority of the participants (LB4, LB3,) was that ILs were instrumental in facilitating reading and writing in English. Explanations from the participants in line with the above findings are as follows:

ChiRungu mukwidza kuchitaura. Hatigoni kunyora kana kuverenga neChiRungu. Chero hazvo zvichinzi chinozotibatsira kumabasa asi pakudzidza tinoremegwa. Translated as:

It is difficult to communicate in English. We cannot read, neither are able to write in English language. Although we know that it will assist us to get jobs in future but it is difficult to understand it.

[Participant LB4, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Ichokwadi ichocho hatigonhi kutaura ChiRungu pamwe nekunyora asi tonotochidavo. Saka maticha vanozongoshandisa Shona kuti tifambe mberi nechidzidzo.

Translated as: *It is true that we are struggling to read and write in English. Our teachers come to the rescue by resorting to heritage languages. [Participant LB3, from school A, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]*

The above quotations imply that the home language is the key to unlock the learners' potential to deal with English content. Thus, for primary Grade Three learners to be

able to read with fluency in English, they should first learn to read in their first language. First language reading and writing skills can then be generalised to deal with tasks in English.

d) Learners Learn Faster in ILs than in English

FGI findings also established that general consensus among learners that academic performance is enhanced when learners use the mother tongues as the LOI. Learner participants (LB6, LB4, LB1, LB3) commented that concepts are understood quickly when explained in home languages. The following comments made by some of the participants substantiate the above findings:

Mitauro inotaurwa nanaticha pakudzidzisa iShona neChiRungu. Asi Shona inotozonyanya chikonzero vakati takarasima neChiRungu hapana unovanzwa. Tinodzima chose.

Translated as: Mostly, teachers use English and Shona in teaching. However, they resort to mother language because we do not understand English. We are comfortable with Home languages. [Participant LB6, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Shona inotibatsira kuti tinzwisise zvidzidzo nekukasira. Translated as: Heritage languages assist us to quickly grasp concepts. [Participant LB1, from school B, interviewed on 26 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The above quotations indicate that learners score better when using ILs as the LOI than English. This implies that the education system at Grade Three in Chivi District is marred by social justice malpractices because the use of English as the LOI at the expense of ILs disadvantages learners academically.

Having analysed and presented data from the FGIs in this section of the research, analysis and presentation of face-to-face interview data is the focus of the next section of the study.

4.4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS FROM FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS

The raw data from the semi-structured, open-ended interviews are presented, analysed and discussed in this section of the study. For their part, semi-structured, open-ended interviews were held with four (4) teachers, two (2) head teachers, two (2) education officers from the District Education office and two (2) parents. The section is classified into major themes and sub-themes derived from the emerged raw data in line with the research sub-questions which guide this study. Furthermore, the presentation and analysis of findings are substantiated with verbatim quotations from the semi-structured, open-ended interviews.

4.4.1 Participants' Views on How English as the LOI Impedes Social Justice Education Practices in Primary Schools

In the process of doing semi-structured, open-ended interviews, participants were introduced to the discussions on their perceptions and attitudes of English as a LOI at Grade Three and its implications for social justice education practices. The research question aimed to explore the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three and its capacity to foster social justice in the education system in Chivi District primary schools. Research participants displayed diverse lived experiences in using English as the LOI in primary schools especially with specific reference to Grade Three. The following list comprises the eight (8) major themes that emerged from the participants' semi-structured interviews for all the three sub-research questions guiding this study: (1) Conceptualisation of the LOI, (2) positive perception of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice, (3) negative perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice, (4) conceptualisation of social justice, (5) opportunities in English as the LOI in influencing social justice education practice, (6) adversity in English as the LOI in influencing social justice education practice, (7) English as a LOI, an asset for educational achievement and social justice, and (8) English as a barrier to educational achievement and social justice. The following sub-section endeavours to unpack and explore each one of the major themes and their related sub-themes and categories.

4.4.1.1 Conceptualisation of the LOI

As the research participants were exploring on English as the LOI at Grade Three, the conceptualisation of the LOI became a topical issue. This was because for the participants to effectively come up with vivid personal views on the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three, they needed to understand exactly what was meant by the LOI. In the process of familiarising themselves with the concept LOI, some participants defined it in various ways. The following constitutes some meanings attached to the LOI: (i) the LOI/MOI as an acronym, (ii) the LOI/MOI as a mode of communication, (iii) the LOI/MOI as a government policy and (iv) the school curriculum and the MOI (participants, HB, PB, EO1, TB2, EO2). The section below unpacks the contents of the sub-themes outlined above.

a) The LOI as an Acronym

The description of the LOI as an acronym emerged as one of the key issues in conceptualising the LOI during semi-structured, open ended interviews. Findings indicated that participants perceived the MOI/LOI as an acronym depicting the Medium of Instruction or the Language of Instruction (PB, HB, and TB1). This means the two abbreviations (MOI/LOI) were interchangeably used to describe the language for teaching and learning.

Some remarks from the face-to-face interview participants in connection with these findings are as follows:

The MOI is an acronym which stands for the medium of instruction.

This means a language that is used in teaching and learning in schools. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The MOI is an abbreviation which means the medium of instruction. In most cases, it is the language for teaching and learning. [Participant PB, from school B, interviewed on 28 March 2019 in Chivi District]

b) The MOI as a Mode of Communication

Another sub-theme from the conceptualisation of the LOI theme relating to the perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice was the MOI as a mode of communication (EO2, TB2). Participants (EO1, TB2) argued that MOI is a vehicle of communication in the academic sphere. The LOI is perceived as an instrument for communicating the school curriculum. Comments to substantiate the above findings are as follows:

In schools, we are running a curriculum which should be communicated to the learners using a mode of communication. Therefore, the mode of communication is language. This is the medium of instruction. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

The MOI refers to the mode of communication used to teach various subjects in the classroom. This is the language that the teacher uses to teach the curriculum. [Participant TB2, from school interviewed on 28 March 2019 in Chivi District]

c) The School Curriculum and the MOI

The research findings further revealed that the school curriculum and the LOI were 'Siamese twins', in other words, they are inseparable. However, the MOI at Grade Three upwards was typically English. Most participants (TB2, TB1, TA2, TA1, PB, PA, EO2, EO1, HA, HB) concurred that a foreign language (English) was the driver for the school curriculum content.

The remarks to support the above findings are provided below:

The English language is the MOI for upper grades and the mother language is the MOI for lower classes. [Participant EO2, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

English language is the MOI used to teach the school curriculum at Grade Three level. [Participant TA2, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

4.4.1.2 The Positive Perceptions of English as the LOI and its Implications for Social Justice

Apart from the conceptualisation of the MOI, the study revealed some positive perceptions of English as the LOI and their implications for social justice. Most participants from both semi-structured, face-to-face interviews concurred that the use of English as the LOI was advantageous. Five sub-themes emerged from this major theme about the positive perceptions towards English as the LOI: (i) English as an instrument for global communication, (ii) English as a language of employment opportunities, (iii) English as a language for further education, (iv) English as the official language of business, and (v) English as the classroom language. The above issues were unpacked below.

a) English as an Instrument for Global Communication

Exploring participants' views on English as the LOI in face-to-face interviews, the study found consensus among the participants about English as a global language of communication. Participants (HA, EO1, TA1, TB2,) viewed the use of English language in teaching and learning as an advantage for them to interact with the rest of the world. Participants indicated that upon mastering English in their academic journey, learners might be in a position to communicate effectively with people from other nations throughout the globe. This implies that English widens the scope and horizon of the learners' communication capacity.

The following remarks made by some of the participants support the above findings:

I can say using English in teaching and learning is an advantage because it is a global language. So if learners master English, they will be able to communicate with people from other regions. [Participant TA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The English language is good in teaching and learning because if learners internalise it, they will be able to communicate with people from other nations throughout the globe. [Participant HA from school A interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

b) English as the Language of Employment Opportunities

Discussions from both semi-structured, open ended interviews revealed that participants attached high regard to English as a language of job opportunities after schooling (HB, EO1, PA, TA1). In other words, English is instrumental in the learners' future economic well-being. This means the capacity to speak and write in English may assure learners good-paying jobs.

Explanations from the face-to-face interviews in tandem with the above findings are as follows:

English is a gateway to the success of the learner because if the learner masters English, he or she may go up the education ladder and is assured of a better paying job in future. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The use of English in teaching is good because the explanation is clear to understand concepts. This will help learners to master English further in employment. English is the language of employment opportunities. [Participant PA, from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District].

Well, if learners are taught in English they master the language. Being the official language, it will assist them to interact with the rest of the globe in future for both further education and employment opportunities across the globe. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

c) English as a Language for Further Education

Furthermore, the face-to-face findings of this study revealed that participants widely perceived English as the language instrumental for further education (HB, EO1, and). Most research participants thought it was fair to use English as the LOI from Grade Three to secondary and tertiary levels of education. This is because of instruction of the subject content at those levels of education demand English. This implies that English is the language of education. Any other language is either a taught subject or does not feature in the education field.

Some participants had this to say:

English is a gateway to the success of the learner because if he/she masters English, he /she may go up the education ladder.

[Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Well, if learners are taught in English they master the language. Being the official language, it will assist them to interact with the rest of the globe in future for both further education and employment opportunities across the globe. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

d) English as the Official Language of Business

The face-to-face interview research findings of this study further confirmed English as the official language in various spheres. Research participants unanimously agreed that English is instrumental in the business circles across the globe (HB, TA1, PA). People who can communicate proficiently in English are required in business of all kinds.

The participants made the following remarks to substantiate the above findings:

English is the official language in Zimbabwe which means it is the language of business. Some companies with money will employ

educated people who can communicate with English. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]
I can say using English in teaching and learning is an advantage because it is associated with high class. This is because English is widely used as the official language in Zimbabwe. Even other countries in the region are also using English as they interact in their everyday transactions. [Participant TA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Following the above perceptions of English as the LOI, one parent said:

From my working experience in the industry, I have proved that ILs do not work in business circles. Learners should strive hard to master English. [Participant PA from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District]

e) English as the Language of the Classroom

The last sub-theme emerging from positive perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice was English as the language of the classroom. The face-to-face study findings indicated that classroom instruction was the province of English (EO1, TA1, TA2, HA, PA). Most research participants unanimously agreed that, among the ten (10) subjects taught at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools, only Shona was the subject that did not use English as the LOI. The rest of the subjects were conducted in English.

Explanations from participants concurred with this finding as follows:

I teach a total of 10 subjects namely Maths, Agriculture, Science, Heritage-Social Studies, Visual and Performing Arts, Shona, Family, Religion and Moral Education (FAREME), Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Physical Education and Sport. In teaching these subjects, I use English, except in Shona which is the IL. [Participant TA2, from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District: p18]

I teach 10 subjects at primary grade 3 and in most of them, except one, English is used in teaching and learning. [Participant TA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

At primary Grade 3, English is used as the LOI in the following subjects, Visual and Performing Arts, Agriculture, Science, ICT, Heritage-Social Studies, English, Fareme, and Physical Education. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

4.4.1.3 Negative Perceptions of English as the LOI and its Implications for Social Justice

The third theme emerging from face-to-face interviews was the negative perceptions of English as the LOI. Most research participants unanimously agreed that English was a liability in the education system. The sub-themes in line with this theme are as follows: (i) English as a menace to one's culture and identity, (ii) teacher incompetency in English, (iii) English language versus curriculum literature, (iv) home environment not conducive for English, and (v) promotion of monolingualism. The section below serves to expand on each of the sub-themes mentioned above.

a) English as a Menace to One's Culture and Identity

The study found out that the use of English as the LOI was a threat to the learners' culture and identity. This was because research participants were in unanimous agreement that English could erode one's culture and identity (HB, TB1, HB). This implies that use of English as the LOI at Grade Three could create cultural erosion.

Some comments to substantiate the above findings are as follows:

To some extent, English may be a disadvantage. For example, it is common knowledge that within one's language we attach his or her culture and identity. So, using English as a LOI tends to strip away one's culture. [Participant HB, from school A, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

English is a disadvantage in that it will force learners to forsake their mother languages at a very tender age. Hence they will lose both their languages and identity which are very important aspects of their culture. [Participant HA, from school A, interviewed on 20 March in Chivi District]

b) Teacher-Learner Incompetency in the English Language

Face-to-face research findings of this study indicated teacher-learner incompetency in English. Most participants from the semi-structured and FGIs (TA1, TA2, TB1.HA, HB, EO1, TB2) remarked that more often they experienced stressful moments with English during teaching and learning.

To substantiate the above findings, some participants had this to say:

You see, it is not always easy to use other people's language in learning and teaching. This is because people love their languages as well as culture. So in a situation like this where the LOI is not the language of both the teachers and the learners, we are likely to face a lot of incompetence in both the teachers and learners in using English. So their right to language is thwarted since there is no linguistic diversity in as far as the LOI is concerned in the District. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

Well, of course as an L2 to me there are so many times where I struggle to find a simple word to use so that these young learners understand me. As a result, I end up using their home language. [Participant TA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

c) English Language versus Curriculum Literature

Another sub-theme pointing to the negative perceptions of English as the LOI revealed by the study findings was that the school curriculum literature was English dominated. The participants (EO2, TA1, TA2) described the school curriculum as elitist. Very little

was offered in ILs. Curriculum literature, for instance, textbooks, wall charts and other teaching and learning resource materials, was codified in English.

The remarks below are consistent with the research findings above:

Policy demands that English should be used to teach in nine subjects out of 10. Like what I have already indicated that it is only in Shona, where English is not used. However, at the Grade 3 level, it is very difficult to speak in English throughout. I usually switch to Shona when I see that they do not understand the concepts. [Participant TA2, from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District]

A primary Grade 3 class studies the following subjects: Heritage-Social Studies, ICT, Visual and Performing Arts, Agriculture, Maths, Science, Fareme, English and Shona. Among the above subjects, it is only Shona which is not using English as the MOI. The rest of the subjects are centred on English language. [Participant EO2, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 March 2019 in Chivi District]

d) Promotion of Monolingualism

The fourth sub-category to the major theme of negative perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice alluded to monolingualism. Two face-to-face interview participants (EO2, PA) described the linguistic environment in Chivi District primary schools as monolingual. In other words, the participants suggested the death of heritage languages in Chivi District because home language common in the district, namely, Shangani, Ndebele and Shona, were not promoted in teaching and learning. The aforementioned home languages were regarded did not play any role in schooling in spite of the large number of speakers.

Comments to substantiate the above findings are as follows:

I am afraid to say that if we continue to use English in teaching and learning at school, our children will end up knowing one

language. They will underrate their mother languages forever.

[Participant PA, from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District]

You see, certainly, there is one language which tends to be more equal or important than others here. This is because the majority of the subjects do affiliate to English yet the majority of the learners do not speak English together with their teachers. [Participant EO2, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

e) Home Environment Not Conducive for English acquisition

The research findings also revealed that one participant (TA1) perceived the home environment as a cause for concern with regard to the learners' failure to cope with English in teaching and learning. He said:

Learners have the opportunity to speak English both at home and school but this largely depends on the home environment.

[Participant TA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

4.4.1.4 Conceptualisation of Social Justice

Semi-structured, open ended interviews discussions included a research question which demanded participants to explore the influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice in primary schools. The purpose of the question was to find out the degree to which social justice education practices were a reality in schools in the absence of language diversity. The first key theme emerging from participants' exploration of English as the LOI and its influence on fostering social justice education practices was the conceptualisation of the concept of social justice. Various views about the meaning of social justice were echoed by parents, teachers, school administrators and education officers during face-to-face interview sessions held in Chivi District primary schools.

a) Social Justice as Freedom

In an endeavour to describe social justice with a bias towards the LOI, participants conceptualised social justice as freedom or liberty to use the language of choice in teaching and learning, whether ILs or foreign languages (TA1, TB1, TB2). The study established that social justice is a reality when learners and teachers have the freedom to use the language of their choice in the teaching and learning process.

The following constitutes comments made by the research participants to substantiate the above findings:

I think social justice is a situation whereby teachers and learners recognise and have the freedom to use all the languages found in the locality. [Participant TA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

In terms of the MOI, social justice I think is the recognition, freedom and respect granted to a group of people's language to take part in teaching and learning. [Participant TB1, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

I am of the view that social justice education practices entail freedom and human rights of every cultural group through the inclusion of their language in teaching and learning. [Participant TB2, from school B, interviewed on 28 March 2019 in Chivi District]

b) Social Justice as Fairness

The face-to-face findings of the study also revealed that social justice could be conceptualised as fairness. The participants (TB2, HA, EO2) vividly described social justice in connection with the LOI as the execution of fairness in terms of language usage. This implies that social justice in the education system is hinged on fairness in terms of how both English and ILs are treated. This means learners should have the opportunity to learn using their mother tongues.

The following remarks are in tandem with the research findings:

In teaching, we have a communication mode which is a language. So when we talk of social justice, we are talking of fairness. So for us to realise fairness where we have different groups of people, their languages should be respected and valued. Their value is manifested in their use of the LOI. Thus, we can claim social justice in the education system. [Participant TB2, from school B, interviewed on 28 March 2019 in Chivi District]

I want to relate social justice in education as simply fairness in connection with how local languages are considered in teaching and learning. In other words, I am calling for language homogeneity in education. In other words, not only one language should dominate the school curriculum. [Participant HA, from school A interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

c) Social Justice as Multilingualism

The study findings also described social justice as denoting linguistic pluralism. Participants (EO1, HB) used the term multilingualism in defining social justice as related to the LOI. The idea is that when linguistic pluralism is being considered, that is, all languages are recognised as the language of education, social justice is a reality.

To substantiate the above findings, the two participants had this to say:

In this context, social justice is an attempt to address the inequalities being faced in using the languages in teaching and learning. In other words, it is a quest for linguistic diversity in the education system. [Participant EO2, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2016 in Chivi District]

I think when focusing on the LOI, social justice in education can be a reality when we do away with dominance of one language in teaching and learning in the classroom. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

d) Social Justice as Equal Access

Furthermore, the face-to-face research participants defined social justice in terms of granting equal opportunities to all languages spoken in the community to become the LOI. Participants' (HA, HB, EO1, PA) responses from the interview sessions called for equality of opportunities in terms of language usage in delivering the curriculum content.

These remarks from the research participants substantiate the above findings of the study:

Conceptualising social justice in this District, English is at the centre but within the District, we have several languages namely Shona, Shangani and Ndebele. Therefore, social justice in this case can be viewed as giving equal access to use the languages in the District to be used in teaching and learning. If these languages are taken at the equal stance, then we can proclaim social justice in the education system. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

Well, when I sort of compare the two languages namely Shona and English language, there is an imbalance. English has an upper hand than IL Shona. [Participant PA, from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District]

I think when focusing on the LOI, social justice in education can be a reality when we do away with dominance of one language in teaching and learning in the classroom. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

4.4.1.5 Opportunities in English as the LOI in Influencing Social Justice Education Practices

The second major theme about the influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice in the education system in Chivi District primary schools focused on opportunities in English as the LOI in fostering social justice education practices. The

research findings indicated that some participants viewed English as a facilitator of social justice in the school system. Therefore, this section of the research study explored the three aspects indicative of the positive influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice education practices in two Chivi District primary schools, namely, (i) English as the language of unity, (ii) improvement on access to information and movement globally, and (iii) cultivation of neutral communication environment in the education system.

a) English as the Language of Unity

First, the face-to-face findings of this study reflected on English as the language of unity to explore the influence of English in fostering social justice in the education system. Participants (HA, HB, PB) remarked that in a multilingual community like Chivi District, the use of English as the language of education was a step towards national cohesion and social justice since learners were bound by one language. Conflicts and tension which are characteristics of social injustice could be avoided. This means participants (PB, HB, HA) perceived English as the centre of unity in the classroom and beyond.

The following comments made by some of the participants during interview sessions support these findings:

Using English as the LOI has both positive and negative effects as I see it. First, English is an advantage in a multilingual community like this area because it will unite these diverse learners. They tend to benefit from the lessons on equal footing because all of them use English as the L2. [Participant HA, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

You know, it is true that way for instance, in a multilingual society like this one, English may be functional because it allows all learners to operate at the same level since it is an L2 for all of them. [Participant, PB from school B, interviewed on 28 March 2019 in Chivi District]

I think English will assist the learners to cut across cultural barriers in that in a multilingual community it is an instrument of unity.

[Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

b) Improvement on Access to Information and Movement Globally

The second aspect on English as a panacea to social justice in the education system revealed by the research findings was its ability to improve access to information and movement on a global scale (TA1, HB, EO2). This was against the backdrop that English empowered individuals linguistically so that they could communicate verbally and in writing. The study revealed that the ability to communicate in English was an asset in the education system because learners believed that English empowers individuals linguistically that they can communicate verbally and in writing.

Explanations consistent with these findings from the participants are as follows:

Currently English fosters justice in the education system as textbooks are written in English which is almost used internationally. Once one can speak in English, you can communicate with anyone in another country without problems.

[Participant TA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Well, to some extent I can say that for those who have the opportunity to further their education, English may assist them to interact with the rest of the world and may be instrumental in the job market.

[Participant EO2, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

English guarantees a learner a better learning future because, without the knowledge of English, you cannot go further with education in this country and even beyond our borders.

[Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

c) Cultivation of Neutral Communication Environment in the Education System

The third sub-theme under the positive influence of English in championing social justice in the education system theme in Chivi District which emerged from the semi-structured, open ended interview research findings was the neutral communication environment in the educational sphere. Research participants EO1, HA, TB1, TA2, HB viewed English as influential in promoting fairness in teaching and learning. This implies that participants (EO1, HA, TB1, TA2, HB) shared the idea that English as LOI allowed the incorporation of speakers of all ILs in Chivi District in the education system. Remarks substantiating these findings are provided below:

You know, the issue of equal opportunity is central in education. On a positive note, I see English as promoting social justice in the classroom in that it allows all learners to operate at the same level at any given level because it is an L2 for all of them be they Shona, Ndebele or Shangani speaking learners. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

This District is of course multilingual. So it will be fair to find a neutral language to communicate academic issues. In that case, we cannot overrate English. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

The use of English as the LOI fosters social justice in the education system because learners speak different indigenous languages in this area. Therefore, the use of English is quite relevant since there will be no bias of any indigenous language. [Participant TB1, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

4.4.1.6 Adverse Effects of English as an LOI in Influencing Social Justice Education Practices

The sixth key theme about the influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice education practices was the adverse effects of English as a LOI in fostering social justice in the education system. Most face-to-face interview participants' responses to a larger degree indicated that English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District was

far from being an opportunity and promoter of social justice education. Under this subsection of the research study fourteen (14) sub-categories emerged from both semi-structured face-to-face interviews, namely, (i) lack of linguistic diversity, (ii) language attrition, (iii) an elite centred curriculum, (iv) ILs as custodians of people's culture and identity, (v) the manifestation of xenocentrism, (vi) avoidance of ILs, (vii) early immersion, (viii) bilingualism, (ix) ethnic languages and their demise, (x) the multilingualism nature of the community, (xi) inclusion to exclude, (xii) glocalisation of ILs, and (xiii) coercive tendencies.

The section below focuses on analysing each of the above sub-categories emerging from this key theme.

a) Lack of Linguistic Diversity

Research findings for this study established the existence of a linguistic monopoly in Chivi District primary schools (EO2, LA1, EO1, LA2). There was concrete evidence that teaching and learning at Grade Three were dominated by English in nine of the school subjects taught at primary school level in Chivi District. Secondly, among the ILs spoken in the District, namely, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele, only one, Shona, was recognised as a subject and not as a MOI. Thus, ILs were pushed to the linguistic margin.

The following comments made by some of the research participants substantiate the above findings:

You know, social justice in education centres around equity, linguistic diversity, fairness and the observation of human rights and so on. So I think taking a leaf from the policy (Zimbabwe education language policy), it is divisive in that it calls for an elite centred curriculum where one language is the master of them all.

[Participant EO2, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

You see, it is not always easy to use other people's language in learning and teaching. This is because people love their language as well as culture. So in a situation like this where the LOI is not the

language of both the teachers and learners, we are likely to face a lot of incompetency in both teachers and learners in using English. So their right to language is thwarted since there is no linguistic diversity in as far as the LOI is concerned in this District. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

b) Language Attrition

The findings of this study also indicated language death as another social justice educational pitfall unearthed during face-to-face interviews relating to the use of English as the LOI. Research participants (LB1, LB4, PB, HB) viewed the use of English at the expense of their heritage languages as a recipe for the death of the home languages in Chivi District.

These remarks below from the participants substantiate the above findings:

These two languages (ILs Shangani and Ndebele) are almost phased out even in our local villages where we gather for beer drinking and cooperative, you hardly hear anybody communicating in them. It is Shona, Shona throughout. I believe this is the case even at school. [Participant PB, from school B, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District]

English is a disadvantage in that it will force learners to forsake their mother languages at a very tender age. Hence, they will lose both their language and identity, which are very important aspects of their culture. Remember the culture of a people is in their language. [Participant HA, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

c) An Elite Centred Curriculum

Further findings on the negative influence of English on fostering social justice education practices pointed to an elite centred curriculum. Research participants (EO2, PA, HA, TB2) opined that social justice malpractices manifested through

inequalities in the use of English and mother tongues as languages of education. Mother tongues occupied peripheral roles, while English occupied the central role in communicating the school curriculum.

Explanations from the research participants under these findings are as follows:

Well, the issue is in the language policy (Zimbabwe Education language policy). The English language enjoys more space than IL, that is what I mean by an elite centred school curriculum because very few people can speak English in this District. The majority speak ILs. So it is dividing the people. [Participant EO2, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2016 in Chivi District]

You know, the nature of our curriculum is that most subjects are English based. That is, they use English as the mode of communication. The other point is that parents in the procurement committee at this school even recommend for the purchase of more English textbooks than ILs. They say that they want their children to learn English so that they will get good jobs and live better lives. [Participant HA, from school A interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

d) Indigenous Languages as Custodians of People's Culture and Identity

Another aspect revealed by the research findings of this study was the issue of perceiving ILs as the custodians of people's culture and identity. The research participants (HB) argued that the use of English as the LOI could have the capacity to strip away ILs' role as the custodians of people's culture and identity.

They had this to say:

While English is a blessing, I think there is a bit of a problem. The curriculum is aligned with English since the majority of the subjects are taught in English. ILs are ignored yet we believe that they

incorporate a people's culture. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

This is the language they are used to since they speak it at home. They have love for their language since it gives them identity. [Participant HA, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District].

e) The Manifestation of Xenocentrism

The research findings of this study also revealed some xenocentric tendencies as one of the social justice education malpractices. For their part, research participants (HA, TA2,) perceived that, in comparison, English enjoyed more ground than ILs in their use as the LOI. Most participants declared that they preferred English as the LOI than ILs for various reasons.

Some research participants made the following comments to substantiate the above findings:

It depends on how we value these subjects or languages. Normally we tend to think that learners should be exposed more to English literature so that they master the language and become associated with those with money and good-paying jobs. [Participant TA2, from school A interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The other point is that parents in the procurement committee at this school even recommend for the purchase of more English textbooks than ILs. They say that they want their children to learn English so that they will get good jobs and live better lives. [Participant HA, from school A interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

f) Early Language Immersion

The research findings indicated early language immersion as another key social justice education malpractice as a result of the use of English as the LOI. Two

participants (HA, TA1) cited that the adoption of English as the LOI at Grade Three accounted for early language immersion, resulting in neglect of ILs. This implies that Grade Three learners were gradually losing their first language in the interests of the second language.

One headteacher had this to say:

English is a disadvantage in that it will force learners to forsake their mother languages at a very tender age. Hence, they will lose both their language and identity. [Participant HA, from School A interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Similarly, one teacher echoed the above sentiment in his remarks below:

You know, these learners are at a transitional grade where they are introduced to English as the LOI for the first time. In the previous grades, ILs were used as the LOI. [Participant TA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

g) Inclusion in Order to Exclude

Furthermore, face-to-face research findings of this study reflected on ethnic languages and their dilemma in the education sector in Chivi District. Some research participants (TA1, TB1, EOI, PB, TB2, HB, HA) explained that ethnic languages, namely, Shangani and Ndebele, occurred in this District. However, they were excluded from the school curriculum.

The research participants made the following comments which substantiate these findings:

Among the three ILs in this community, only Shona is taught as a subject at Grade Three. The other two (Shangani and Ndebele) are not part of the school curriculum. [Participant TB1 from school B, interviewed on 27 March in Chivi District]

You know, I think it is a dire situation because ethnic languages are not given full recognition. The Ministry of Primary and

Secondary Education may or may not recommend their use. This is not fair especially at this level. [Participant TA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

You know, it is unfortunate that in our school curriculum, we do not have Shangani and Ndebele. We only have Shona which is also sidelined because it is the LOI only when teaching Shona as a subject. [Participant HA, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

h) The Multilingual Nature of the Community

The face-to-face interviews research findings pointed to Chivi District as a plural community. Residents of the district speak ILs, namely, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele. A small group was also conversant in English by virtue that they went to school where they were exposed to English as a LOI. Participant (HB, EO1, HA, TB2) responses during interview sessions were consistent with the above.

Some participants had this to say:

The learners in this district belong to the Karanga language, which is a Shona dialect. However, we tend to have minority groups who speak Shangani and Ndebele languages. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

We seem to have several ILs being spoken in this area namely Shangani, Shona and Ndebele, which are spoken in Dhobhani and Bhejani villages. [Participant HA, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Most of my learners are Shona speaking. Then we have a small number of Shangani and Ndebele speaking. All of the above languages mentioned are not used as the LOI. This is the duty of English. [Participant TB2, from school B, interviewed on 28 March 2019 in Chivi District]

i) Two Second Languages for Some Learners

The research findings on the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in Chivi District primary schools also indicated that due to the multilingual nature of the District, there were some sections of the learners who were grappling with two second languages in the classroom. The participants (HB, HA) openly acknowledged that learners who spoke ethnic languages (Shangani and Ndebele) in this district were at crossroads with the LOI issue.

Comments supporting these findings are listed below:

There is an issue sir. You see, I can confirm that all staff members here cannot speak any of these two languages (Shangani and Ndebele). So it is yet another blow on these ethnic groups. They have to endure two second languages. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Although Shangani and Ndebele could be heard at the break and lunch hours, very few learners are fluent in these two ethnic languages and even their teachers are not conversant in these languages. So in the end they also resort to Shona. [Participant HA, from school A interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

j) Coercive Tendencies

The findings of face-to-face interviews pointed to coercive tendencies as a negative influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice practices in the education system. Research participants (TB1, PA) mentioned that during teaching and learning processes, learners were exposed to draconian classroom rules which compelled them to communicate in English.

The following comments made by some of the research participants substantiate these findings:

It seems there is an imbalance in the way languages are used. We are sort of obliged to use English, a foreign language to teach

subjects in the school curriculum yet the majority of the learners at grade 3 do not know it. So to a larger extent, there is lack of respect and recognition of ILs in teaching and learning at Grade 3 level.

[Participant TB1, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

I go back to my first point that it is not fair to use English to learn the subjects. We are somehow forced to like it to the extent of ignoring ILs simply because we hope that in future we will get employed. [Participant PA, from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District].

k) Glocalisation of Indigenous Language Shona

The face-to-face interview research findings had a bearing on ILs, notably Shona. Findings of the study indicated that IL Shona, which was the other language for the majority of learners, was taught as a school subject like any other subject in the school curriculum at Grade Three. It was not the language of education like English which commanded much respect both as a subject and the LOI (EO2, HA, HB). The language of education was the prerogative of English.

Participants made the following remarks to substantiate the findings:

The education language policy expects teachers to use English. Shona is only a subject and not a LOI. Concerning Shangani, it is not even in the school curriculum but it does exist in some communities in this district. [Participant EO2, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

You know, it is unfortunate that in our school curriculum, we do not have Shangani and Ndebele. We only have Shona which is also sidelined because it is the LOI only when teaching Shona as a subject. [Participant HA, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

The languages I have mentioned, especially Shangani and Ndebele are not part of the school curriculum in this school. Only

Shona is taught as a subject. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

l) Bilingualism

The face-to-face interview findings of this study also indicated bilingualism as dilemma in both focus group discussions and interview sessions held. Participants (HB, HA, TB1, EO1) responses pointed to bilingualism and code-switching as a strategy to end teacher-learner incompetencies in English, emanating from the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three.

Remarks substantiating the above findings are provided below:

The issue is not to ignore, for example, English in totality but these should work together. The two languages (English and Shona) should be used to assist each other to clarify concepts. No language should take a leading role if we are to realise social justice in the education sector. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Basing on the language situation in this District, where we have three or so languages being spoken, approaches like code-switching, where we are to mix the languages in interpreting issues is a positive development and will benefit the learners. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

I think mixing Shona and English may be the best approach. Apart from those teachers may use multilingualism, especially in this area where we have the languages like Shangani and Ndebele. [Participant HA, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

m) Avoidance of ILs

The face-to-face interviews also revealed that ILs in Chivi District, namely, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele, were marginalised to a larger extent (TB2, LA3, EO2, HB,

Chimhenga and Chivhanga, 2013: 59, Dube and Ncube, 2013: 250). Teachers infrequently use ILs as the LOI.

Explanations from the research participants inconsistent with the above findings are as follows:

The language policy expects teachers to use English. Shona is only subject and not a LOI. Concerning Shangani, it is not even in the school curriculum since it but it does exist in some communities in this district. [Participant EO2, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

While English is a blessing, I think there is a bit of a problem. The curriculum is aligned with English since the majority of the subjects are taught in English. ILs are ignored yet we believe that they incorporate a people's culture and identity. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

4.4.1.7 English Language as an Asset for Educational Achievement and Social Justice Education Practices

The study on the use of English as the LOI and its implications on social justice explored the role of English on educational attainment as a way to determine its influence in promoting social justice practices in the educational sector. The following are the sub-themes under the foregoing key theme: (i) English language versus tests and examinations, (ii) English language versus educational upward mobility, (iii) English language versus increased access to academic information, and (iv) English language versus sifting, selection and allocation of roles.

a) English Language versus Tests and Examinations

The face-to-face interview research findings under this theme revealed that English was a source of relief for the learners because it scaffolded them during tests and examinations (HA, EO1, PB). At Grade Three level, they had tests every fortnight in all the 10 subjects.

Remarks substantiating the above findings are provided below:

English is useful when learners are sitting for English and Content tests which call for learners to communicate in English. Moreover, at school the learners engage in debate, quiz and public speech competitions which are English dominated activities. [Participant HA, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District] Learners tend to benefit because tests are written in English and they also benefit from English because the majority of the literature in various subjects is codified in English. So learners will enhance their chances of passing thereby proceeding to secondary and tertiary education where English is also the MOI. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

b) English Language versus Educational Upward Mobility

Apart from being instrumental in tests and examinations, the study findings also revealed English as an asset for educational upward mobility. English could give them the freedom to advance their education to the secondary and tertiary sector throughout the world since they were empowered linguistically

Comments supporting these findings are provided below:

Being an international language, English may be an instrument for further education. If these learners continue with the educational ladder, they will use it to communicate in further studies, for instance in colleges and universities in other countries and locally. [Participant TB2, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

English is the gateway to success of the learner because if the learner masters English, he or she may go up the education ladder and is assured of a better paying job in future. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Well, if learners are taught in English, they master the language. Being the official language, it will assist them to interact with the

rest of the globe in future for both further education and employment opportunities across the globe. [Participant EO1, from the District Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019]

c) English Language versus Increased Access to Academic Information

Furthermore, research findings of this study indicated that English was helpful for learners to get more information about other subjects thereby scaffolding them to perform better. This implies that the ability to speak and write in English had benefits for learners because they could access information from the textbook, and other teaching and learning resources written in English.

Once one is able to speak in English, he/she can communicate with anyone in another country without problems. [Participant TA1, from school A, interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

A parent in the School Development Committee also remarked that:

Well, English is instrumental in tests and examinations since the majority of the subjects are done in English. Not only in tests and examinations but also the majority of literature is prepared in English. So using English may enhance learners' chances of being successful in their academic careers. [Participant PB, from school B, interviewed on 28 March 2019 in Chivi District]

d) English versus Sifting, Selection and Allocation of Roles

Further face-to-face interview findings of the study on the use of English as the LOI indicated that good academic results could play a significant role in sifting, selection and allocation of learners to occupy some functional societal roles. The ability to communicate fluently in English was viewed as an asset for learners in future employment opportunities.

An Education Officers at the District Education Office had this to say:

I think English has long term benefits in education. For instance, the learner may do well in the examinations at grade seven, proceeding to secondary level and up the educational ladder. Having done well, at all those levels, it means the education obtained using English as the MOI may assure the learner to get a good-paying job throughout the globe because the learner can communicate with every member of the global community. [Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

4.4.1.8 English as a Barrier to Educational Achievement and Education for Social Justice

The eighth major theme relating to the role of English in educational achievement and social justice education practices identified English as a barrier to educational achievement and social justice. Under this major theme, the following sub-categories emerged: (i) poor performance in class, (ii) slowness in thinking, (iii) reading and writing difficulties, (iv) promotion of subtractive bilingualism, (v) learners learn faster in ILs than in English and (vi) ILs versus self-confidence. The rest of this section is meant to explore the above sub-themes to examine the extent to which social justice practices were a reality in Chivi District primary schools.

a) Poor Performance in the Classroom

The research findings indicated poor classroom performance arising from the incompetency of learners in using English as the LOI. Participants (TA1, TB1, TB2, EO1, PA, EO2) mentioned that the use of English as the LOI is associated with poor academic performance (PB). The study findings revealed that the majority of the learners were performing below standard in the classroom as a result of the use of English as the LOI.

Participants made the following remarks in substantiating the above findings:

English is a barrier to academic achievement of learners because it is a foreign language. Its inclusion in the education system is to

exclude ILs. Learners do not score much in English because they do not understand it since it is not their language. [Participant PA, from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District]

When I look at English, I think it is a disgrace to some extent because most learners do not perform well when lessons are being conducted in English. They become docile, somehow mesmerised and confused. I mean, participation is very low. [Participant EO2, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

b) Slowness in Thinking

The research findings from the face-to-face interviews revealed that the use of English in teaching and learning compromised the learners' thinking capacity. Responses from the participants (HA, PB) were indicative that the thinking ability of the learners negatively affected as a result of the use of English in teaching and learning. This implies that learners tended to think in their heritage languages.

A head of the school exposed his feelings as follows:

English is not commonly used at home and because of that learners think and conceptualise in their home languages before translating to English. [Participant HA, from school A interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Similarly, a parent in the SDC concurred with the above sentiments. He had this to say:

English is a barrier to learners' academic attainment because they take long to understand concepts. This is evident since most learners keep quiet during lessons. [Participant PB, from school B, interviewed on 28 March 2019 in Chivi District]

c) Reading and Writing Difficulties

The face-to-face interview findings indicated that learners experienced stressful moments in reading and writing activities, where they were required to use English as the mode of communication. Most participants (TA1, TA2, HA, PB, TB2) mentioned that learners experienced reading and writing difficulties in English and that the ILs were instrumental in facilitating reading and writing in English. This implies that the first language is the key to unlocking the learners' potential to deal with second language content.

Explanations from the participants in line with the above findings are as follows:

For learners to be good English readers, I think we should begin to sharpen their reading in L1. This will assist them to generalise reading in the L2. Once they master reading, they will even do better in writing their fortnightly and end of term tests. [Participant TA2, from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District]

You see, when you want your learners to perform better, especially in reading and even writing in English, you need to sharpen their IL reading and writing skills first and then they will transfer the knowledge to the L2. This is because learners tend to master L1 faster than L2.[Participant HA, from school A interviewed on 20 March 2019 in Chivi District]

d) Promotion of Subtractive Bilingualism

The face-to-face interview research findings indicated that English was a drawback in academic achievement in that it promoted subtractive bilingualism, where other languages, especially heritage languages, were on the verge of disappearing (HB).

One head of the school had this to say:

English becomes a liability when it is strictly applied to the extent of excluding Shona, the IL. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

e) Learners Learn Faster in ILs than in the Second Language

The face-to-face interview findings of the study on English as the LOI in primary schools in Chivi District revealed that, in comparison, learners perform much better in ILs than using English as the LOI. Most research participants in the face-to-face interviews (TB2, TB1, HA, TB2, EO2, HB, EO1) opined that learners learn faster in ILs than in the second language. This implies that even difficult concepts were better understood when teachers explained them to learners in home languages.

The following comments made by some participants substantiate these findings:

ILs are effective because when we compare pass rates in ILs and English, we see that those for ILs (Shona) are higher than those of English both in fortnightly and termly tests sat in school.

[Participant EO1, from the District Education Office, interviewed on 06 April 2019 in Chivi District]

There are benefits in using ILs in teaching and learning because learners understand quickly or better than they do in English.

[Participant TA2, from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District]

Concepts explained in ILs are better understood than those done in English. Learners participate very well when using their mother language. [Participant HB, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

f) Indigenous Languages versus Self-Confidence

As a way to indicate how English could be a barrier to educational achievement, face-to-face interview participants' responses co-opted ILs as having a greater capacity to build confidence in learners than English (TB1, PA). This means using English as the LOI developed low-self esteem in Grade Three learners because they lacked proficiency.

Comments supporting these findings are provided below:

Using IL as the LOI is beneficial because learners will gain confidence and understand it better since this language starts from the birth of the child. [Participant TB1, from school B, interviewed on 27 March 2019 in Chivi District]

You know, when you lose your mother language, you have lost it all in that in your language you learn your culture apart from identity, dignity and self-esteem. [Participant PA, from school A, interviewed on 21 March 2019 in Chivi District]

These sections presented and analysed the findings of the study from both focus group and face-to-face interviews. The next section focuses on presenting the findings of the study from the document analysis.

4.5 FINDINGS OF DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

This section is meant to analyse and present research findings collected through documentary study. Some documents studied are the progress record book, attendance register, schemes and plans of work, minute books, the school termly learners' reports, exercise and textbooks as well as the Education Act of 1987 and the Education Amendment Bill of 2019 which represent the language policy document. The documentary study was engaged to establish the extent to which English as the LOI promoted social justice education practices at Grade Three in selected schools in Chivi District. The main research question and the subsequent research questions led the researcher to scrutinise the Zimbabwe Education Act of 1987 enshrined in the national constitution. This is because currently Zimbabwe has no standing education language policy document but an act of parliament is in use. Table 4.2 illustrates the documents used to obtain data for this study

Table 4.2: Summary of Documents Analysed

No.	Type of document	Source
1	Progress record book	Interviewed teachers (TA1, TA2, TB1, TB2)
2	Attendance register	Interviewed teachers (TA1, TA2, TB1, TB2)
3	Schemes and plans of work	Interviewed teachers (TA1, TA2, TB1, TB2)
4	Minute book	Interviewed headteachers (HA, HB)
5	School termly reports for learners	Interviewed teachers (TA1, TA2, TB1, TB2)
6	Exercise books and textbooks	Interviewed teachers (TA1, TA2, TB1, TB2)
7	Education Act, The Statutory Law of Zimbabwe	Morgenster Teachers' College Library
8	Education Amendment, Bill, 2019	Morgenster Teachers' College Library

Below are the details of the research findings from each one of the documents listed in the table above. The research findings were presented in line with the major and sub-themes which emerged from the raw data about the research questions. In other words, as outlined in Chapter 3 (section 3.4.4), the documentary study endeavoured to add value to the data generated from interviews. The language(s) used to record information in these documents functioned to reveal the degree to which linguistic diversity was a reality in selected Chivi District primary schools.

4.5.1 Analysis of Findings from Classroom Documents

Table 4.3: Details of findings from Classroom Documents on English as the LOI and Its Implications for Social Justice Education Practices

Type of Document	Findings from School A		Findings from School B	
	Class 1	Class 2	Class 1	Class 2
The Progress Record Book	<p>-Four (4) mark entry sections namely English, Maths, Shona and General Paper were noted.</p> <p>-12 of the 46 learners in this record book failed English, 6 failed Shona and 16 faile General Paper.</p>	<p>-Four (4) mark entry sections were observed. Further analysis of the record revealed that 15 of the 48 learners performed poorly in English, 15 failed General Paper, 17 failed Maths and 9 failed Shona</p>	<p>-English, Shona, Maths and General Paper subjects were recorded in this record.</p> <p>-The class enrolment was 50.</p> <p>- Of the 50, 10 failed Shona, 14 failed English,, 19 failed Maths and 17 failed Agriculture.</p>	<p>- There were no marks recorded in this particular record from class 2</p> <p>-Only 4 mark entry sections labelled English Shona , Maths and General Paper were inserted</p>

Attendance Register	-Learner attendance was 100%. 10 of the 48 learners in the register had Shona names while 30 learners had English names. 4 learners had Ndebele names and 2 had Shangani names.	-Attendance was 100% -27 of the 48 learners bear English related names, 15 Shona names,, 5 Ndebele names and 3 Shangani names.	-Attendance was fair. Only a small number of learners were absent. - A significant number(33) of learners had English names, 10 Ndebele names and 7 had Shangani names.	-The name list in this record consists of 28 English names, 15 Shangani names and 7 Ndebele names.
Schemes and Plans of work	-English is predominantly used to scheme and plan 9 of the 10 subjects at Grade Three level.	-English dominated scheming and planning. Only one subject (indigeneous language Shona) is not schemed and planned in Shona	-English language is the mode of communication in scheming and planning. Only one indigeneous language was observed.	-English language is the mode of communication in scheming and planning. Only one indigeneous language was observed. However, the indigeneous syllabus for Grades 3-7 is codified in English.

<p>School Termly Report Learners.</p>	<p>-All subjects are commented in English in the majority of the subjects.</p>	<p>-The record revealed that 10 subjects are studied at Grade Three level. Of the 10 subjects, only one subject is commented in indigeneous language. Head teacher's comments</p>	<p>-The school reports for learners consisted 10 subjects. Comments for the subjects were done in English from both the</p>	<p>-The list of subjects in the reports were English related. Only one subject is indigeneous.</p>
<p>Exercise Books and Textbooks</p>	<p>- It was noted that learners had 10 exercise books to write daily work. An analysis of the exercise books revealed that in 9 of the 10 exercise books English was used as the mode of communication.</p>	<p>were made in English language.</p> <p>- English language was dominant in communicating the school curriculum in the majority of the subjects.</p>	<p>teachers and head teachers.</p> <p>-Analysis of the exercise books for learners indicated that the majority of the subjects (9 of 10) were using English the LOI. It was only one subject using Indigeneous language as the LOI</p>	<p>-The school curriculum was communicated in English in most of the subjects.</p>

Minute Book	Staff development, workshops, report backs of meetings and staff meetings were codified in English language.		English language is the communication mode used to record minutes of various meetings, workshops and staff development workshops.	
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Analysis of documents in the table above revealed that English was the dominant language used as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District. Although indigenous languages, Ndebele, Shangani and Shona, exist in the district, they are not the MOI. Document analysis indicated that English is the MOI in nine of the ten subjects in the school curriculum. This was also the trend in other documents like term reports, exercise books, schemes and plan books, to mention a few. Analysis of documents established that it was a sad situation with Shangani and Ndebele in that they are not included in the school curriculum. On the other hand, Shona is taught as a subject but not the MOI; its syllabus is codified in English language. The teacher has to grapple with translating information into Shona. However, Shangani and Ndebele names and surnames featured in both the attendance and progress book record books. Document analysis has revealed a dearth of linguistic diversity in the education system in Chivi District primary schools. This has defined English as an impediment to social justice education practices. The section below discusses the findings from the language of education act as enshrined in the Zimbabwe national constitution.

4.5.2 Analysis of Education Language Policy Documents

Table 4.4: Details of Findings from the Education Language Policy Acts on English as the LOI and Its Implications for Social Justice

Type of Document	Findings Obtained
The 1987 Zimbabwe Education Act Document	<p>-Chapter 25:04 of the Education Act categorically listed English, Shona and Ndebele as languages to be taught in Primary schools on tribal lines.</p> <p>-From Grade One to Three, mother language is the MOI depending on the population of the area.</p> <p>-Ethnic languages, for instance Shangani were only to be included in the school system on the sole will of the Minister responsible for education.</p> <p>All sixteen (16) official languages of Zimbabwe to be taught in schools.</p>
The Zimbabwe Education Amendment Bill, 2019	<p>-ILs to be MOI and languages of tests and examinations</p> <p>-ILs to be the MOI from ECD to Grade Two</p> <p>-Introduction of ILs in the school system entirely depends on the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of resources, - Human capital and <p>Equipment, infrastructure and textbooks.</p>

Table 4.4 above indicates that the 1987 Education Act emphasised the teaching of three languages namely English, Shona and Ndebele, however, on tribal lines. ILs were stipulated as the MOI from Grade One to Three depending on population. From

Grade Four upwards, English is the MOI. Analysis of the 1987 Education Act also indicates that there is a likelihood of the demise of ethnic languages since their inclusion in the education system was determined by political will. Furthermore, analysis of the Education Amendment Bill of 2019 reveals that the number of ILs to be taught in schools has been raised to sixteen. The latter languages were to be the MOI and the languages of tests and examinations. Analysis of the Education Amendment Bill of 2019 also reveals transitional submersion of ILs by introducing English as the LOI at Grade Three in contrast to the 1987 Act which recommends Grade Four as the transitional grade. Finally, the 2019 Education Amendment Bill envisages social justice education malpractices by attaching sanctions to the introduction of ILs in the school system, for instance, making sure that there is adequate human capital, infrastructure, learning equipment and other resources.

The researcher's analysis of the language of education documents pointed to the fact that it strips away learners' linguistic rights. There is an over-emphasis of English as the LOI directly and indirectly. It is direct by declaring openly that English is the MOI from Grade Three, and indirectly by demanding the fulfilment of certain conditions before ILs are introduced in the school system.

4.6 FINDINGS FROM OBSERVATION

This section presents and analyses data from observation. Both Grade Three teachers and the learners were observed during teaching and learning as well as during co-curricular activities. Focal areas for teacher observation were the practical lesson delivery, wall charts, chalkboard, assembly proceedings and their co-curricular activities. For the learners, attention was on teacher-learner interaction, learner-learner interaction during lesson delivery, break time, co-curricular activities and the assembly proceedings. The aim was basically to explore the communication modes in use in all those aforementioned proceedings. Code labels for the interviewed teachers (TA1, TA2, TB1 and TB2) and FGI's participants (LA1-6 and LB1-6) were used when it was necessary.

Table 4.5: Details of Participants, Date, Time and Place of Observations

Participant	Date	Time	Place	Total	
TA1 School A	19-24 2019	March	800-1000 1100-1300	Classrrom 1 Sports grounds	2
TA2 School A	19-24 2019	March	0800-1000 1400-1600	Classroom 2 Sports grounds	2
TB1 School B	26-30 2019	March	0800-1000 1400-1600	Assembly point Classroom 1 Sports grounds	2
TB2 School B	26-30 2019	March	0800-1000 1400-1600	Classroom 2 Sports grounds	2
LA1-LA6	19-24 2019	March	0800-1000 Sports ground	Assembly point Classroom 1-2 Sports grounds	2
LB1-LB6	26-30 2019	March	0800-10000 1400-1600	Assembly point Classrooms 1 and 2 Sports grounds	2

The observations were made in line with the following sub-research question:

How do Grade Three learners, teachers, education administrators and parents perceive English as the language of instruction and its implications on fostering social justice practices in Chivi District primary schools?

How does English as the language of instruction at Grade Three influence the practice of social justice in Chivi District primary schools?

What role does English as the language of instruction play in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners in Chivi District schools when it comes to fostering social justice?

The Grade Three teachers were observed during lesson delivery. Each teacher participant had two opportunities to be observed: first while in his/her classroom and secondly, during co-curricular activities at sports grounds. Observations were conducted between 0800 to 1000 hours, first session and between 1400 to 1600 hours, second session.

4.6.1 Teachers' views on English as the LOI and its Implications for Social Justice as Revealed by Observation Findings

Table 4.6: Grade Three Teachers' Views of English as the LOI and its Implications for Social Justice Education Practices

	School A Grade Three Teachers		School B Grade Three Teachers	
Focal Area	Class 1 Observations	Class 2 Observations	Class 1 Observations	Class 2 Observations
Lesson delivery	Lesson delivery was dominated by code-switching in delivering Maths, English and FAREME lessons. -Learners became effective when giving answers in ILs	-English lesson was taught using Indigenous language Shona	-Code-switching was rampant. Indigenous language Shona was used in code-switching. - Ndebele and Shangai were not used in code-switching. -Classroom is labelled 'Joshua at the door	-lesson delivery was not easy in English. Learners indicated that there was communication break down

<p>Wall charts</p>	<p>-The classroom walls are punctuated with English written charts-No Indigenous language written chart is displayed</p>	<p>-A small part of the chalkboard occupies Shona charts.</p> <p>-The rest of the charts are English codified.</p> <p>-Rampant spelling and grammatical errors were observed on some charts, for instance, 'chose the best determiners' for 'choose the best determiners'.</p>	<p>-No ILs charts were observed on the walls.</p> <p>-Only 4 Shona written fliers are hanging.</p> <p>- The rest and majority of the charts are English codified.</p>	<p>The four walls in Classroom 2 are punctuated with English written subject content Charts.</p> <p>- Nothing in the form of Shona charts.</p> <p>-Extensive grammatical errors on charts were observed. For example, The three states of water is....</p>
<p>Chalkboard</p>	<p>-There were 6 sections of prepared chalkboard work</p> <p>-Only one section was for the indigenous language Shona</p> <p>-No Shangani and Ndebele work was prepared.</p>	<p>-There were 9 sections of the prepared chalkboard work</p> <p>-8 sections were English related work</p> <p>-1 section was for Shona indigenous language</p>	<p>-There were 9 sections of the prepared chalkboard work</p> <p>-8 sections were English related work</p> <p>-1 section was for Shona indigenous language</p>	<p>-One exercise was indigenous language Shona</p> <p>-7 exercises were English related</p> <p>-No Shangani and Ndebele exercises were observed .</p>

<p>Assembly Proceedings</p>	<p>-Assembly proceedings included singing, reciting the school's national pledge, announcements and prayer</p> <p>-Gospel songs were sung</p> <p>-The school's national pledge and the Lord's prayer are recited in English only</p> <p>-Announcements are done in Shona</p>	<p>Assembly proceedings included singing, reciting the school's national pledge, announcements and prayer</p> <p>-Gospel songs were sung</p> <p>-The school song</p>	<p>Assembly proceedings included singing, reciting the school's national pledge, announcements and prayer</p> <p>-Gospel songs were sung</p> <p>-The school song</p>	<p>Assembly proceedings included singing, reciting the school's national pledge, announcements and prayer</p> <p>-Gospel songs were sung</p> <p>-The school song</p>
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Co-curricular activities	<p>-Common co-curricular activities include sporting activities and general work.</p> <p>- Observations were that in both general work and sports, teachers were communication with the learners in Shona.</p> <p>-No teacher communicated in English</p>	<p>-Shona was the mode of communication in sports and general work</p> <p>-English was used at a very minimum scale. One word communication could be heard, e.g. 'set' and 'go' in athletics.</p>	<p>-Common co-curricular activities include sporting activities and general work.</p> <p>- Observations were that in both general work and sports, teachers were communicating with the learners in Shona.</p> <p>-No teacher communicated in English</p>	<p>-Shona was the mode of communication in sports and general work</p> <p>-English was used at the very minimum. One word communication could be heard, e.g. 'set' and 'go' in athletics</p>
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The observations conducted at both school A and B revealed that to a large extent teachers use English as the mode of communication in teaching and learning at Grade Three level in Chivi District. However, participants indicated that teachers were to some extent incompetent in English communication as revealed by grammatical and spelling errors on charts. The only indigenous language appearing in code-switching was Shona. Ndebele and Shangani were completely sidelined by all the teachers. Teacher observation emerging themes are as follows: lack of language diversity, manifestation of xenocentrism, teacher incompetency in English, language attrition, learners learn faster in ILs than in English and English as the classroom language.

4.6.2 Learners' views on English as the LOI and its implications for Social Justice as Revealed by Observation Findings

Table 4.7: Grade Three Learners' views of English as the LOI and its Implications for Social Justice Education Practices

Focal Area	School A Grade Three Learners		School B Grade Three Learners	
Teacher learner interactions during lesson delivery	<p>-Rampant code-switching from teachers</p> <p>-Learners were active in giving answers using Indigeneous languages</p>	<p>- Learners were able using 'yes/no' words as answers to teachers' questions.</p>	<p>-Code switching was rampant</p> <p>-Shona was dominant in code-switching</p>	<p>- Learners revealed a state of shock when asked to narrate the read story in English</p>
	<p>-English was the MOI in giving one word answers only.</p>	<p>-Teachers had to code-switch in lesson delivery.</p> <p>-Shona was the main language used by learners to communicate subject content in most cases</p>	<p>-Teacher encouraging learners to speak in Shangani</p>	<p>-Teacher resorted to Indigeneous language.</p> <p>-Some few hands are raised up</p>

<p>Learner-Learner interactions during lesson delivery</p>	<p>-Group activity was a flop when learners were asked to discuss set tasks in English</p>	<p>- Learners were given instructions in Shona.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incomplete statements and one word answers were noted. - Complete statements were heard only during reinforcement statements, for example, type a message and send it. 	<p>-Shona is the language used by the majority of the learners in learning</p> <p>-English is only heard in chorus answers after the teacher.</p> <p>-Effective group discussion was not realised in English.</p> <p>-Learners had live discussions in Shona</p>	<p>There was dead silence when learners were asked to discuss comprehension questions in an English lesson</p> <p>-The teacher to intervene through code-switching</p>
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Learner-learner interactions during co-curricular activities	-Shona dominated learner conversation -Very minimal Shangani and Ndebele conversations	-Not even one learner was heard communicating in English. It was ILs shone mostly and Shangani and Ndebele here and there.	- Shona dominated learner conversations -Ndebele and Shangani could be heard here and there	-Only Shona was the communication mode
Assembly Proceedings	-Shona was the communication mode. - English was heard in recitation of the School's national pledge and the Lord's prayer.	-Shona was the communication mode. - English was heard in recitation of the School's national pledge and the Lord's prayer.	- English was heard in recitation of the School's national pledge and the Lord's prayer. -Shona was used to sing the National Anthem	- English was heard in recitation of the School's national pledge and the Lord's prayer. -Shona was used to sing the National Anthem

Learner-learner observations were dominated by code-switching, where English was mixed by Shona. Observations established gross learner incompetency in speaking English. Learners resorted to indigenous language Shona to a great deal to communicate subject matter. Observations highlighted existence of Shangani and Ndebele as ethnic languages in Chivi District. However, the aforesaid ethnic languages are marginalised. Emerging themes from learner observations are as follows: learner incompetency in English, exclusion of ILs, manifestation of xenocentrism, poor performance in learners, English as a barrier to academic achievement and multilingualism.

4.6.3 Triangulation of Research Findings from Face-to-Face, Focus Group Interviews, Document analysis and Observation

Face-to-face and FGIs, document analysis and observation generated data were analysed and presented. Research findings from interviews indicated that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District, to a large extent, relegates ILs, Ndebele, Shangani and Shona, to extinction. This is because interview participants revealed that English was the MOI from Grade Three. Moreover, it is the language used to write tests and examinations in nine of the subjects. The above interview findings are consistent with document analysis findings. The Education Amendment Bill of 2019 spelt out that English is the MOI from Grade Three. Observation field notes also indicated a dearth of linguistic diversity in the classrooms in Chivi District primary schools. English dominated written exercise books, wall charts and lesson delivery. The practice places ILs at a threat and it has compromised social justice education practice.

It was also a trend throughout document analysis, observation and interviews that there was a dearth of linguistic diversity in Chivi District primary schools. Focus group interview participants revealed that they were studying ten subjects altogether. Of the ten subjects, only one indigenous language (Shona) did not use English as the LOI. The rest of the subjects used English as the LOI. Other indigenous languages (Ndebele and Shangani) spoken in the district were not even included in the school curriculum. This gross lack of language diversity was also noted in document analysis. It was a common feature, especially in the minute books, exercise books and the progress record books where the information recording was primarily in English.

Learner observations and interviews revealed that code-switching was rampant during lesson delivery. This could be related to lack of proficiency in English by both teachers and learners. This finding was also echoed in the teacher observation. Classroom observation, particularly the wall charts, indicated some grammatical and spelling errors.

Interviews and observations also established convergence of findings through manifestation of xenocentrism. During interviews, participants revealed that they preferred English as the MOI so that they could master the language and enhance

their chances of getting high-paying jobs after school. Observations findings substantiated the above findings as it was observed that nine of the ten subjects used English as the LOI. Documentary study, for instance, the attendance registers from both research sites were dominated by English related names. Indigenous names appeared to have been shunned and avoided. This practice of undervaluing indigenous languages and knowledge testifies to xenocentrism to a large extent.

Finally, observation indicated that Grade Three learners performed well when using ILs in both lesson delivery and written work. Focus group interview participants indicated that they understood ILs better than English during lesson delivery. Moreover, document analysis revealed that Shona marks were higher than any other subject recorded in the progress record book and the school reports for learners. The data generation methods used in this research, therefore, indicate credibility as well as trustworthiness of data as they reveal similar findings (see section 1.8.3) for details of credibility and trustworthiness of data.

In the next section, the researcher pays attention to the discussion and interpretation of the major findings from semi-structured interviews, FGIs, documentary study and observation. Literature reviewed and the theoretical frameworks (section 2.2 – 2.10) underpinning this study will be incorporated to refute or confirm the study findings.

4.7 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section focuses on discussing major themes and their related sub-themes and categories emerging from interviews, document analysis and observations. The themes and categories are summarised in the table below.

Table 4.8: Summary of Major Themes, Sub-themes and Categories from Participants' Views on English as the LOI and its Implications for Social Justice Education Practices

Major Theme	Sub-Themes
Conceptualisation of the LOI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LOI as an acronym • The LOI as a mode of communication • The MOI as a government policy • The school curriculum and the MOI
The positive perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English as an instrument for global communication • English as a language of employment opportunities • English as a language for further education • English as the official language English as the classroom language
Negative perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English as a menace to one's culture and identity • Teacher-learner incompetency in English language • English language versus curriculum literature • Promotion of monolingualism • Home environment not conducive for English acquisition

<p>Conceptualisation of social justice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social justice as freedom • Social justice as fairness • Social justice as multilingualism • Social justice as equal access
<p>Opportunities in English as the LOI in influencing social justice education practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English as the language of unity • Improvement on access to information and movement globally • Cultivation of neutral communication environment in the education system
<p>Adversity of English as a LOI in Influencing social justice education practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of linguistic diversity • Language attrition • An elite centred curriculum • ILs as custodians of people's culture and identity • The manifestation of xenocentrism • Avoidance of ILs • Early immersion • Bilingualism • Ethnic languages and their demise • Multilingualism • Low-self esteem • Inclusion to exclude Two second languages for some learners • Two second languages for some learners • Glocalisation of ILs • Coercive tendencies

English as an asset for educational achievement and social justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English versus tests and examinations • English versus educational upward mobility • English versus increased access to academic information • English versus sifting, selection and allocation of roles
English as a barrier to educational achievement and education for social justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor performance in classroom • Slowness in thinking • Reading and writing difficulties • Promotion of subtractive bilingualism • Learners learn faster in ILs than in English language • ILs versus self-confidence

4.7.1 Theme 1: Conceptualisation of the LOI/MOI

This section discusses four sub-themes relating to the conceptualisation of the LOI.

4.7.1.1 The LOI/MOI as an Acronym

The description of the LOI as an acronym emerged as one of the key issues in conceptualising the LOI during semi-structured and FGIs. Findings indicated that participants perceived the MOI/LOI as an acronym depicting the Medium of Instruction or the Language of Instruction (PB, HB, and TB1). This means the two abbreviations (MOI/LOI) were interchangeably used to describe the language for teaching and learning. Trudell (2016: 790) concurs with the above research findings where the researcher defines the MOI as the language used to communicate curriculum content at any level in the education system in any nation. The study findings, therefore, indicated the MOI as an instrument of communication in the education system at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools. Education delivery is hinged on the MOI. In this study, interview participants, documentary study and observations (Tables 4.3 - 4.7) converged to single out English as the MOI at Grade Three level in Chivi District: English was used as the LOI in nine of the ten subjects offered at primary school level.

This practice of sidelining ILs to become the MOI is a hindrance to social justice education practices.

4.7.1.2 The MOI as a Mode of Communication

Another sub-theme from the conceptualisation of the LOI theme relating to the perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice was the MOI as a mode of communication (EO2, TB2). Participants (EO1, TB2) argued that MOI is a vehicle of communication in the academic sphere. The LOI is perceived as an instrument for communicating the school curriculum. The above explanation of the MOI concurs with Benstein and Tieger-Faber (2011: 16) who postulate that the LOI is the usage of voice sounds rhythmically in an endeavour to communicate thoughts and feelings in any given subject content in the classroom. In this study of the use of English as the LOI, thoughts and feelings of the Grade Three learners were expressed in an unfamiliar language. The study findings point to the MOI/LOI as the main means of information dissemination in teaching and learning. This implies that the LOI is a means of communicating the school curriculum at Grade Three. It is an indispensable component of the school curriculum. However, of significance was that the MOI at Grade Three in Chivi District was different from the learners' heritage languages, a situation which exposed learners to subtractive bilingualism or transitional submersion model.

4.7.1.3 The MOI as Government Policy

The third sub-theme emerging from the conceptualisation of the MOI/LOI theme was the MOI as government policy. Apart from the general view of the majority of the participants of describing the MOI as a mode of communication in teaching and learning, participant LA5, had a divergent view of the LOI. According to participant LA5, the LOI was an appendage of the government policy (LA5). This suggested that the MOI emanated from the education language policy, which is the brainchild of the government. This means that the LOI was imposed on learners and the school system by the government authorities. In other words, there was no freedom to choose the instructional language at Grade Three in Chivi District but only to adhere to the dictates of the government to use English as the LOI. The MOI at Grade Three in Chivi District is not the mother tongue of the learners, a situation that points to social justice

malpractice in the education system. Contrary to the above scenario, the Asmara Declaration of 2000 resolves that it is a fundamental human right for every African child of school-going age to enrol at school and receive his/her education through the mother tongue. To this end, the linguistic rights of Grade Three learners have been violated. The fact that the majority of the subjects use English as the LOI, excluding IIs that are spoken by the majority of the speakers, points to social justice malpractice and violation of the linguistic rights of learners in Chivi District.

4.7.1.4 The School Curriculum and the MOI

The research findings further revealed that the school curriculum and the LOI were 'Siamese twins'. However, the MOI at Grade Three upwards was typically English. Most participants (LB4, LA2, TB2, TB1, TA2, TA1, PB, PA, EO2, EO1, HA, HB) concurred that a foreign language (English) was the driver for the school curriculum content. The above findings are in tandem with Grosfoguel (2013: 5) who argues that non-western ideas and knowledge are considered inferior and they contribute nothing to the world's knowledge bank. Implicitly, the MOI (English) in use in Chivi District Grade Three classrooms was a fertile ground for social justice malpractice. This is largely because the home languages of the learners were sidelined in the education sector. Similarly, Mthethwa-Somers (2014: 10) and Hawkins (2009: 2) concur that social justice is a reality only if learners are accorded the opportunity to use their languages in schools. For their part (Mthethwa-Somers, 2014 and Hawkins, 2009) are of the view that an education system that avoids mother tongue is marred by social justice malpractices. The convergence of study findings from face-to-face, FGIs, document analysis and observations indicated that IIs were not the MOI at Grade Three level in Chivi District. This implies that the principle of fair play in terms of language usage in education is non-existent. As a result, this could be interpreted as impeding social justice.

Over and above, the study findings under this sub-theme, articulate Bourdieu's (1977) cultural reproduction theory principle of symbolic violence. In his theory, Bourdieu (1977) argues that knowledge is the product of the powerful and the definition of worthwhile culture is also the province of the dominant class, who establish their culture as the source of knowledge (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73). The idea that English is the MOI at Grade Three at the expense of heritage languages contextually

regards it as the standard to which we measure knowledge in the education system in Chivi District primary schools. The study findings also concur with the critical theorist, Carnoy (1975), who argues that cultural imperialism can take the form of an active formal policy or a general attitude as it reinforces cultural hegemony. The fact that the LOI is an appendage of the Zimbabwean government education language policy (The Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 255; Education Amendment, Bill, 2019: 4), speaks volumes about the role of English as the LOI. It has been mandated to take a leading role in the education sector. The idea that English is used as the MOI from Grade Three to Seven through to tertiary education depicts that ILs have been degraded yet they are spoken by the majority of the learners in Chivi District primary schools. ECD to Grade Two is a short academic calendar in which primary school learners are expected to use ILs as the MOI. In addition, at this stage, Grade Three learners are too young to be immersed into a second language. They still need to master their heritage languages. Thus, the participants' perception of English as the LOI pointed to a violation of learners' linguistic rights.

4.7.2 Theme 2: The Positive Perceptions of English as the LOI and its Implications for Social Justice

Apart from the conceptualisation of the MOI, the study revealed some positive perceptions of English as the LOI and their implications for social justice. Most participants from both semi-structured and FGIs concurred that the use of English as the LOI was advantageous. Five sub-themes emerging from this major theme about the positive perceptions towards English as the LOI are discussed below.

4.7.2.1 English Language as an Instrument for Global Communication

While exploring participants' views on English as the LOI in both semi-structured and FGIs, the study found consensus among the participants about English as a global language of communication. Participants (HA, EO1, TA1, TB2, LA1, LB5) viewed the use of English language in teaching and learning as an advantage which allowed them to interact with the rest of the world. The participants indicated mastery of English positions learners to communicate effectively with people from other nations throughout the globe. This implies that English widens the scope and horizon of the learners' communication capacity. In other words, learners are empowered

linguistically. Their linguistic environment has been expanded and they fit well in the world systems since they can communicate in English which predominates as the global *lingua franca*.

The findings from the critical investigation of English as the LOI are consistent with the research findings from other research studies (Mlay, 2010: 48, Shizha, 2012: 787, Gudyanga and Makaudze, 2012: 52). These research studies confirm that in this era of globalisation and free markets, we need English, which is a global language since heritage languages are limited in this regard. The fact that English was given prominence at the expense of indigenous languages implies that ILs took a peripheral role in the education sector. Whatever they portray, for instance, culture, heritage and identity, apart from their communicative function are rendered useless.

The above research findings of this study are also in line with critical theorist Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural imperialism which posits the tenet of colonialism, that is, control of one nation by another. The cultural products of the colonisers dominate the colonised and affect the local cultures (Monnier, 2010: 19). To regard English as the *lingua franca* (global language) is to propagate idea of the devaluation of local languages. In this way, the dominant role assumed by English in the educational sphere is a counter to social justice education practices.

4.7.2.2 English as the Language of Employment Opportunities

Discussions from both semi-structured and FGIs revealed that participants attached high regard to English as a language which secures job opportunities after schooling (HB, EO1, PA, TA1, LB4). In other words, English is instrumental in the learners' future economic well-being. This means the capacity to speak and write in English may assure learners of good-paying jobs. In other words, participants saw justice in using English as the LOI because mastery of English, according to research participants LB4, TA1, PA, EO1 and HB, guarantees a prestigious job opportunity. Erling et al. (2017: 11) confirm that English proficiency is associated with better paying job opportunities. In other words, knowledge of English is an asset for the learners and they are bound to benefit from it in future. Following Erling et al. (2017), Plonski, Teferra and Brady (2013: 15) established that educationists hit a brick wall in introducing heritage languages as the LOI in rural communities because parents and

guardians believe that ILs are denying their children better-paying jobs. However, the preference for English has drawbacks. ILs, despite their power to shape culture and identity, are regarded as liabilities in the education sector. This implies that ILs' role as custodians of culture and identity are sacrificed for employment opportunities. In other words, ILs are not associated with economic opportunities.

The foregoing research findings on the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice are in line with neo-Marxist Bourdieu's (1977) theory of education as cultural reproduction and its principle of symbolic violence. The assumption that the power elite defines worthwhile knowledge and its endorsement remains the prerogative of those who are powerful, concurs with the research findings of this study (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73; Schaefer, 2010: 10). It is a question of who is in power that English comes in as the appropriate language of education in Chivi District primary schools. Apart from Bourdieu's (1977) theory, the research findings of this study confirm Panizzon's (2016) views. Panizzon (2016: 1) argues that contemporary society experiences 'curriculum capture' through education institutions because they control what type of content, who should be educated, when the content is available, and which skills, attitudes and competencies are imparted by the schooling system. The study findings revealed that English was prioritised and society regarded it as the language of education and economic well-being. Thus, the imbalance existing between English and ILs as the LOI implies social justice education malpractice to a larger extent.

According to Miller's (1999) social justice theory principle of 'need', one basic necessity is endangered (Nelson et al., 2016: 4-5). The above social justice theory is relevant for this study because ILs are threatened by English in the education arena in Chivi District. English is dominant because it is generally regarded as the language of employment opportunities and communication globally.

4.7.2.3 English as a Language for Further Education

Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that participants widely perceived English as the language instrumental for further education (HB, EO1, and LB1). Most participants thought it was fair to use English as the LOI from Grade Three to secondary and tertiary levels of education because the subject content at those levels

of education demand English in their instruction. This implies that English is the language of education. Any other language is either a taught subject or is non-existent in the education field.

The above findings of the study concur with Bacha (2011: 1326) argues that the rationale for engaging learners in English as the LOI is to enhance their educational opportunities in future. Learners wish to acquire English, not because they like it, but because they are concerned about their future. Their participation in educational institutions is guaranteed by their ability to communicate effectively in English.

Another research finding in line with the above findings in the critical investigation of English as the LOI is Paauw's (2009: 10) study on *One Land, One Nation and One Language*. Paauw (2009) concludes that in Indonesia there is a mismatch in using local languages as the LOI up to university level and conforming to global trends. This is largely due to inadequate reading materials in the heritage languages. In addition, English proficiency is very low among university graduates who do not come up to global standards. Paauw's study indicated that local languages could not get university students anywhere in education and led to an early exit from higher education.

Much as English may be an asset for further education as indicated by participants' views from both semi-structured and FGIs in this study, the findings are in contrast with John Rawls' (1971) theory of social justice and the principle of liberty (Nelson et al., 2016: 4). The liberty principle posits that freedom is mandatory to every citizen of any nation. Contrary to the liberty principle, learners and teachers are not free to choose the language they want to use in teaching and learning. They are coerced and compelled to use English to remain longer in the education system. In addition to Rawls' (1971) theory of social justice, findings of this study are also in line with Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural imperialism. Carnoy's theory argues that hegemonic tendencies and the maintenance of the status quo are created by cultural imbalances imposed by western nations (Monnier, 2010: 19). Further, the study findings are also in line with critical theorist Freire's (1970) view that to speak of education at any given place, moment and time as neutral is to speak in mythical terms. Education can be a weapon of domination or freedom (Nyirenda, 2015: 6 citing Freire, 1970: 80). The idea that English is regarded as the language for further education in an environment where local languages are sidelined is indicative of social

justice malpractices in the education system. In this case, education through English as the LOI has become a weapon of domination.

4.7.2.4 English as the Official Language of Business

The research findings of this study further confirmed English as the official language in various spheres. Research participants unanimously agreed that English is instrumental in business circles across the globe (HB, TA1, PA). People who can communicate proficiently in English are required in business of all kinds. Mutasa (2004: 304) confirms the above research findings. He (Mutasa, 2004) argues that English is the solution to the socio-economic and political problems of parents and their children. The fact that English is assumed to be the language of success in socio-economic spheres leads to the subjugation of ILs which are the languages of the majority in Chivi District. In Chapter One (section 1.2.1), the researcher indicated that Zimbabwe has at least 16 languages (Zimbabwe Constitution Amendment (No. 20), 2013: 31). However, English, a foreign language, dominates the teaching/ learning process. The study findings revealed that educational activities, primary, secondary or tertiary, are dependent on English for communication. For a business to prosper there should be an effective communication system. The language of commerce in Zimbabwe is English. Learning and teaching in English are aimed at empowering learners to fit well into industry when leave school. The above study findings concur with Bourdieu's (1977) cultural reproduction theory and his principle of symbolic violence which states that the power elite impose meanings on what is worthwhile knowledge, they determine the culture to be possessed and institutionalise it as the basis of knowledge (Haralambos et al., 2013:73), Similarly, Nieuwenhuis (2015: 62) argues that social reality or truth is the product of people. It is a social construct. The prominent role given to English as the official language is a purely human creation. It is a strategy to wield power and maintain the status quo. In other words, study findings expose the nature and aims of colonial education in Zimbabwe and the rest of Africa, where English and other foreign languages, for instance, French and Portuguese, were used to segregate citizens.

The findings of this study also articulate Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural imperialism and the principle of domination over non-western cultures, especially from the developing world. Western education shuns their traditional beliefs,

norms and values and they lose their cultural identity (Monnier, 2010: 19; Marimba, 1994: xxvi). These critical theories critically examine English as the official language and openly expose it as an instrument of the power elite rather than being an official language. One cannot understand the rationale behind excluding fifteen (15) or more languages spoken by the majority in Zimbabwe and the choice of one language of the minority to represent the whole population. Articulating some of the functions of language in the background chapter of this study (Chapter One) Leech (2017), Nurhidayati (2013) and Das (2016) unanimously agree that any language has an identity function. Language is the life of human culture and it is central to one's identity as an individual and as a marker of a social group. While the study findings point to English as the official language, to a large extent, it violates linguistic rights. Its use in socio-economic and political spheres compromises self-love and knowledge of the social justice element. Through self-love and the knowledge of social justice, teachers provide learners opportunities to learn about who they are (self-identity) and where they come from (Picower, 2012 : 5). Hence, a sense of pride in one's culture, heritage, ethnicity, skin tone, and gender is cultivated in the classroom. This cannot be a reality where the LOI is not the mother tongue. To a larger extent, the findings of this study show that English is a liability hidden behind the smokescreen of globalisation.

4.7.2.5 English as the Language of the Classroom

The last sub-theme emerging from positive perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice is English as the language of the classroom. The study findings indicated that classroom interaction is the province of English (EO1, TA1, TA2, HA, PA). Most research participants unanimously agreed that, among the ten (10) subjects taught at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools, only Shona as a subject did not use English as the LOI. The rest of the subjects were conducted in English. Apart from the verbatim transcripts, field notes from observations and document analysis also indicated that at both research sites A and B, English codified wall charts were present. This was also the trend on the prepared work on the chalkboard. These research findings of the study concur with Muchenje et al's. (2013) study on the LOI. Muchenje et al. (2013:48) describe one of the learners in their findings as having said that at times she was reluctant to read the charts and textbooks as they did not include her mother language. This indicates that the dominant language in the classroom was English and this affected learners' motivation.

The above research findings also communicate Bourdieu's (1977) cultural reproduction theory tenet of cultural shock, which assumes that when introduced to a foreign culture, a person experiences cultural shock (Schaefer, 2010:80). Bourdieuan theory is relevant for this study because the early introduction of English as the LOI to Grade Three learners is a cause for concern. A shift from heritage languages to English as the LOI intimidates learners who find it difficult to deal with curriculum content. Both document analysis and observations (sections 4.3 – 4.7) revealed poor performance where English was used as the LOI.

4.7.3 Theme 3: Negative Perceptions of English as the LOI and its Implications for Social Justice

These five sub-themes reflecting negative views of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice are discussed under this theme.

4.7.3.1 English Language as a Menace to One's Culture and Identity

The study found out that the use of English as the LOI was a threat to the learners' culture and identity. Research participants were in unanimous agreement that English could erode one's culture and identity (HB, TB1, LA6, LA3, LB6, HB). The use of English as the LOI at Grade Three could inflict cultural erosion. This is because research participants indicated that learners at Grade Three were alienated from their heritage languages which are custodians of one's culture and identity. This means education in Chivi District primary schools does not measure up to the social justice standards.

These findings concur with Said (2011: 191) who confirms that culture and language cannot be separated; after losing one of them, one is bound to lose his/her identity. Similarly, Hopkyns (2014) concurred that the spread of English has become cancerous and several heritage languages and cultures are affected worldwide (Modiano, 2001: 345; Badry, 2011: 85; Pan and Seargent, 2012). By virtue that the learners at Grade Three in Chivi District do not use heritage languages as the LOI, means they are gradually losing their culture as well as identity. In other words, these research findings suggest language genocide or culture erosion. Mlay (2010: 10) and Prah (2003: 17) concur that culture, freedom and African emancipation cannot be

mooted where the education system does not recognise heritage languages as the LOI. The findings are also consistent with Freire's (1980) assertion that cultural conquest may lead to the cultural inauthenticity of those who are invaded, and they begin to respond to the values, standards and the goals of the invaders. For a cultural invasion to be a success, the invaded must become convinced of their intrinsic inferiority (Freire, 1980: 122). Thus, the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three is a threat to the learners' culture and identity in line with Carnoy's theory of education as cultural imperialism. The education arena has exposed learners to English and, by avoiding ILs and culture, learners are stripped of their culture and identity. Hence, the manifestation of social justice malpractices in the education sector in Chivi District primary schools is evident.

4.7.3.2 Teacher-Learner Incompetency in English

Research findings of this study indicated lack of teacher-learner proficiency in English. Most of the Participants from the semi-structured and FGIs (TA1, TA2, LA2, LB6, and TB1.HA, HB, EO1, TB2) remarked that more often they had torrid moments with English during teaching and learning. The above remarks from the participants during semi-structured and FGIs were consistent with observations during lesson delivery. Observation field notes revealed that although teachers used English to deliver lessons, learners found it difficult to understand the concepts. Occasional code-switching was used. Furthermore, observations of group work activities were indicative that the tasks were formidable when done in English as the mode of communication. Teachers had to intervene either through code-switching or wholly by way of ILs. This implies that both teachers and learners had challenges in using English in teaching and learning. This was evident through rampant code-switching and communication breakdown during lesson delivery. Grammatical errors on charts and chalkboard work also meant that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three was a challenge to both teachers and learners.

The research results confirm Shizha (2012) study which established that both learners and teachers experienced difficulties in using English because it was their second language. Following the above, Mlay (2010: 17) confirms that the use of English as the LOI is a problem for both teachers and learners. In a difficult situation like this, learners are at a disadvantage because they lack opportunity to develop the language

fully. Thus, the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three may not be the best option for the education sector.

To a larger extent, the foregoing research study findings articulate Bourdieu's theory of cultural reproduction and the principle of cultural capital (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73-74). This is because teacher-learner incompetency is indicative of lack of cultural capital. Both teachers and learners lack English vocabulary. In the process, education is a liability. According to Carnoy's (1975) theory, the education arena is culturally imperialistic. In addition, the education sphere, through the use of English as the LOI, has dismally failed to incorporate social justice practices because the social action and social justice elements are embedded in the expressive language function. Picower (2012: 12) argues that in social action and social justice, learners can learn how to improve the material condition of their lives by learning how to write, for instance, letters and speeches, carry out research and analyse who has the power to influence certain situations. Following the above, Das (2016: 15) confirms that language has an expressive function. It is used by people in growing their deep and innermost feelings. To that end, the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three tends to limit the learners' expression. This is a violation of linguistic rights on the part of teachers and learners, who are the key stakeholders in the education fraternity, hence the mythical proclamation of social justice practices in the education arena.

4.7.3.3 English Domination of Curriculum Literature

Another sub-theme pointing to the negative perceptions of English as the LOI revealed by the study findings was that the school curriculum literature was English dominated. The participants (EO2, TA1, TA2, and LB4) described the school curriculum as elite centred. Very little was offered in ILs. It was found that curriculum literature, for instance, textbooks, wall charts, among other teaching and learning resource materials, was codified in English. According to the research participants, very little non-English literature was found at the two research sites under this study. A study by Erling et al (2017) confirms that sources of subject content, for instance, textbooks and the learning media, were codified in English and the learners' academic levels were too low to grasp the content. This implies that English dominates the education system from lesson delivery to the resource materials. The research findings indicated that ILs occupied peripheral roles in the education system in Chivi District.

The above findings communicate Sturman's (1997) social justice principle of curricular justice. In this theory, Sturman (1997) argues that social justice should inform curriculum design and implementation (Nelson et al., 2016: 5-6). Considering the above research findings of this study, in which the curriculum literature is mainly published in English, social justice malpractice is a reality. In Chivi District primary schools, curriculum design and implementation tend to favour one language (English), ignoring ILs languages dominant in the District. Participants (TA1, EO2, TA2, and LB4) and the document and observation findings concurred that the codification of subject area content was wholly done using English. It implies that the education system, particularly at Grade Three level in Chivi District was dominated by English. Nine of the 10 subjects taught at Grade Three level were the prerogative of English. ILs were not considered as the LOI. Implicitly, the situation does not promote social justice practices.

To a larger extent, the findings also communicate Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural imperialism, which argues that the cultural products of the developed invade the developing world and conquer local cultures (Monnier, 2010: 19; Marimba, 1994: xxvii). English is the non-material culture pervades the education system in Chivi District. As a result, it has overshadowed ILs which occupy peripheral positions.

4.7.3.4 Promotion of Monolingualism

The fourth sub-category to the major theme of negative perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice allude to monolingualism. Two participants (EO2, PA) described the linguistic environment in Chivi District primary schools as monolingual. In other words, the participants point to the death of heritage languages in Chivi District because the mother tongues common in the district, namely, Shangani, Ndebele and Shona, have not been promoted in teaching and learning. The aforementioned home languages were regarded as non-existent yet they are spoken by more speakers than English which is the LOI.

The research findings for this study indicated that the use of English as the LOI was perceived as a strategy to exclude other languages in the District. Two participants, EO2 and PA, argued that, among the ten subjects taught at Grade Three level, English was the instructional language in nine of them. These findings are confirmed by Heugh

(2011: 53) who argues that schooling after the first three years for the majority of heritage language speakers continues in a foreign language as the MOI. However, the policy awards an opportunity for English-speaking learners to use their home language throughout their learning career (Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225). Thus, learners are robbed of their heritage languages in favour of English, while their English-speaking counterparts enjoy its use in academic work.

The above findings are also consistent with Bourdieu's theory of cultural reproduction and the tenet of cultural capital. Indigenous learners do not possess the cultural capital (English) which is the capital needed for academic endeavour. Their counterparts, English-language speakers, possess the cultural capital, that is, they come to school with proficiency in English. Hence, they do not experience cultural shock since the school is an extension of the home (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73-74). Furthermore, findings of this study are embedded in Miller's (1999) theory of social justice and the principle of equality which denotes that a normal society treats its citizens equally and accords as well as distributes fundamental human rights equally to its citizens (Nelson et al, 2016:4). While language is a right, the reality on the ground is in contrast with this view. Thus, research findings indicate the absence of social justice practices in the education sector.

4.7.3.5 Home Environment Not Conducive for English Language

The research findings also revealed that participants (LA2, TA1) perceived the home environment as a cause for the learners' failure to cope with English in teaching and learning. The research participants argued that the linguistic environment in learners' homes was not prudent for English language development. The research participants revealed that the home environment and the school environment were two different linguistic environments. At home, they were deeply immersed in heritage languages and upon arrival at school, teachers instructed them to use English to communicate. This means the language they used at home was completely divorced from the one they used at school. In the process, learners found it difficult to cope with school work.

A study by Ntshangase (2011: 20-21) confirms the above research findings. Ntshangase (2010: 10) argues that in most rural communities, English is rarely heard or spoken but it dominates communication in the classrooms. Thus, the Grade Three

learners in Chivi District are living in two contrary linguistic 'worlds': the home environment which exposes them to heritage languages and the school environment exposing them to English. In that context, learners are likely to experience cultural shock, according to Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73). Bourdieu's theory further argues that when one is immersed in an unfamiliar culture, one may feel simply uncertain, out of place and even fearful (Schaefer, 2010: 80). This is because these learners get exposed to a new language or system of communication at school, different from home language. In other words, they come to school virtually knowing nothing in terms of English conversation. Thus, the school is not a home away from home. The above scenario is a fertile ground for social justice malpractices in the education sector in Chivi District primary schools.

4.7.4 Theme 4: Conceptualisation of Social Justice

This section discusses four sub-themes on the conception of social justice.

4.7.4.1 Social Justice as Freedom

In an endeavour to describe social justice with a bias towards the LOI, participants conceptualised social justice as freedom or liberty to use the language of choice in teaching and learning, be they ILs or foreign languages (TA1, TB1, TB2). The study established that social justice is a reality when learners and teachers have the freedom to use the language of their choice in the teaching and learning process. The above findings are in line with Harrison and Clark (2016: 231) who define social justice as a process that ideally allows all groups to participate equally in society and enables them to fulfil their needs. However, the study findings were contrary to the reality on the ground at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools. The learners and their mentors had no freedom to use languages of their choice in teaching and learning curriculum content. They were obliged to use English in most of the subjects and it was the second language to all of them. Prah (2003: 17) cited in Mlay (2010: 10) argues that culture, freedom and African emancipation cannot be cultivated, expanded or developed where the LOI is different from the languages the people normally speak in their everyday lives. To that end, social justice is not championed in Chivi District primary schools. Indeed, education becomes cultural imperialism (Carnoy, 1975 cited in Monnier, 2010: 19; Marimba, 1994: xxvi).

4.7.4.2 Social Justice as Fairness

The findings of the study also revealed that social justice could be conceptualised as fairness. The participants (TB2, HA, EO2) vividly described social justice in connection with the LOI as the execution of fairness in terms of language usage. This implies that social justice in the education system is hinged on fairness in terms of how both English and ILs are treated. Learners should have the opportunity to learn using their mother tongues.

Participants TB2, HA and EO2 strongly agreed that social justice is a reality when different groups of people and their languages are respected and valued. That is, their languages should be considered as the languages of education. The above study findings concur with Gale and Densmore's (2000) theory of social justice, which argues that fairness is achieved through positive recognition of the differences between cultural groups (Nelson et al., 2016: 6). To a larger extent, the foregoing findings of this study do not communicate social justice in the education system in Chivi District primary schools because ILs, namely, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele spoken in the District, are not given full recognition as the language of education. Thus, the education environment in Chivi District is punctuated with social justice malpractices.

4.7.4.3 Social Justice as Multilingualism

The study findings also described social justice as denoting linguistic pluralism. Participants (EO1, HB) used the term multilingualism in defining social justice as related to the MOI. When linguistic pluralism is being considered, all languages are recognised as the language of education which makes social justice a reality. Participants TA1, TB1 and TB2 unanimously agreed that social justice education practices entailed freedom and human rights of every cultural group through the inclusion of their languages in teaching and learning. This implies that social justice is a reality where full recognition of every language in the locality is allowed to be evident in the school curriculum. Cumming-Potvin (2009: 84) argues that schooling is expected to be socially just and not influenced negatively by discrimination through sex, language, culture, ethnicity or any creed. The study findings appeared to be the opposite of the situation at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools. Linguistic

pluralism was violated since the education system was pro-English as the vehicle of communication in teaching and learning. ILs (Shona, Shangani and Ndebele) spoken in Chivi District were partially introduced or do not even exist in the school curriculum. To that end, social justice education practices were mythically conceived in the District's primary schools.

4.7.4.4 Social Justice as Equal Access

Furthermore, the research participants defined social justice in terms of granting equal opportunities to all languages spoken in the community to become the LOI. Participants' (HA, HB, EO1, PA) responses from the interview sessions called for equality of opportunities in terms of language usage in delivering the curriculum content. It was found out that social justice in other dimensions could be conceptualised as equal access. The research participants HA, HB, EO1 and PA revealed that social justice would be realised if all the languages in the District were given equal opportunities to be the languages of education.

The above findings are in line with Sturman's (1997) theory of social justice in which it is stressed that some aspects of social justice are required to achieve equity for the most disadvantaged. The curriculum content is delivered in English at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools. This has tended to dominate other languages in the District, especially Shona, Ndebele and Shangani. Thus, equality of opportunity was lacking among learners who use ILs as the first language and those who speak English as first language in the District. Wright (2004: 92) confirms the foregoing research findings. He (2004) argues that learners from the dominant class are advantage because of their English proficiency. To a large extent, the conceptualisation of social justice as equal access communicates social justice education malpractices in Chivi District primary schools. Teachers and learners give more prominence to English than ILs in the District. To that end, the education field is not level ground.

4.7.5 Theme 5: Opportunities in English as the LOI in Influencing Social Justice Education Practices

This section of the research discusses three sub-themes attempting to define opportunities in English as the LOI in influencing social justice education practices.

4.7.5.1 English as the Language of Unity

First, the findings of this study reflected on English as the language of unity which fosters social justice in the education system. Participants (HA, HB, PB) remarked that in a multilingual community like Chivi District, the use of English as the language of education was a step towards national cohesion and social justice since learners were bound by one language. Conflicts and tension which are characteristics of social injustice could be avoided. Participants (PB, HB, HA) perceived English as the centre of unity in the classroom and beyond. Grade Three learners in Chivi District belong to different linguistic groups. As such, the choice of English as the LOI provides an opportunity to unite learners from these cultural groups and enhances equal linguistic opportunities to communicate curriculum content since they operate under one language 'flag'. This cultivates the spirit of togetherness, avoiding conflict and tension, which are the tenets of social injustice.

Mlay (2010: 48) confirms that in the present era of globalisation and free markets people need English, which is a global language. ILs would not get us anywhere. This implies that the use of English by all cultural groups is a step towards a global village. In a global village, people understand one another linguistically and culturally. Thus, language brings them together irrespective of their linguistic background. Participants in this study indicated that, to some extent, the use of English as the LOI united them and enabled them to communicate on an equal footing. They had buried their cultural 'machetes' in using English as the LOI. This is because English was the second language for both the learners and the teachers. However, observation findings established that learners had challenges in communicating fluently in English. There was rampant communication breakdown. As such the idea that English is a language of unity was not realised since learners found it difficult to use English in communication. This implies that English could be regarded as an impediment to social justice education practices.

However, the above findings are consistent with Miller's (1999) theory of social justice and the tenet of equality. Miller (1999) argues that society regards and treats its citizens as equals and that benefits such as certain rights should be distributed equally (Nelson et al., 2016: 4-5). The idea of using English as a second language for every

stakeholder in Chivi District primary schools is a step towards national unity. Thus, social justice practices are cultivated in the education system.

4.7.5.2 Improvement on Access to Information and Movement Globally

The second aspect on English as a panacea to social justice in the education system revealed by the research findings was its ability to improve access to information and movement on a global scale (TA1, HB, EO2). This was against the backdrop that English empowered individuals linguistically that they could communicate verbally and in writing. The study revealed that the ability to communicate in English was an asset in the education system because learners believed that English empowers individuals linguistically so that they can communicate verbally and in writing. This promotes interaction with others across the globe. The ability to articulate in English has enhanced the learners' chances to access information of any kind. In other words, English exposes individuals to the wider world through the facilitation of interaction of individuals from all corners of the world. A study by Tembe and Norton (2011) in Uganda concurs that the rationale behind the majority of parents to prioritise English is the need for their children to be able to interact internationally and to enhance upward mobility. The ability to interact with the international community is an opportunity that one may cherish.

4.7.5.3 Cultivation of Neutral Communication Environment in the Education System

The third sub-theme under the rubric of the positive influence of English in championing social justice in the education system in Chivi District which emerged from the findings was the issue of a neutral communication environment in education. Research participants (EO1, HA, TB1, TA2, HB) viewed English as influential in promoting fairness in teaching and learning. This implies that participants (EO1, HA, TB1, TA2, HB) perceived the idea to incorporate all ILs in Chivi District in the education system, particularly as the LOI, as a fallacy. This was because ILs could not bring learners together and operate at the same level. Participants (EO1, HA, TB1, TA2, HB) argue that communication is facilitated in education arena where to some extent there is justice since everybody is treated equally and justice is done to use the language that everybody has no outright advantage. In the Chivi District learners

belong to three cultural groups, namely, Shangani, Shona and Ndebele. So the use of English is fair to a large extent. A study by Erling et al (2017: 20) confirms that a mother tongue cannot be functional as the LOI in a multilingual nation. Thus, social justice is practised since no one is privileged above others by virtue that his/her mother tongue is the LOI.

4.7.6 Theme 6: Adversity of English as an LOI in Influencing Social Justice Education Practices

The sixth key theme about the influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice education practices was adversity in English as a LOI in fostering social justice in the education system. The section below focuses on discussing fourteen sub-themes emerging from this key theme.

4.7.6.1 Lack of Linguistic Diversity

Research findings from interviews established the existence of a linguistic monopoly in Chivi District primary schools (EO2, LA1, EO1, LA2). There was also concrete evidence from both document analysis and observation that teaching and learning at Grade Three were dominated by English in nine of the school subjects taught at primary school level in Chivi District. Secondly, among the ILs spoken in the District, namely, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele, only one, Shona, was recognised as a subject and not as an MOI. Thus, while ILs were pushed to the linguistic margin.

The finding from the face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis and observation were consistent with the observations made of teachers from both site A and site B. Most chalkboard work prepared for the lesson delivery by teachers in both schools was English dominated. Furthermore, learning aids in the form of wall charts and learning centres were also dominated by English. ILs were limited to a larger extent. This implies that the education environment in Chivi District primary schools was not communicating social justice since linguistic pluralism was a flaw. The existence of Shona, Shangani and Ndebele as dominant languages in the district could not make them recognisable in driving the school curriculum, which means linguistic diversity was not observed.

A study by Shizha (2012: 787) confirms the dominant role of English in teaching and learning. Shizha (2012) argues that the continued use of English in classrooms and business has the potential to negatively impact on the development of ILs in Zimbabwe. Similarly, Phillipson (2008: 251) argues that the absence of linguistic diversity is an explicit goal of nations attempting to impose monolingualism within their borders. Linguistic monopoly is a reality in the education system in Chivi District, a situation that is exposing ILs in the District.

The foregoing study findings are consistent with Bourdieu's (1977) symbolic violence principle in his theory of education as cultural reproduction. The principle stresses that the dominant class has the power to impose meanings on what they regard as knowledge (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73-74). In this context, English is the basis of knowledge. The national constitution of Zimbabwe has also extended its hands to craft the education language policy in which English was declared the MOI (The Education Act. The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 255; Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 4). Thus, linguistic monopoly has been legitimised. Apart from Bourdieu's (1977) symbolic violence principle, the study findings are also embedded in Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural imperialism principle which states that culture is not neutral but shaped by western powers to create hegemony and maintain a status quo (Monnier, 2010: 19). The culture which is dominant in education at Grade Three in Chivi District is English. ILs are but a 'mockery' in the school curriculum in the District. ILs are not fully recognised. To that end, education tends to be culturally imperialistic.

The study findings also embrace Miller's (1999) and Sturman's 1997 theories of social justice. In his theory, Miller's (1999) coins the principle of 'need', in which he denotes a claim that an individual is lacking necessities and is being harmed or is in danger of being harmed (Nelson et al., 2016: 4). Hence, the linguistic monopoly in Chivi District, where English is dominating ILs in the District indicates that learners at Grade Three in the District are being maimed linguistically, culturally and identity wise. They are not getting the basic necessity of communication in their mother languages during teaching and learning. Sturman's (1997) theory of social justice embraces the principle of curricular justice, in which he opines that curriculum design and enactment should attend to the principles of social justice, for example, equality of opportunity during and in post-education (Nelson et al., 2016: 4-5). The curriculum environment is not equitable in Chivi District primary schools. Learners, especially at Grade Three, do not

have the freedom to use their mother tongues in teaching and learning. Their linguistic rights are reduced and they are coerced to communicate in English. To that end, lack of linguistic diversity has led to long, hegemonic tendencies in the education system.

4.7.6.2 Language Attrition

The findings of semi-structured and FGI indicated language death as another social injustice in education. Research participants (LB1, LB4, PB, HB) viewed the use of English at the expense of their heritage languages as a recipe for the death of the mother tongues in Chivi District. The study findings revealed that language genocide was looming in Chivi District as a result of the dominance of English in teaching and learning with particular reference to Shangani and Ndebele. These aforementioned languages are spoken by the minority in this District. Most residents spoke Shona which is partially recognised as a subject in the school system. Shangani and Ndebele were not part of the canon of knowledge in the school curriculum in this District; hence they are at the verge of extinction in the District. Documentary study and observation also testified absolute exclusion of Ndebele and Shangani in Chivi District primary schools. This is against the 2019 Education Bill which demands that all the sixteen official languages should be taught in schools.

The above findings were consistent with field notes in the researcher's observations, during which the researcher interacted with learners during break, lunch and co-curricular activities and the assembly proceedings. During the foregoing interactive periods, hardly anybody was heard communicating in Ndebele and Shangani. The above scenario spoke volumes on social justice education malpractices in Chivi District primary schools. The participants' analysis of the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three, established that among ILs spoken in Chivi District, only Shona was partially recognised as a subject in the education system. Shangani and Ndebele did not function. This means the two ethnic languages were at the verge of extinction in the district. They were slowly disappearing. A study by Crystal (2003: 20) confirms that one of the major concerns of using English as a global *lingua franca* is linguistic death. Following the above, Hopkyns (2014: 1) warns that the spread of English has become cancerous and several heritage languages and cultures are affected worldwide. The dominance of English has further cast its long hegemonic shadow over ethnic

languages in Chivi District and they are exposed to linguistic genocide. This is because they do not appear anywhere in the school curriculum.

The study findings also articulate Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural imperialism which argues that cultural imperialism can take the form of an active, formal policy or general attitude as it reinforces cultural hegemony (Monnier, 2010: 19). The Zimbabwe education language policy demands that English should be the MOI at Grade Three upwards. This stance excludes ILs in the education system. As a result, learners are stripped of their languages and cultures. The effects tend to affect the speakers of the ethnic language most since they do not use their mother languages at any point in the education system. Their counterparts, Shona speakers, are somehow incentivised in that their language is regarded as a subject in the school system.

Furthermore, the study findings echo Freire's (2005: 5) view that in any part of the world, the less powerful person has been reduced to a spectator and is driven by the social construction of reality created by those in power. Thus, ethnic languages and their speakers have been vanquished and reduced to mere spectators in the education system in Chivi District primary schools.

Also, the study findings embrace Rawls' (1971) theory of social justice and his principle of liberty. In this theory, every individual should have the right to an extensive system of equal basic liberties. The treatment of ILs does not promote their freedom in the education sector. Their speakers are exposed to English. Thus, social justice is mythically conceived in Chivi District primary schools.

4.7.6.3 An Elite Centred Curriculum

Further findings on the negative influence of English on fostering social justice education practices pointed to an elite centred curriculum. Research participants (EO2, PA, LA2, LA5, HA, TB2) opined that social justice malpractices manifested through inequalities in the use of English and mother tongues as languages of education. Mother tongue occupy the peripheral roles, while English occupies the central role in communicating the school curriculum. Furthermore, participants (PA, LA2, LA5, HA, TB2, EO2) noted that lesson delivery, curriculum literature codification,

chalkboard preparation and the learning aids making, for instance, charts, work cards and fliers, endorsed English as the dominant language. A study by Masuku and Peresuh (2002: 29) confirms that the school curriculum does not promote the interests of various linguistic groups across the nation but serves the interests of those in power who are the minority. Thus, school knowledge is that which affiliates to English and everything associated with ILs is regarded as inferior and useless. Freire (1980: 122) cited in Nyirenda (2015) concurs that if those invaded are alienated from the spirit of their own culture, the more the latter want to be like the invaders - to walk like them, dress like them, talk like them (Freire, 1980: 122). In that context, the school curriculum at Grade Three in Chivi District is geared to distance the learners from their heritage languages. Almost every activity to do with teaching and learning uses English as the mode of communication.

The foregoing study findings are in line with Bourdieu's (1977) principle which argues that education serves as a mechanism for cultural reproduction. It does not transmit the culture of the whole society but it reproduces the culture of the dominant class (Halarambos et al., 2013: 73-74). The reality that English dominates the teaching and learning at Grade Three in Chivi District indicates the power dynamics at play. English is the language of the power elite. Heritage languages are a symbol for the powerless, despite their overwhelming number. Similarly, the study findings embrace Carnoy's (1975) theory of education as cultural product as the first world invades the third world and conquers local cultures (Monnier, 2010: 19). The school curriculum is an appendage of the western powers who are the elite class. Their language, English, drives the school curriculum. It is the standard of measure in every aspect of the school curriculum. Furthermore, the study findings are contrary to Gale and Densmore's (2000) theory of social justice which accentuates that fairness is achieved through positive recognition of the differences between cultural groups (Nelson et al., 2016: 6). In other words, Gale and Densmore (2000) articulate linguistic tolerance in the education sector. The nature of the school curriculum at Grade Three is in contrast to Gale and Densmore (2000) principle of fairness and recognition. Heritage languages are not fully recognised and school knowledge is the province of English. To that end, English as LOI constitutes a social justice malpractice in the education sector in Chivi District primary schools.

4.7.6.4 Indigenous Languages as Custodians of People's Culture and Identity

Another aspect revealed by the research findings of this study was the issue of perceiving ILs as the custodians of people's culture and identity. The research participants (HB, LA3) argued that the use of English as the LOI could have the capacity to strip away ILs' role as the custodians of people's culture and identity. This implies that among the various functions of language, the transmission of a group's culture, identity and heritage is important as well (Tembe and Norton, 2011: 33; Das, 2016: 12). Exposing Grade Three learners to English as the LOI in Chivi District was viewed as going against ILs' role of custodians of their culture and identity. This means that as learners continue to use English as the LOI, they are also further alienated from their local cultures, identity and heritage. To that end, the idea that English dominates the school curriculum means learners at Grade Three are deprived of their rights to internalise their cultural beliefs, norms and values embedded in the heritage languages. In the process, they gradually lose their identity as a result of being assimilated into the culture of the dominant curriculum language.

The findings of this study demonstrate Carnoy's theory of education as cultural imperialism. Losing a language is losing culture, and losing culture automatically heads to the loss of identity (Said, 2011: 91). While it is widely known that the culture of a people is in their language and vice versa, the situation at Grade Three in Chivi District is contrary to the truth above. Learners are using a second language in teaching and learning and thereby are deprived of their linguistic rights. Thus, this alienating and depriving linguistic environment constitutes a social justice malpractice in education in Chivi District.

4.7.6.5 The Manifestation of Xenocentrism

The research findings of this study also revealed some xenocentric tendencies as one of the social justice education malpractices. Research participants (HA, TA2, LA3) perceived that, in comparison, English enjoyed more ground than ILs in its use as the LOI. Most participants declared that they preferred English as the language of education than ILs for various reasons. The use of English as the LOI at Grade Three had devalued indigenous language and culture. Participant, learners, teachers, heads education officers and parents, felt that ILs were of less value than English in teaching

and learning. This means participants were giving prominence to English which does not promote their language and culture. They believed that English was preferable in everyday school business. Cholakova (2015: 43) confirms that the zeal to learn heritage languages is thwarted by the desire for English language proficiency. The legitimisation of English as the LOI at Grade Three had sown the seed of degrading local languages and culture. Similarly, the study findings concur with Bourdieu's (1977) principle of symbolic violence which posits that the dominant class determines the culture that is worthy and establishes it as the basis of knowledge (Schaefer, 2010: 80). The above social construction of knowledge where English is regarded as superior to ILs in Chivi District has led to the denigration of ILs. Learners prefer English to heritage languages since they associate it with those who have power and wealth. In that context, English is a liability in championing democratic principles of social justice in the education system in Chivi District.

4.7.6.6 Early Language Immersion

The research findings indicated early language immersion as another key social justice education malpractice as a result of the use of English as the LOI. Two participants (HA, TA1) cited that the adoption of English as the LOI at Grade Three accounted for early language immersion, resulting in ILs submersion. This implies that Grade Three learners were gradually losing their first language for a second language. The net effect was the death of their mother tongues and loss of culture and identity. This was because they were introduced to English as the LOI at an early stage before they even internalised their mother languages. This had since deprived of their linguistic rights to learn in their mother language. A study by Owu-Ewie and Eshun (2015: 73) confirms that most African nations have adopted language policies that start formal education in the learners' language as the LOI in the initial three years of schooling and a second language from Grade Four upwards. The above language of the education policy framework is also articulated in the Zimbabwe education policy (The Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987:225; Education Act, Amendment Bill, 2019: 10). Learners in Zimbabwe primary schools use heritage languages as the LOI from ECD to Grade Two. From Grade Three upwards, English becomes the LOI and learners are immersed in the second language too early and at a fragile stage. They are prone to the negative influences of this linguistic monopoly in the education system.

The study findings are also in contrast with the Asmara Declaration on African languages of 2000. The Asmara Declaration (2000: 130) argues that it is a fundamental human right for every African child of school-going age to enrol at school and receive their education through mother languages. Every effort should be made to develop African languages at all levels of education (Mutasa, 2004: 2-3; Nhongo, 2015: 3). The fact that Grade Three learners are no longer using mother language in teaching and learning is a violation of linguistic rights. To that effect, the education sector in Chivi District does not champion social justice. Undemocratic principles of alienation, deprivation and linguistic malnutrition prevail in education in this District.

4.7.6.7 Inclusion in Order to Exclude

Furthermore, research findings of this study reflected on ethnic languages and their dilemma in the education sector in Chivi District. Some research participants (TA1, TB1, EOI, PB, TB2, HB, HA) explained that ethnic languages in this District, namely, Shangani and Ndebele, were spoken. However, they were excluded from the school curriculum. Their existence in the education system was dependent on the political will (Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225). Thus, these languages were degraded and neglected in Chivi District primary schools.

Shona was recognised as a subject and not as the MOI. Ndebele and Shangani were entirely left out of the school curriculum at Grade Three in the two primary schools in Chivi District, yet they commanded a reasonable number of speakers, according to research findings. The situation of the aforesaid ethnic languages was dire because they appear to have existed only on paper (The Education Act. The Statute Law of Zimbabwe 1987:225). However, on the ground, they were not part and parcel of the education system in Chivi District, hence, inclusion for exclusion is a reality. A study by Pennycook (2001: 81) confirms that English is an instrument for sifting, sorting, selection and allocation of social positions in future. The choice of English as the LOI at Grade Three is a threat to ILs, which are included in the school system on paper but in practice, they are at the periphery.

Dube and Ncube (2013: 250) concur with the above by arguing that language is central to the achievement of educational goals, and for any language to endure, survive and be respected; it should be the MOI, whether it is an African or European one. Similarly,

Cumming-Potvin (2009: 84) argues that schooling is expected to be socially just and not influenced negatively by discrimination through sex, language, culture, ethnicity or any creed. The inclusion for exclusion scenario common in Chivi District's education communicates social justice malpractice.

The foregoing research findings are in line with Bourdieu's (1977) principle of symbolic violence which articulates that the dominant class has the power to attach meanings on what counts as knowledge and to legitimate that which they regard as knowledge (Schaefer, 2010: 80; Haralambos et al., 2013: 73). Similarly, sociologist Carnoy's (1975) theory accounts for the above research findings. This theory argues that culture is not neutral but shaped by western powers to create hegemony and maintain the status quo (Monnier, 2010: 19). These theories are relevant for this study because the dominance of English in teaching and learning at Grade Three is a force from those in authority. ILs are introduced partially in the education sector. They do not have authority like English which commands respect and recognition in all social facets. The linguistic inequality punctuating the education arena in Chivi District is counter to democratic principles of social justice.

4.7.6.8 The Multilingual Nature of the Community

The research findings pointed to Chivi District as a plural community. Residents of the district speak ILs, namely, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele. A small group was also conversant in English by virtue that they went to school where they were exposed to English as a LOI. Participant (LB1-LB3, HB, EO1, HA, TB2) responses during semi-structured and FGIs were consistent with the above. Among the popular heritage languages spoken in the District were Shangani, Ndebele and Shona. However, Shona commanded 82% (Thondhlana, 2013: 32). Shangani was spoken by <3% and Ndebele by 14% and werethus spoken by the minority (Thondhlana 2013: 32). A study conducted by UNESCO in (2008a) comments that both constitutional clauses and education language policies grant multilingual countries the right to use their languages and promote their own cultures but implementation is lacking (Owu-Ewie and Eshun, 2015: 172). Similarly, in this study, the education language policy recognises ILs in teaching and learning. However, it is not fully implemented. This implies that the linguistic rights of the learners are violated and this is the recipe for cultural erosion.

According to Picower (2012: 7), the social justice element of respect for others is to create a climate of respect for diversity. The fact that English dominates teaching and learning means the social justice element of respect for others is not practised in Chivi District primary schools. This is in line with Carnoy's theory which posits that culture is not neutral but is shaped by western powers to create hegemony and maintain a status quo (Monnier, 2010: 19). While this phenomenological study of the use of English as the LOI revealed that Chivi District was a multilingual community, the education system in this District promoted monolingualism. Thus, the social justice element of respect for others was not realised in the District primary schools. This gross negligence of language homogeneity envisaged social justice education malpractice.

4.7.6.9 Low-self Esteem

Another social justice education malpractice from the research findings was low-self esteem. Participants revealed that their self-esteem was thwarted especially when their mother tongues were not the languages of instruction (LA1, LA3, LA4). Semi-structured and FGI findings indicated that whenever learners communicated in their ethnic languages, they became objects of ridicule to their classmates who belonged to IL Shona which was partially recognised in the education system.

The above findings are consistent with the field notes from the observation made on lesson delivery at research site B. Learners were tasked to state various names for God in different languages. When the teacher called for the Shangani name for God, learners from Shangani speaking villages around the school were reluctant to mention it. They reiterated that they were shy since their classmates tended to laugh at them once they spoke in their language (LB4). The participants were of the view that the persistent use of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District was developing an inferiority complex among learners. In other words, those learners who were not proficient in English were not free to express themselves even in their mother languages because they felt that home languages were inferior to English and other ILs like Shona. In the process, the situation created a negative linguistic environment in the education sector.

A study by Widin (2005: 587) confirms that the children's right to utilise their local languages in education is violated by the education environment across Africa. In other

words, the school system demonises ILs to such an extent that the speakers of these languages assumed English was superior to ILs. In the process, they develop low-self esteem whenever they are associated with their mother tongues.

The foregoing research findings are in line with Freire (1980) who argues that cultural conquest cascades to those who are invaded and they begin to respond to the values, the standards, and the goals of the invaders (Nyirenda, 2015 citing Freire, 1980: 122). Contextually, this implies that the ethnic languages (Shangani and Ndebele) speakers in Chivi District are forced to communicate in English and Shona, hence the violation of their linguistic rights. The lived experiences of participants in this context manifest social justice malpractices in the education system in Chivi District primary schools.

4.7.6.10 Two Second Languages for Some Learners

The research findings on the critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in Chivi District primary schools also indicated that due to the multilingual nature of the District, some sections of the learners were grappling with two second languages in the classroom. The participants (HB, HA) declared that learners who spoke ethnic languages (Shangani and Ndebele) in this district were at crossroads with the language of education issue. The phenomenological study findings of this critical investigation of English as the LOI established that English was the second language for both the teachers and the learners at Grade Three. Further findings indicated that for almost all learners, it was their first academic year of using English as the LOI. Of interest was that among the Grade Three learners in Chivi District, certain learners were Ndebele and Shangani speakers. The rest were Shona speakers. That being the case, the school curriculum demanded that the learners use English as the LOI. Shona was taught as a subject. Ethnic languages (Shangani and Ndebele) were not even recognised as both the MOI and subjects. Thus, ethnic language speakers grapple with two second languages, (English and Shona). This implies that the likelihood that this section of learners could have difficulties in dealing with their academic work.

A study by Harris (2011: 7) confirms that the majority of the learners are confounded by using a second language in teaching. The foregoing study findings are in contrast with Sturman's 1997 theory of social justice which suggests a distributive component

which entails equipping learners so that they receive equality of opportunity both within current and future education. Learners at Grade Three level in Chivi District are not treated equally in terms of the language of education. Ethnic language speakers are exposed to two second languages (Shona and English) and the learners who speak Shona have English only as the second language. To that end, the education system is a centre for the division of classes. The curriculum tends to favour other groups of people and subjugate other cultural groups. Thus, lived experiences of the Grade Three learners in Chivi District were indicative of gross social justice malpractices

4.7.6.11 Coercive Tendencies

The findings of this study pointed to coercive tendencies as a negative influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice practices in the education system. Research participants (TB1, PA, LA4, and LB6) mentioned that during teaching and learning processes, learners were exposed to draconian classroom rules which compelled them to communicate in English.

Research participants in this phenomenological study of English as the LOI revealed that teachers and school administrators could even apply corporal punishment for communication in mother language during school hours. Freire (1980) confirms that the oppressor opts to deprive the people of reality, to dominate, denying them the right to speak and think in their heritage languages (Nyirenda, 2015 citing Freire, 1980: 97). In line with Freirean view, the theory of social justice argues that educational institutions are directly involved in reflecting as well as shaping the society (Nelson et al., 2016: 5-6). The Freirean view implies that the existence of classroom rules and regulations is meant to expand the scope and horizon of English dominance in the education sector. Furthermore, the lived experiences of participants of this study illustrate Bourdieu's theory. Bourdieu (1977) argues that education serves as a mechanism for cultural reproduction. It does not transmit the culture of the whole society, but it reproduces the culture of the dominant class (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73). In this case, English is the language of the dominant class and ILs belong to the weaker and poorer peasants. Thus, the ILs speakers should comply with the dictates of those in power. Whether they like it or not, they use English as the LOI. This situation demonstrates social justice malpractices in the education system in Chivi District primary schools.

4.7.6.12 Glocalisation of Indigenous Language Shona

The research findings had a bearing on ILs, notably Shona. Findings of the study indicated that IL Shona, which was the other language for the majority learners, was just a mere subject like any other subject in the school curriculum at Grade Three. It was not the language of education like English which commanded much respect as both a subject and the LOI (EO2, HA, HB). The language of education was a prerogative of English.

The lived experiences of the participants revealed that while Shona was the only IL included in the school curriculum in Chivi District primary schools, it was not fully recognised. Instead of playing the role of the MOI, Shona was found to be just a subject like any other subject. As a result, the curriculum was found to be differentiated in many respects and it was partially biased. This was because English was both a subject and the LOI for the other subjects, except Shona. Thus, ILs have been localised and occupy peripheral roles in the education system in Chivi District. A study by Dube and Ncube (2013) confirms that the retarded development of African languages is legally and officially sanctioned by Zimbabwe language policy which confines them to certain grade levels. The blockage of ILs to become the LOI throughout the primary school grades is an attempt to thwart ILs and create a status quo for English in the education sector. The above situation is a socially constructed phenomenon to create a fertile ground for other people and their cultures. This is in line with Bourdieuan theory tenet of symbolic violence, the assumption that the dominant class wields power to impose meanings on what counts as worthwhile knowledge and to legitimate that which they regard as knowledge (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73, Schaefer, 2010: 10; Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84). To that end, the findings imply that the 'doors' are closed for social justice practices in Chivi District primary schools. The findings are in conflict with Sturman's (1997) theory of social justice which demands curriculum design and enactment should attend to the principles of social justice (Nelson et al., 2016: 5-6). The social justice principles of equality, respect and recognition of other people's languages and culture are not applicable in Chivi District primary schools.

4.7.6.13 Bilingualism

The findings of this study also indicated bilingualism as a dilemma in both focus group discussions and interviews. Participants (HB, HA, TB1, EO1) responses pointed to bilingualism and code-switching as a strategy to end teacher-learner incompetencies in English, emanating from the dominance of English language as the LOI at Grade Three. Observations of teacher-learner rapport indicated that there was rampant code-switching from both the teachers and the learners. Hardly a minute passed without language mixing, especially English and IL Shona, which was the language of the majority of learners.

The study findings indicated that approaches like bilingualism, code-switching and dual language were unavoidable in a melting pot of cultures like Chivi District, where more than one language was spoken. Participants argued that this could enhance learners' grasping of curriculum content (EO1, HA, HB). A study by Thondhlana (2013: 36) confirms that first language education provides a rich cognitive preparation for the acquisition of a second language and that the literacy and cognitive skills already acquired in the first language can be an asset to understand second language concepts. This implies that the adoption of bilingualism and/or code-switching as language teaching strategies may assist Grade Three learners in Chivi District to understand concepts.

However, the current situation in the District's education system is opposite to the above. Learners are supposed to use English as the LOI in the majority of their lessons. Teachers conduct lessons in English. Bilingualism and code-switching do not comply with the education language policy. However, research findings indicated that, more often than not, teachers and learners resorted to ILs when they found things not working (communication breakdown) during lesson delivery. Buttaro (2014: 119) concurs that the reason dual language programmes could benefit all is that if done properly, it should promote bilingualism, respect and equity, for all learners in the school. To that end, study findings revealed that the absence of bilingualism in the language of education policy in Zimbabwean primary schools should be a thing of the past since this is counter to democratic social justice practices in the education system.

4.7.6.14 Avoidance of Indigenous Languages

The study on the use of English as the LOI in primary schools also revealed that ILs in Chivi District, namely, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele, were marginalised to a large extent (TB2, LA3, EO2, HB, Chimhenga and Chivhanga, 2013: 59; Dube and Ncube, 2013: 250). Hardly did teachers use ILs as the LOI. This was the province of English. The lived experiences of the majority of the participants revealed that the education system was undervalued ILs while espousing English. The heritage languages in Chivi District were not respected in the education circles and as a result, some of them, notably Shangani and Ndebele, were near extinction throughout the District.

The following study findings are in line with Panizzon (2016: 1) who argues that educational institutions have a powerful position polarising and controlling society by dictating who should be educated, what knowledge is to be taught when this knowledge is made available in the curriculum and, equally important which social values are imparted and maintained by the education system. Accordingly, Carnoy's theory of education as cultural imperialism concurs that culture is not neutral but shaped by western powers to create hegemony and maintain the status quo (Monnier, 2010: 19). The above theories are in agreement with the study findings that ILs are marginalised in the teaching and learning process at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools. The school curriculum is dominated by English in various spheres, ranging from literature, resource materials and the communication mode.

4.7.7 Theme 7: English Language as an Asset for Educational Achievement and Social Justice Education Practices

The study on the use of English as the LOI and its implications on social justice explored the role of English in educational attainment as a way to find out its influence in promoting social justice practices in the educational sector. This section focuses on discussing the four sub-themes under the foregoing key theme.

4.7.7.1 English Language versus Tests and Examinations

The research findings under this theme revealed that English was a source of relief for the learners because it scaffolded them during tests and examinations (HA, LA5,

EO1, PB). At Grade Three level, they had tests every fortnight in all ten subjects. Participants mentioned that they discovered that English was instrumental for the above purpose since it was the communication mode in nine subjects. It made their life easy and enhanced their chances of scoring better marks. In addition, the sources of curriculum content, for example, textbooks, and other teaching and learning resources were codified in English. Against the above backdrop, the majority of the participants viewed English as an asset when it came to the writing of tests and examinations at the end of the primary school course. The ability to communicate in English would empower them to tackle their tests with ease and increased their chances to score higher marks in those subjects that demanded them to use English in written or oral tests.

A study by Tackie-Ofusu et al. (2015: 163) confirms that English as the language of tests and examinations has a drawback. The use of English only in textbooks, examinations and tertiary learning presents a challenge to enhanced recognition of heritage languages (Tackie-Ofusu et al., 2015). The use of English in tests and examinations is viewed as a blessing in disguise by various stakeholders. While they believe English added value to their educational achievement, they also viewed it as a threat to their local language and heritage.

The idea of using only English in tests and examinations is in line with Bourdieu's principle of symbolic violence which argues that the dominant class can determine what counts as worthwhile knowledge and to legitimate that which they regard as knowledge (Schaefer, 2010: 43). English is in the superior position and the home languages are regarded as inferior. While there were benefits in using English, especially in tests and examinations, there were challenges in the learners regarding home languages as useless and unworthy. To that effect, the depiction of social justice malpractice is a reality.

4.7.7.2 English Language versus Educational Upward Mobility

Apart from being instrumental in tests and examinations, the study findings also revealed English as an asset for educational upward mobility. English could give learners the freedom to advance their education to the secondary and tertiary sector throughout the world since they were empowered linguistically. Participants (TB2,

EO2, LA6, and LB2) mentioned that proficiency in English could assist them to perform better, thereby giving them equal opportunity to go up the educational ladder. Educational attainment hinged on the mastery of English since it could increase their opportunities to interact with the rest of the learners in the world. Most participants strongly believed that their academic career was not limited to Chivi District but they had the chance to pursue their educational career in other parts of Zimbabwe or beyond where their mother tongues were not spoken. In that instance, they cited that English could be useful both for communication and educational attainment.

Erling et al. (2017: 38) confirm that English is the language of education and social mobility. The ability to communicate in English may facilitate learners' educational achievement. The above study findings are in line with Bourdieuan principle of cultural capital. In this theory, Bourdieu (1977) argues that education serves as a mechanism for cultural reproduction. It transmits the culture of the dominant class. This dominant culture is regarded as cultural capital because through the education system, it can be translated into wealth and power (Haralambos et al., 2013: 73). The use of English as the LOI at Grade Three gives it the dominant role in the education system. Thus, English is used as an instrument to subjugate local languages and culture. Those who manage to master it, have high chances to succeed in education just like an entrepreneur who has adequate capital to kick start a business enterprise. Those who fail to master English are bound to perform poorly because they do not have the cultural capital.

4.7.7.3 English Language versus Increased Access to Academic Information

Furthermore, research findings of this study indicated that English was helpful for learners to get more information about other subjects thereby scaffolding them to perform better (LA6, PB). This implies that the ability to speak and write in English had benefits for learners because they could access information from the textbook, and other teaching and learning resources written in English. The information obtained from the aforementioned sources could be used in academic work thereby increasing the learners' opportunities of succeeding in their academic work. In a contrasting attitude, a study by Owu-Ewie and Eshun (2015: 72) argue that LOI plays a pivotal role in enabling effective communication in the classroom. This is, however, realised when the learners' heritage language is used in teaching and learning. While English

can increase the learners' opportunities to access academic information, in an English dominated educational environment, they could be much better if the mother tongues were the MOI. Home languages enable learners to carry their academic activities in reading and writing lessons with ease than the unfamiliar language (English).

The foregoing research findings are in line with the cultural imperialism theory of Martin Carnoy (1975). This is because the use of English in teaching and learning, avoiding ILs, does not promote social justice in the education system in Chivi District primary schools. In the process, the growth of learners' culture is denigrated and their identity thwarted. Similarly, the avoidance of ILs in teaching and learning deprives learners of the cultural capital to be able to deal with what goes on in the school system. Given the chance to use local languages as the LOI, learners may enhance their academic performance.

4.7.7.4 English versus Sifting, Selection and Allocation of Roles

Further findings of the study on the use of English as the LOI indicated that good academic results could play a significant role in sifting, selection and allocation of learners to occupy some functional societal roles. The ability to communicate fluently in English was viewed as an asset for learners in future employment opportunities (EO1, LA3). The study findings from both semi-structured and FGIs revealed that English proved to be instrumental in society today. For their part, the majority of the participants indicated that English sifts, selects and allocates roles to the learners after school. The idea was that after schooling, learners are to occupy various posts in society. To occupy those roles, English is the yardstick, especially in the socio-economic and political environments. Erling et al (2017: 38) concur that there are assumptions regarding the value of English in employment opportunities. This implies that the ability to speak and write in English may assist to place an individual at the right place or occupation in society. High positions are occupied by those who have good academic qualifications and are eloquent in English.

The above findings are in line with Martin Carnoyian principle which assumes that culture is not neutral but determined by western powers to create hegemonic tendencies and maintain the status quo (Monnier, 2010: 19). Similarly, the study findings communicate neo-Marxist Bourdieuan principle of cultural capital

(Haralambos et al., 2013: 73; Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84). This is because those who possess the cultural capital (English language) will be sifted, selected and allocated to high positions with attractive benefits. However, those who cannot communicate in English may occupy less privileged positions in society where less benefit is awarded. In that context, while study findings regarded English as a benefit, to a larger extent, it could be regarded as a source of class division, alienation and inequality in society. To that end, social justice malpractices are a reality in Chivi District primary schools.

4.7.8 Theme 8: English as a Barrier to Educational Achievement and Education for Social Justice

The eighth major theme relating to the role of English in educational achievement and social justice education practices identified English as a barrier to educational achievement and social justice. Under this major theme, six sub-categories which emerged are discussed

4.7.8.1 Poor Performance in the Classroom

The research findings indicated that there was poor performance in the classroom emanating from the incompetency of learners in using English as the LOI. Participants (TA1, TB1, TB2, EO1, PA, LA1, and EO2) mentioned that the use of English as the LOI is associated with poor academic performance. The study findings revealed that the majority of the learners were performing below standard in the classroom as a result of the use of English as the LOI. Most learners were incompetent in English. A study by Mwinsheikhe (2002) concurs that learners exhibit minimal participation and low-performance grades in some subjects as a result of the use of English as the LOI and also understanding English is a problem that both the teachers and learners are experiencing (Mlay, 2010: 17). Following the above, Erling et al (2017: 26) argue that issues around language and the MOI in schools are greatly contributing to low achievement. This implies that the use of English as the language of education at Grade Three in Chivi District had serious negative effects on the educational achievement of learners and it is a drawback for social justice in the education arena in Chivi District. In line with Bourdieuan theory principle of cultural capital, learners do

not have the keys to unlock the educational potentials since they do not have the cultural capital. Their inability to speak fluently in English is a cause for concern.

4.7.8.2 Slowness in Thinking

The research findings from semi-structured and FGIs suggested that the use of English in teaching and learning compromised the learners' thinking capacity. Responses from the participants (HA, PB) were indicative that the thinking ability of the learners was short-changed as a result of the use of English language in teaching and learning. This implies that learners tended to think in their heritage languages. So the use of English as the LOI was a drawback to their educational attainment and demise to social justice education practices as well because learners had to think in mother tongues first before they translate that to English. The process was compromising their performance to a larger extent. Studies confirm that human beings use language to think and that language can be viewed as a vital thinking tool (Ntshangase, 2011: 11; Hopkyns, 2014: 10; Mlay, 2010: 10). Nevertheless, problems emanate when a person has to think in another language and communicate ideas in another language different from the mother tongue. Learners at Grade Three in Chivi District speak one of the following ILs, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele. This implies that they think in those languages. However, when it comes to speaking and writing academic work, they use English. In the process, they experience problems leading to poor academic achievement. To that end, the use of English language in teaching and learning does not promote social justice educational practices. The study findings are in line with critical Freire (1980: 122) view that cultural conquest may lead to the cultural inauthenticity of those who are invaded and they begin to respond to the values, s and goals of the invaders and for the cultural invasion to succeed the invaded must become convinced of their intrinsic inferiority.

4.7.8.3 Reading and Writing Difficulties

The study findings indicated that learners had torrid moments in reading and writing activities, where they were required to use English as the mode of communication. Most participants (LB4, TA1, TA2, HA, PB, TB2) mentioned that learners experienced reading and writing difficulties in English and that the ILs were instrumental in facilitating reading and writing in English. This implies that L1 is the key to unlocking

the learners' potential to deal with L2 content. Thus, for Grade Three learners to be able to read with fluency in English, they should first learn to read in their L1. L1 reading and writing skills can then be generalised to take up tasks in English. The research participants further revealed that reading and writing tasks in English were lagging as compared to reading and writing tasks done in home languages. A study by Ochshom and Garcia (2007: 16) confirms that reading and writing in a second language is a difficult task. Following the above, a study by UNICEF (2016) concurred that the majority of the learners are below the basic level of reading proficiency by the end of Grade Two to enable them to read effectively in the next grades (UNICEF, 2016: 99). This implies that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools was a threat to both the learners' academic achievement and social justice education practices. Learners did not score much since they used English in most subjects. Reading and writing are the macro language skills integral for one to attain educationally.

The foregoing study findings are in tandem with the Bourdieu's principle of cultural shock. This is because, learners in Grade Three abruptly shift to English as the LOI while in Grade Two, and down to ECD they were using home languages as the LOI. The situation tends to confuse learners and as a result, they become shocked. The study findings are also in line with Miller's (1999) theory of social justice 'need' assumption, a claim that one is lacking necessities and is being harmed or is in danger of being harmed. This is largely because learners are being deprived of their rights to read and write in the mother languages in most of the subjects which may grant them the opportunity to score better in their academic work. To that end, the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three does not promote social justice practices in Chivi District primary schools.

4.7.8.4 Promotion of Subtractive Bilingualism

The research findings indicated that English was a drawback in academic achievement in that it promoted subtractive bilingualism, where other languages, especially heritage languages, were at the verge of disappearing (HB). The research participants lamented that the continued exclusion of ILs in teaching and learning constitutes significantly to their poor performance in academic work. A study by Djite (2008: 150) confirms that English is the language of the elite who have abandoned

their home languages. The mother languages are associated with the home while English is related to acquiring new knowledge. This implies that the school curriculum is dominated by English and the heritage languages are denigrated and they occupy peripheral roles yet they command much respect in terms of followers in Chivi District.

The Carnoyian theory of education as cultural imperialism is relevant for these research study findings. The theory posits that African cultures, especially from the developing world, forsake their traditional values and lose their cultural identity when they are exposed to western cultures (Monnier, 2010: 19). The use of English as the LOI at Grade Three tends to threaten the development of local languages, which are rich in African cultures, beliefs, customs, norms and values. The learners gradually lose their mother languages and become associated with those who speak English. In other words, they become assimilated into the English culture and values. The study findings are in contrast with Miller's (1999) theory of social justice principle of equality which states that society should regard and treat its citizens as equals and that benefits such as certain rights should be distributed equally (Nelson et al., 2016: 4-5). Citizens cannot be regarded as equal when their mother languages are not used in the education system in which they are stakeholder number one. Furthermore, justice is not a reality, where citizens' linguistic rights are violated. Thus, the promotion of subtractive bilingualism in Chivi District primary schools is a barrier to educational achievement and exacerbates social justice malpractices in the education system.

4.7.8.5 Learners Learn Faster in ILs than in English

The findings of the study on English as the LOI in primary schools in Chivi District revealed that learners perform much better in ILs than using English as the LOI. Most research participants in both semi-structured and FGIs (TB2, TB1, HA, TB2, EO2, HB, EO1) opined that learners learn faster in ILs than in L2. This implies that even difficult concepts were better understood when they were explained to them in home languages. Effective communication between the learners and the teachers was realised when ILs were used during teaching and learning. A study by UNEB (2012) confirms that Grade Three learners' performance in numeracy conducted in ILs was much better than when taught in English. The report assumes that the numeracy that is taught in local languages enables learners to grasp the concepts better (UNEB, 2012: 76). Similarly, UNICEF (2016: 3) concurs that using mother tongue in education

consolidates learner participation, minimises attrition and cascades to parental and siblings' support in the child's education. Furthermore, Owu-Ewie and Eshun (2015: 73) contend that teachers agree that the use of the local languages is a more reliable vehicle of communication through which learners learn better and faster. The role accorded to English at Grade Three is a counter to the development of ILs in teaching and learning. The situation has proved to be a barrier to the learners' academic achievement and a source of social justice education malpractices because learners are prevented to use the languages (ILs) they understand best in teaching and learning.

The above research findings are in tandem with Bourdieu's (1977) principle of symbolic violence which alludes that the dominant class has the power to impose meanings on what is worthwhile knowledge and legitimate which they regard as knowledge (Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84). English is regarded as the worthwhile knowledge at primary Grade Three in Chivi District and the ILs come second. Nevertheless, ILs have proved to be very useful in the academic achievement of learners. This phenomenological study has proved beyond any reasonable doubt that the dominance of English in the school curriculum in Chivi District primary schools is a socially constructed environment. The study findings indicated that ILs could compete successfully with English as the vehicle for curriculum implementation. The sidelining of ILs in teaching and learning is in contrast with Sturman's (1997) theory of social justice and the principle of curricular justice which opines that curriculum design and enactment should attend to the principle of social justice (Nelson et al., 2016: 5-6). To that end, the education system in Chivi District is marred by social justice malpractices.

4.7.8.6 Indigenous Languages versus Self-Confidence

As a way to indicate how English could be a barrier to educational achievement, participants' responded that ILs had greater capacity to build confidence in learners than English (TB1, PA). This means using English as the LOI developed low self-esteem in Grade Three learners because they not proficient in it. The development of inferiority complex led to the poor academic performance of learners. Learners needed to master the language of education for them to communicate the curriculum content with fluency. Research findings from both semi-structured and FGIs indicated that they

displayed self-confidence when communicating the school curriculum in their home languages. A study by Trudell (2016: 101) confirms that there is greater classroom participation of learners who learn in their mother tongue, as well as greater self-confidence. Tambulakani and Bus (2011) concur that English as the LOI is a liability to the nation. This implies that the use of English as the LOI is a barrier in the educational achievement of learners and promotion of social justice education in the sense that learners lack self-confidence and are bound to perform dismally in their academic work.

The above research findings are in line with Bourdieu's principle of cultural capital. Learners at Grade Three fail to achieve academically because they lack cultural capital (English). The English language was the 'key' to unlock the academic barriers. The school, in this instance, was not an extension of the home. Learners met new language and knowledge at school, hence, the development of the inferiority complex. Apart from the Bourdieuan theory, the study findings are also in line with Rawls' (1971) theory of social justice and the liberty principle, where each person should have the right to an extensive system of equal basic liberties (Nelson et al., 2016: 4). The basic linguistic human right of learners tends to be violated in the education system in Chivi District primary schools. Their exposure to English deprives them the opportunity to use their home languages, thereby thwarting their self-esteem and academic performance. Thus, social justice practices are not a reality in the education system in Chivi District.

Having discussed research findings of this study above, in the next section, the researcher pays attention to the presentation, analysis, discussion and interpretation of the major findings from semi-structured interviews, FGIs, documentary study and observation in line with the research questions.

4.8 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This study was a critical investigation of English as the LOI and its implication for social justice at Grade Three level in Chivi District, Zimbabwe. As indicated in Chapter One, the background of the study, there is a dearth of linguistic diversity in Chivi District primary schools, despite its multilingual nature, where ILs Shona, Ndebele and Shangani are spoken. The government of Zimbabwe drafted education language

policies and participated in several international declarations on African languages, which recognise ILs as languages of education but to no fruition. The backtracking and 'shop talk' by education authorities in Zimbabwe is leading to the death of ILs, culture, heritage and identity. Learners at Grade Three level in Chivi District are using English as the LOI in teaching and learning and this violates the linguistic rights of learners and has caused social justice malpractices through the denigration of ILs in the education system.

Against the above background, the study sought to explore the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three. Various studies have been conducted at both primary and secondary levels in Zimbabwe. However, these studies adopted a holistic approach across grades and forms. This study aimed to explore English as the LOI at Grade Three, which is a micro approach to the study. This was because of the education language policy shift which came with the introduction of the updated competence-based school curriculum of 2015, which tended to worsen the language of instruction situation (MoPSE, 2015: 31; Education Amendment Bill, 2019: 10). Before 2015, the education language policy stipulated that English was to be the LOI from Grade Four. Currently, the education language policy has shifted goals and demands English as the LOI from Grade Three. This has exposed learners to early immersion and subtractive bilingualism let alone transitional submersion (Pluddenmann, 2010: 19, Ramokgopa, 2010: 14, Roberts, 1995: 370). Thus, the study explores an area which seems to be quite new in Zimbabwean research studies on the sociology of knowledge and language.

The study adopted the qualitative research design and also employed phenomenological research strategy within the constructivist paradigm which called for the lived experiences of participants and held the belief that knowledge is a product of people or a social construct. Data were generated through semi-structured, open-ended interviews, FGIs, document analysis and observation method. These were imperative for trustworthiness and credibility of the generated data from the two research sites. The verbatim transcripts were analysed according to Tesch's interactive data analysis model TIDAM (Ganga, 2013: 114). Emerged themes and sub-themes were formulated in line with the fundamental research question and the sub-research questions. The next section focuses on the summary of research findings according to the aforesaid research questions.

4.8.1 Findings in Line with Sub- Research Question 1

How do Grade Three learners, teachers, parents and education administrators perceive English as the language of instruction and its implications on fostering social justice practices in Chivi District primary schools?

This research sub-question sought to explore perceptions of teachers, learners, education administrators and parents on English as the LOI at Grade Three level in Chivi District, Zimbabwe. The study findings of this sub-research question were presented in respect of the following themes and sub-themes: conceptualisation of the LOI, English as a tool for global communication, English as a language of employment opportunity, English as the language of educational upward mobility, English as a menace to one's culture and identity, teacher-learner incompetency, English dominance in curriculum literature, home environment not conducive for English development and the promotion of monolingualism. The study findings from all the data generation methods indicated both positive and negative perceptions of English as the LOI. However, to a greater extent, participants' views revealed that English as a LOI was a hindrance to education for social justice. Very little was aligned to some positives (LB6, TB1, LA2, HB, EO2, TA1, LB4).

4.8.1.1 Conceptualisation of the LOI

Research participants conceptualised the LOI as an acronym, mode of communication and as government policy (HB, PB, EO1, TB2). Most participants unanimously described the LOI as an acronym that stands for the language of instruction. This implies that it is the language which is used in teaching and learning. In this study, research findings revealed that the LOI was English for nine of the ten subjects offered at Grade Three level in Chivi District. Study findings indicated that the abbreviation LOI could be used interchangeably with MOI (Medium of Instruction). Apart from the LOI/MOI as an abbreviation, research participants defined the LOI as a mode of communication in curriculum implementation and dissemination. In this way, the LOI points to a language in use in teaching and learning. The above descriptions of the LOI/MOI were consistent with the definitions of the LOI discussed in the literature review in Chapter Two of this study (Trudell, 2016; UNICEF, 2016).

Other views from the study findings, specifically participant LA5, postulated the LOI/MOI as government policy. The study findings uncovered that the choice of a language of education in a nation with linguistic pluralism is the prerogative of the government. In other words, the findings indicate that the LOI was wholly an appendage of the government's education language policy. Implicitly, study findings revealed that the introduction of English as the LOI in the Zimbabwean education system was not a product of negotiation between the education stakeholders and the government but an imposition. To that end, the LOI in the Zimbabwean context, particularly at Grade Three in Chivi District, was a contested area and it exhibited social justice malpractices in the education sector. The study findings from interviews were in accordance with the findings from document analysis. The Education Act of 1987 and the Education Amendment Bill of 2019 categorically stated that English is the LOI in all the school subjects except in ILs.

4.8.1.2 English as a Language of Global Communication

On a positive dimension, the study findings maintained that English is a tool for global communication. This implies that research participants perceived justice in the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three in that they focused on the future of learners and concluded that mastery of English could enhance their chances to interact with the rest of the world. The research findings revealed that in comparison with ILs, English could take them further in terms of communication with the global community (LB5, LA1, TB2, TA1, EO1, HA,). These findings are in line with the reviewed literature studies which confirmed that, due to globalisation and the open markets, English is important for smooth interaction (Mlay, 2010:48, Gudhlanga and Makaudze, 2012:52, Shizha, 2012:787). In this way, the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three can be viewed as a social justice trait in the education system. This is because people of all backgrounds can communicate effectively.

4.8.1.3 English as a Language of Employment Opportunities

Furthermore, on a positive note, the study findings indicated that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three Level in Chivi District was beneficial in the future lives of the learners. This was because, the majority of the participants (HB, EO1, PA, TA1, LB4, LA3) unanimously perceived English as a language of employment opportunities. For

instance, a full Ordinary Level certificate in Zimbabwe should have a pass in English at grade C or better. A good pass in English normally facilitates a learner to enter into a tertiary training institution as well as in occupational positions across the industry. In light of the above, research participants perceived justice in introducing English as the MOI as early as Grade Three level in Chivi District. Mastery of English could be functional in sifting, sorting, selecting and allocating learners into occupational positions that may improve their standard of life in future. In other words, participants saw justice in using English as a LOI when it comes to employment opportunities. English proficiency could give them the advantage to be selected for good paying jobs in future. The study findings were in agreement with the literature reviewed in Chapter Two which confirms that English proficiency is an asset for employability (Erling et al., 2017: 11; Plonski et al., 2013: 15). Therefore, the researcher can conclude that, to a lesser extent, English as a LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools reflects social justice education practices.

4.8.1.4 English as the Language of Educational Upward Mobility

Another aspect which was unmasked by the research findings of this study about the sub-research question¹ and points to social justice practice was the idea that English was viewed as instrumental for educational upward mobility (Erling et al, 2017: 38; Paauw, 2009: 10; Bacha, 2011: 1326). The educational journey in Zimbabwe and beyond its borders is not easy without English proficiency. Most participants confirmed that English was the classroom language (EO1, TA1, TA2, PA, HA). It was used to communicate academic issues of all kinds. Thus, English was the vehicle of communication in the field of education. Therefore, the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools was a positive step towards the academic achievement for learners in the future. This could lead to the production of graduates who meet global competitiveness. In this context, it could be concluded that English articulates social justice education practices.

4.8.1.5 English Language as a Menace to One's Culture and Identity

However, study findings were indicative of the negative perceptions of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools. Most participants (HB, LB6, LA3, TB1, HB) perceived English as a menace to one's culture and identity. The bone of

contention was that within one's language, people attach their culture. In addition, losing one's language is losing one's culture and losing one's culture is losing one's identity (Said, 2011: 191; Modiano, 2001: 345; Badry, 2011: 85; Pan and Seargent, 2012; Hopkyns, 2014: 1). Therefore, research participants perceived social injustice in the education system through the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District. The research findings revealed that Ndebele, Shangani and Shona spoken in the selected schools in Chivi District were not the languages of instruction in nine of the ten subjects taught in the school curriculum. To that end, their culture and identity were threatened to a larger extent because English, the dominant language in teaching and learning, was not part of their culture, nor could it be their identity. Therefore, participants' perception of English as the LOI led the researcher to conclude that English was a liability than an asset in the education arena.

4.8.1.6 Teacher-Learner Incompetency

Additionally, the study findings established social justice malpractices through the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three in selected Chivi District primary schools. This was largely because, the denigration of ILs and promotion of English as the LOI revealed a number of shortcomings in terms of English usage in communicating curriculum content by both the teachers and learners. Communication breakdown, lack of English proficiency, dead ends, grammatical and spelling errors and language mixing were the order of the day in the classrooms. Most research participants indicated that using English in teaching and learning was a mammoth task; however, they had no option since their local languages were not plausible with the school curriculum, especially with regard to the language of education (TB1, EO1, HB, HA, LB6, LA2, TA2, TA1). The above findings from the participants' views in the semi-structured and FGIs were consistent with research findings from observations made on both teachers and learners during lesson delivery. Observation field notes revealed that, although teachers used English to deliver lessons, learners found difficult to understand the concepts. Here and there code-switching could be used. Furthermore, observations made on learners in group work activities were indicative that the tasks formidable when done in English as the mode of communication. Teachers had to intervene either through code-switching or wholly by way of ILs. Document analysis also indicated several shortcomings on teacher incompetency, especially on some charts which were mounted on the four walls of the classrooms. For example, in one

of the wall charts at research site B, the following grammatical error on the chart was noted, “**the three states of water is...**”. This implies that both teachers and learners had challenges in using English in teaching and learning. This was evident through rampant code-switching and communication breakdown during lesson delivery. Grammatical errors on charts and chalkboard work also meant that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three was a challenge to both teachers and learners.

Therefore, against this background, the implications were that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three could not communicate social justice in the education sector. There was a need to re-look and revise the Zimbabwean Education Act and to do justice to the learners from all cultural groups in the district.

4.8.1.7 English Dominates Curriculum Literature

Furthermore, the study findings revealed that the school curriculum at Grade Three in Chivi District primary schools was elite centred and it dictated the power elite's pace and agenda (Erling et al, 2017). Lived experiences of the participants indicated that apart from English dominance in lesson delivery, textbooks and other teaching and learning resources were codified in English. The study findings also established that classroom wallcharts and fliers were written in English. Also, classroom observations revealed that chalkboard work in all the four classrooms observed was English dominated. Classroom records were also a testimony to the school curriculum at Grade Three as the province of English. Participants (TA1, EO2, TA2, LB4, PA, LA2, LA5) lamented that the school curriculum was dominated by English. Participants commented that it was not fair to use English as LOI because they were not proficient in the language. In this context, the school curriculum does not champion the dictates of the majority of the people in Chivi District since their languages were not part and parcel of the school curriculum. English dominated in both teaching and learning as well as in the publication of curriculum literature. To that end, therefore, the education environment in Chivi District primary schools does not live up to the expected standards of social justice.

4.8.1.8 Home Environment Not Conducive for English Language Development

Research findings also revealed that participants perceived the linguistic environment at home as not conducive for the development of English language proficiency. Specifically, research participant (LA2) commented that there was no link between the home and the school in terms of language. At home, Grade Three learners in Chivi District spoke Shona, Shangani or Ndebele. On arrival at school, they switched on to English, a different linguistic environment altogether. In the process, learners were bound to face problems. This is in line with Ntshangase's (2011: 20-21) study findings which revealed that for the majority of the rural schools, English is only useful in the classrooms. Bourdieuan theory and the principle of cultural shock concur with the study findings (Sadovnik and Coughlan, 2016: 84). Learners experienced a new linguistic environment different from their heritage linguistic environments. As a result, they experienced a shock. Thus, the education system is not a level field in Chivi District primary schools and therefore, it is a haven for social justice malpractices.

4.8.1.9 Promotion of Monolingualism

The research findings on the use of English as the LOI were indicative of the promotion of monolingualism in Chivi District primary schools (PA, EO2, LA1, LA3, TB2, HB). This was against the background that learners in Grade Three in selected Chivi District primary schools were affiliating to the three cultural groups, namely, Shona, Ndebele and Shangani. Despite their allegiance to these languages, learners were exposed to English for almost every lesson and activity in the school system. Heugh (2011: 53), confirming the above findings, alludes that heritage language speakers are shifted to English after three years of learning, a situation which exposes them to a foreign culture. This implies that local languages were excluded and avoided. The above scenario implicated inequality in the education system and this is in line with social injustice (Nelson et al., 2016: 4). One language should not be afforded the opportunity to rule over all other languages and make a mockery of them without becoming an oppressive state apparatus.

The next sub-section of the study presents the study findings of research sub-question Two.

4.8.2 Findings in Line with Sub- Research Question 2

How does English as the LOI at Grade Three influence the practice of social justice in Chivi District primary schools?

The findings of the use of English as the LOI in championing social justice practices were presented in respect of the following two themes and their subsequent sub-themes. Opportunities in English as the LOI in influencing social justice education practices and adversities in English as the LOI in influencing social justice education practices are the two major themes to be presented under this sub-research question. The following are both opportunities and adversities sub-themes to be discussed under this second sub-research question: Conceptualisation of social justice, English as the language of unity, a manifestation of xenocentrism, coercive tendencies, and the multilingual nature of the community. The research question to a larger extent revealed social justice education malpractices.

4.8.2.1 Conceptualising Social Justice

Research findings established that social justice in connection with the LOI could be described in various ways. First, the participants confirmed the views from reviewed literature that social justice could be viewed as freedom and respect granted to a group of people's language to take part in teaching and learning (Harrison and Clark, 2016: 231; Nelson, et al., 2016: 6). Secondly, participants' lived experiences viewed social justice in education as linguistic pluralism (HB, EO2, EO1, PA). Put together, the above definitions of social justice about the LOI point to the linguistic human rights of every learner. In this context, social justice was a reality when and only if the three ILs in Chivi District were recognised in teaching and learning. The study findings openly indicated that English was the only language of instruction at Grade Three in selected Chivi District primary schools. To that end, English failed to champion social justice practices in the education sector because it deprived the learners' freedom to use their mother languages in education. The marginalisation of mother tongues also implied the death of the learners' culture and identity, a social justice malpractice.

4.8.2.2 English as the Language of Unity

The study findings of the foregoing sub-research question revealed a positive influence of English in promoting social justice in the education arena, however, to a lesser degree. The participants (HA, HB, PB) in this phenomenological study viewed English as a language of unity. This was against the background that Chivi District is a multilingual community. The dominant linguistic groups in the district, namely, Shangani, Ndebele and Shona, were now united by English and this could develop the spirit of togetherness. In other words, the use of English in teaching and learning by all cultural groups was a step in long journey towards a global village. This is because participants indicated that nobody was disadvantaged in terms of language since English was the second language for every learner. The learners were united under one language 'flag'. The study findings were confirming Mlay's (2011: 48) study which argues that the use of English as the LOI by all cultural groups is a step towards a global village. This implies that English was a unifier of the different linguistic groups in selected Chivi primary schools. To this end, therefore, the use of English as the LOI advocated social justice in the education system in Chivi District.

4.8.2.3 Manifestation of Xenocentrism

On a negative note, the findings revealed the manifestation of xenocentrism at Grade Three in Chivi District. Exploring language preference, the research findings indicated that participants declared that they preferred English to ILs. One of the reasons given by the participants was that they wanted to learn English so that they become associated with those with money and good-paying jobs (HA, LA3, TA2). To that end, the participants were haunted by xenocentrism and they underrated their heritage languages which give them identity and integrity. In line with the above findings, Cholakova (2015: 43) contends that the motivation to learn local languages is lacking due to the love of English proficiency. The desire to use English was a cause for undervaluing participants' heritage languages. English was viewed as the language of the rich. In this way, one could claim that social justice practice in the education system in Chivi District primary schools was a myth.

4.8.2.4 Coercive Tendencies

Apart from the above views, the study findings established that the use of English as the LOI envisaged some coercive tendencies in the classroom set-up. Most participants confirmed that draconian rules were imposed on them to shun their heritage languages in the interests of English (LB6, TB1, PA, LA4).

The adoption of school rules and regulations to enforce the use of English against the learners' will be a recipe for social justice malpractices in the education system. In other words, these draconian rules were meant to scaffold undemocratic systems such as xenocentrism, lack of linguistic diversity, language genocide, among others, which to a larger extent did not go by the dictates of social justice. To that end, it could be concluded that the existence of draconian classroom rules points to a lack of social justice in the education sector.

4.8.2.5 The Multilingual Nature of the Community

To explore the influence of English as the LOI in championing social justice in the education sector in Chivi District, the study findings established that the district was multilingual. Research participants (TB2, HA, EO1, HB, LB1, LB2, LB3) identified three ILs dominant in the District, namely, Shona, Ndebele and Shangani. Of interest in this study was the fact that it emerged from the participants' lived experiences that the aforementioned ILs were not recognised in totality as components of the school curriculum at Grade Three in this district. Only Shona was regarded as a subject and not the LOI. The other two (Ndebele and Shangani) were not in the school curriculum. While the literature review in chapter two of this study mentioned that every African child has the right to education and to learn in his/her mother language (Asmara Declaration, 2000), the findings from face-to-face interviews, FGIs, document analysis and observation indicated that mother languages were excluded in teaching and learning. The education arena was the province of English in Chivi District primary schools. In this case, it could be concluded that the use of English, as the LOI at Grade Three in selected primary schools in Chivi District, was breeding social justice malpractices. The linguistic pluralism of the District was not respected.

4.8.3 Findings in Line with Sub-Research Question 3

What role does English as the LOI play in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners when it comes to fostering social justice in Chivi District schools?

The study findings in respect of the role of English as the LOI in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners are presented under the following two themes, namely: English as a LOI/MOI, an asset for educational achievement and social justice policy implications; and English as a barrier to educational achievement and social justice policy implications. To a greater extent, the findings from semi-structured and FGIs, documentary study and the observation method indicated the Education Act's betrayal of ILs in communicating academic content, specifically in selected Chivi District primary schools and in general in Zimbabwe as a whole.

4.8.3.1 English as the Language of Tests and Examinations

The literature review drawn from other studies in Chapter Two of this study established the importance of English in tests and examinations (Tackie-Ofusu et al., 2015:163). However, the above remarks were a negative perception in that researchers argued that the continued use of English in tests and examinations further exposed heritage languages to transitional submersion. The argument was that the use of ILs in such core areas in the education system would develop a spirit of appreciation to ILs as equally important to English. Contrary to the above, participants (HA, HB, LA5, EO1, PB) viewed English as an asset in tests and examinations. They saw English as their 'Messiah' in coping with nine of the ten subject's content. Without the mastery of English, participants believed that it would not be possible for them to attain good passes in those subjects. In a way, lived experiences of research participants point to English as positively influencing social justice in the education sector in that it added value to their educational achievement. These research findings on English as the language for tests and examinations communicate document analysis findings, particularly the Zimbabwe Education Act, which represents the education policy to a large extent. Section 62 of Chapter 25: 04 of the Education Act of 1987, repealed Languages to be taught in schools; sub-section 1b demands that the LOI should be the language of tests and examinations (Education Amendment Bill, 2019: 4). Participants in both semi-structured and FGIs and document analysis established that

most subjects were using English as the language for tests and examinations. In a way, policy dictates were a betrayal to the linguistic diversity in the education system in Chivi District primary schools.

4.8.3.2 English Language versus Poor Performance

The research findings have indicated that research participants in this phenomenological study of English as the LOI viewed English as a barrier to educational achievement and a source of social justice malpractice in the education sector at Grade Three level. The review of related literature mentioned that learners exhibited minimal participation and low-performance grades in some subjects as a result of using English as the LOI (Mlay, 2010:17; Erling et al., 2017: 26). The majority of participants (EO2, TA1, LA1, TB1, PA, TB2, EO1) confirmed the above assertion in that they unanimously agreed that the majority of them were performing below expected standards. Specifically, EO2 opined that:

When I look at English, I think it is a disgrace to some extent because most learners do not perform well when lessons are being conducted in English. They become docile, somehow mesmerised and confused. I mean, participation is very low.

Against the above backdrop, it could be concluded that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three could not scaffold most learners to reach their desired academic goals and as a result, it compromises social justice education practices since it promotes the underachievement of learners. The social justice malpractices above could be interpreted as a result of the Education Act loopholes because learners and teachers per se complied with the Act which demanded English as the LOI at primary Grade Three (Education Amendment Bill, 2019: 4).

4.8.3.3 Slowness in Thinking

Literature review from Chapter Two pointed to thinking slowness inflicted by the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three (Ntshangase, 2011: 11; Hopkyns, 2014: 10; Mlay, 2010: 10). The study findings have indicated the above as a disadvantage to the learners' academic achievement because learners are more effective in thinking when

they are using their mother tongues than when using English (HA, PB). It emerged that learners at Grade Three in selected Chivi District primary schools were taking two steps to reach the required responses to the teacher. First, they had to conceptualise the problem at hand in their mother tongue, translate it into English and communicate the idea to the teacher. Hence, the process took longer to accomplish and was done slowly. In the process, learners' performance was compromised.

Thus, the use of English as the LOI strips learners of their freedom of language use and enforces coercive tendencies among learners. In light of the above, it could be concluded that social justice in the education system at the primary school level is preached in mythical terms. This was largely because the Education Act had total control over how the LOI should be handled in the academic arena.

4.8.3.4 Early Immersion

Furthermore, the findings indicated that to consider English as championing democracy and social justice practice in the education system in Chivi District primary schools was a fallacy. First, the participants (HA, TA1) argued that Grade Three learners were introduced to English as the LOI too early. This was yet another Education Act implication which demanded primary school learners to be introduced to English as the LOI as from Grade Three (Education Amendment Bill, 2019: 4). In other words, they were exposed to early language immersion. Grade Three is a transitional stage, where the learners are using English as the LOI for the first time. In the process, the learners experience transitional submersion, that is, they are abruptly replacing their local languages with English as the MOI (Pluddeman, 2010: 19; Ramokopa, 2010: 14; Roberts, 1995: 370). Therefore, the participants felt that early language immersion was thwarting social justice practices in the education system.

The tendency to engage learners in a language which was not their mother tongue has grave effects for them culturally and identity wise. This is a result of losing their identity and culture which are deeply rooted in their language. In this way, the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three negatively influences social justice practices in the education system.

4.8.3.5 Bilingualism

Furthermore, the findings established that in a melting pot of cultures like Chivi District, there was a need for incorporating bilingual teaching and learning strategies. Most participants indicated that code-switching was inevitable during teaching and learning (TA2, TB1, HA, HB). They opined that there was a need for the language of education policy to allow dual-language programmes in order to realise social justice in the education system. Buttaro's (2014: 119) study concurs with the participants' views on the need for respect and equity for all the learners by using bilingual programmes.

In light of the above findings on education policy implications, it could be concluded that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three pointed to lack of linguistic diversity and violation of linguistic rights, which are tenets of social justice malpractice.

4.8.4 Findings in Line with the Main Research Question

How does English as the LOI impede social justice education practices at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools?

The research findings of how English as the LOI impedes and/ or reflects social justice practices in the education system in selected Chivi District primary schools were presented in respect of the following eight major themes: conceptualisation of the LOI/MOI, the conceptualisation of social justice, positive perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice, opportunities in English as a LOI in influencing social justice education practices, adversity in English as a LOI in influencing social justice education practices, English as an asset in educational achievement and social justice policy implications and English as a barrier in educational achievement and social justice policy implications. The section below serves to summarise study findings in line with the fundamental research question.

4.8.4.1 Conceptualisation of the LOI/MOI

Research participants conceptualised the LOI/MOI in various ways. However, the consensus was the view of English as the language of the classroom. Teachers, parents, educational administrators and the Grade Three learners concurred that

English was used to communicate the school curriculum across Chivi District primary schools although the school was multilingual.

4.8.4.2 Social Justice as Fairness and Access to Information

An understanding of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice also highlighted the concept of social justice as fairness, access to information in teaching and learning and as freedom or multilingualism (TB2, HA, EO2, EO1, TA1, PA, TA2). In other words, they were campaigning for freedom of language use in teaching and learning. The researcher established that participants' understanding of the concept of social justice was contrary to practice. The equality of opportunities was not a reality since all the learners did not use their mother language in teaching and learning. To that end, the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three, to a larger extent, exhibited social justice malpractices in the education sector in Chivi District.

4.8.4.3 Improving Access to Information and Movement Globally

The findings of the foregoing research question also revealed a positive influence of English in fostering social justice in the education arena. The participants in this phenomenological study viewed English as enhancing access to information and movement on a global scale to learners (EO2, HB, TA1). This is against the backdrop that the school curriculum from primary up to tertiary is elitist-orientated. Research participants indicated that mastery of English from an early Grade Three was an asset for the learners to gain proficiency in English so that they read with adequate understanding data sources codified in English. In addition, findings of the study established that learners in future could interact with the rest of the world socially, economically and politically. The participants' views were in agreement with Tembe and Norton's (2011) study discussed in the literature review which established that parents prioritised English as the LOI because it enhanced their children's opportunities of social mobility and interaction with the global world. Thus, English has become an empowering agent for one to become functional in a globalised village. Therefore, findings have preached the social justice 'gospel' in the education system in Chivi District primary schools.

4.8.4.4 Cultivation of Neutral Communication Environment in the Education System

The use of English as the LOI promotes social justice practices in that it creates a cosmos of a democratic community (Erling et al., 2017: 20). For instance, research participants' (EO1, HA, TB1, TA2, HB) lived experiences established that there was the cultivation of a neutral communication environment in the education system as a result of using English as the LOI. There was fairness and the granting of equal opportunity in communication to Grade Three learners through the use of English as the LOI since it was a second language for all the three linguistic groups in Chivi District. The granting of equal opportunities is a tenet of social justice in the education system and democratisation of the classroom environments.

4.8.4.5 English Language versus Sifting, Sorting, Selection and Allocation of Roles

The research findings also indicated some semblance of social justice practices as a result of using English as the LOI at Grade Three. This was largely because all the participants maintained that English was instrumental in post-education in that it could be used to sift, sort, select and allocate learners to some roles in society. The ability to effectively communicate in English was normally used to allocate people job prospects and other societal roles. The sociological meritocratic principle is an effort to practise fairness in society. Those who possess high qualifications occupy functionally more important positions in society. In this context, the qualification is attached to an English language pass in the academic certificates. Therefore, participants' indication of English's role in sifting, selecting and allocating people to various occupations following the sociological meritocratic principle could be interpreted as a positive campaign towards social justice education.

4.8.4.6 Language Attrition

Apart from the above positive views on how English influences the practice of social justice in Chivi District primary schools, the findings also established several negative perceptions on English as a LOI in selected primary schools in Chivi District. Language attrition was revealed through the lived experiences of participants as one of the key

themes. Participants (HB, PB, LB4, LB1) from both face-to-face and FGIs revealed that ILs - Shona, Ndebele and Shangani - dominant in the district were not recognised fully in the education system. This has indeed demonstrated language death, especially for the ethnic languages, Shangani and Ndebele (Crystal, 2003: 20; Hopkyns, 2014: 1), because they were omitted from the school curriculum. Observation and document analysis findings also revealed that English dominated schooling and Shona was only recognised as a taught subject, probably because it was the language of the majority in the district. Ndebele and Shangani were not part of the canon of knowledge in Chivi District primary schools. To that end, it could be concluded that linguistic genocide was looming in Chivi District and this demonstrated a serious lack of social justice education practices. The two ethnic languages mentioned above were at the verge of extinction because of their exclusion and neglect in the education system. The ethnic language demise was wholly blamed on the language policy of the Education Act which stipulated that their inclusion in the school curriculum was based on the willingness of the Minister responsible for education at that particular time provided that there was adequate funding, learning equipment, infrastructure among other resources (Education Act, The Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225; Education Amendment Bill, 2019: 4). Therefore, the study findings indicated a lack of political will as the main cause of ethnic languages' demise.

4.8.4.7 Low Self-esteem

Also, the findings of the study established that low self-esteem was experienced among the research participants as a result of not using their mother languages in the education system (PA, TB1, LB4). It emerged that whenever they spoke in their mother tongues (Shangani and Ndebele), they were mocked by their classmates, a situation which developed an inferiority complex among those learners. Lack of confidence intensifies transitional submersion and language genocide for ILs. In the end, English becomes the 'kingpin' in the education system and ILs disappear permanently. In this context, it could be concluded that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three did not champion social practices in Chivi District. This was because study findings indicated that the linguistic rights for the learners were grossly violated. This was in line with the assertion found in the literature review that the education environment deprives the children's right to use their mother languages in learning (UNICEF, 2016: 70).

4.8.4.8 Learners Learn Faster in ILs than in English

Participants (EO1, HB, EO2, TB2, HA, TB1), to a large degree, maintained that learners at Grade Three were learning faster in ILs than they do in English. This was because study findings revealed that in almost every classroom, teachers rarely communicated in English throughout the lessons. They occasionally resorted to code-switching. The research participants indicated that they felt at home whenever their teachers were communicating in mother tongue during lessons. The review of related literature for this study confirmed the above study findings that mother tongue usage in education consolidates learner participation, reduces language death and incorporates family members in the education of their young ones (UNEB, 2012: 76; UNICEF, 2016: 3; Owu-Ewie and Eshun, 2015: 73). The function of English at Grade Three tended to be ideological than liberating. In reality, ideology is there to cover the reality in society. According to the above research findings, the reality is that learners' performance increased when they used mother tongues in teaching and learning but they were forced to use English as the LOI. The researcher interpreted these research findings as pointing to policy implications because the choice of English as the LOI was the adoption of the Education Act. There was no freedom to use home languages as the MOI. To that effect, English has tended to be an ideological state apparatus to subjugate ILs and their speakers. Thus, one could safely conclude that to speak of social justice education at Grade Three is a myth.

4.8.4.9 Literacy is Difficult to Attain in English

In addition to the above, study findings revealed that Grade Three learners had reading and writing challenges, particularly where they were required to read and write using English as the MOI. The research participants unanimously agreed that the development of the two macro language skills (reading and writing) was lagging behind because they could not understand the LOI (English). It emerged that mastery of ILs was a prerequisite for the learners to develop reading and writing language macro skills. For example, TA2 mentioned that:

For learners to be good English readers, I think we should begin to sharpen their reading in L1. This would assist them to generalise

reading in the L2. Once they master reading, they would even do better in writing their tests.

The literature reviews also pointed to second language reading and writing as a mammoth task for second language learners. In this context, the introduction of English as a LOI at Grade Three does not promote social justice in the education sector because learners find it difficult to cope with school work.

4.8.4.10 Experiencing Two Second Languages

Another aspect unmasked by the study findings relating to policy implications was the issue of experiencing two second languages (L2) by some section of learners particularly ethnic language speakers (Shangani and Ndebele speakers) at Grade Three. The findings revealed that learners were obliged to use English as the LOI at Grade Three and study IL Shona as a subject (Education Act, the Statute Law of Zimbabwe, 1987: 225; Education Amendment Bill, 2019: 4). In this context, those learners who belong to the ethnic linguistic groups of Shangani and Ndebele encountered a dilemma in that they struggled to internalise both English and Shona as second languages. This situation exposed Ndebele and Shangani speaking learners to inequalities in the education sector. For instance, learners affiliating to the Shona cultural group benefited more than those from the Ndebele and Shangani linguistic groups since Shona speaking learners only had to master one second language (English). Their counterparts, Ndebele and Shangani speaking learners were immersed in two second languages (English and Shona). To a larger degree, this had negative influences on fostering social justice practices in the education sector in selected Chivi District primary schools because ethnic language speakers were exposed to transitional submersion.

4.8.4.11 Subtractive Bilingualism

Another policy implication study finding in line with the main research question relates to the promotion of subtractive bilingualism (Djite, 2008: 150). Research participants indicated that marginalisation of ILs in teaching and learning was thwarting learner academic achievement and social justice practices. This was because learners understood concepts better in ILs than in English. The findings revealed that

abandonment of ILs led to the phasing out of mother tongues in teaching and learning. The researcher's evaluation of the study findings could be interpreted as leading to a loss of culture and identity as a result of avoidance of local languages in teaching and learning.

4.9 SUMMARY

The foregoing chapter outlined the research findings of this study. Eight major themes emerged, namely, the conceptualisation of the MOI/LOI, the positive perceptions of English as the LOI, the negative perceptions of English as the LOI, conceptualisation of social justice, adversities in English as the LOI in influencing social justice, opportunities in English as the LOI in influencing social justice practices in the education system, English language, an asset in educational achievement and social justice and English language as a barrier in educational achievement and social justice. From the eight major themes, several sub-categories emerged in the process of thematic data analysis of the raw data. FGIs, semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis were used to generate raw data. The presentation, analysis, discussion and interpretation of the research findings were further enhanced by verbatim remarks from the research participants and field notes from observations and the document analysis.

The study findings were also substantiated with both kinds of literature reviewed in chapter two of this study and the two critical theories which undergird the study. The findings from semi-structured and FGIs, document analysis and observation method revealed that, to a large degree, English as the LOI reflected social justice education malpractices in Chivi District primary schools. The findings have indicated the use of English in teaching and learning as a hindrance to social justice education practices at Grade Three level in Chivi District.

Chapter Five provided the conclusion and recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the presentation, analysis, discussion and interpretation of the research findings. In Chapter Four, the theoretical framework undergirding the current research was applied to either confirm or refute the research findings. The reviewed literature from Chapter Two was also extensively used to confirm or refute the research findings. The presentation, analysis, discussion and interpretation of the study findings were substantiated by verbatim excerpts from the study participants. The verbatim transcripts from the semi-structured and FGIs were complemented with documentary study findings as well as field notes from the observation method.

In the current chapter, attention is given to the presentation of the conclusions and recommendations of this study. Chapter Five also highlights the need for further research studies before the presentation of concluding remarks.

As highlighted in Chapter One, this study is grounded in Sociology of Education, focusing on exploring English as the LOI and its implications for social justice at Grade Three in Chivi District. The topic reads, 'The use of English as the LOI and its implications on social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation.' The major aim of the study was to explore the degree to which English as the LOI at Grade Three could reflect social justice education practices in selected Chivi District primary schools. The researcher was motivated to carry out this study by the Education Act of 1987, revised in 2015 through the competence-based curriculum review, which demands Grade Three learners to use English as the LOI in nine (9) of the ten (10) subjects offered at primary school level in Zimbabwe. This was against the introduction of English as the LOI at Grade Four in the repealed 1987 Education Act. The one-year immersion into a new language was a cause for concern to the researcher as it exposed learners to subtractive bilingualism and transitional submersion. In other words, this process was phasing out the local languages of the learners which are the custodians of their culture and identity (Das, 2016: 12; Tembe and Norton, 2011: 33.) In light of the above policy-related issues, the thesis title, 'The

use of English as the LOI and its implications on social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation' was penned.

This research was conducted at two selected Chivi District rural based primary schools. The two research sites and the twenty-two (22) research participants were purposively selected to take part in the study. This was because of their information richness and convenience at their respective places of residence and workplaces. The study was wholly informed by constructivist philosophical world view within the qualitative research design. The study also adopted phenomenological research strategy which calls for the lived experiences of the research participants. Semi-structured open-ended and FGIs, documentary study and the observation data generation methods were employed as these methods are embedded in qualitative research design, constructivist paradigm and the phenomenological research strategy.

The qualitative research design data generation methods highlighted above were instrumental in coming up with the major themes and sub-themes which followed the research questions. The rationale behind embarking on the aforementioned qualitative data generation methods was to achieve the aims and objectives and provide answers to the research questions outlined below.

The research aimed to:

1. Reflect on the perceptions of Grade Three learners, teachers, education administrators and parents on the use of English as the language of instruction and its implications on fostering social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools.
2. Examine the influence of English as the language of instruction at primary Grade Three in fostering social justice practices in education in Chivi District primary schools.
3. Explore the role of English as the language of education in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners in Chivi District primary schools when it comes to fostering social justice.

The research was also guided by research objectives in line with the aims outlined above. In terms of objectives, the research sought to:

1. Explain how Grade Three learners, teachers, education administrators and parents perceive English as the language of instruction and its capacity to influence social justice practices in two Chivi primary schools.
2. Evaluate the role of English as the language of instruction in fostering social justice practices at Grade Three in two Chivi District primary schools.
3. Determine the role of English as the medium of instruction in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners in two Chivi District primary schools when it comes to fostering social justice.

To achieve the above aims and objectives of the study, the fundamental and secondary research questions below were explored:

Main Research Question

How does the use of English as the language of instruction impede social justice education practices at Grade Three level in Chivi District primary schools?

The following secondary questions were explored in an attempt to gather adequate information that complemented the primary research questions focus in understanding pertinent issues surrounding English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in the education arena in Chivi District.

Research Sub-Questions

1. How do Grade Three learners, teachers, education administrators and parents perceive English as the language of instruction and its implications on fostering social justice practices in Chivi District primary schools?
2. How does English as the language of instruction at Grade Three influence the practice of social justice in Chivi District primary schools?
3. What role does English as the language of instruction play in the educational achievement of Grade Three learners in Chivi District schools when it comes to fostering social justice?

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

This section of the research summarises major findings of the research. Both semi-structured and FGIs were conducted to collect data on how English as the LOI reflects social justice education practices in selected Chivi District primary schools. Four (4) teachers, two (2) heads, two (2) education officers and two (2) parents participated in the semi-structured open-ended face-to-face interviews. The FGIs involved twelve (12) Grade Three learners. Document analysis and open observations were also carried out to supplement the information to the interviews. Documents studied included the progress record books, attendance registers, schemes and plans of work, learners' exercise books, textbooks, school end of term reports, minute books and the policy documents on the language of education. Observations were made on teachers, where the focal areas were lesson delivery, wall charts, chalkboard work, co-curricular activities, and assembly proceedings, among other school daily activities.

Eight key themes emerged from both semi-structured and FGIs, document analysis and observation about the use of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice education in primary schools in Chivi District. The participants' views revealed that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three reflected both positive and negative perceptions. However, to a greater extent, the participants established that there was social justice malpractice as a result of using English as the LOI at Grade Three. The major emerging themes from the exploration of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice were: conceptualisation of the LOI/MOI, the conceptualisation of social justice, positive perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for fostering social justice education practices, negative perceptions of English as the LOI and its implications for social justice education practices, opportunities in English as the LOI in influencing social justice education practices, English as the LOI, an asset for educational achievement and social justice and English as a barrier to educational achievement and social justice. Having outlined the main findings of the research in this section, the next section focuses on discussing the research findings according to each research question.

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND EMERGING CONCLUSIONS

5.3.1 Research Main Question: Impediment of Social Justice Education Practices in Chivi District Primary Schools.

The following sub-themes and categories are in line with the main research question; conceptualisation of the LOI/MOI, improving access to information and movement globally, cultivation of neutral communication environment in the education system, English versus sifting, sorting, selection and allocation of roles, language attrition, low self-esteem, learners learn faster in ILs than in English, reading and writing challenges, two-second languages and subtractive bilingualism.

The fundamental question revealed that the use of English as the LOI, to a lesser extent, reflected social justice education practices because there is an improvement in access to information and movement globally. This implies that learners can actually get information through reading English articles and that they can interact with the global world physically and in text. The fact that Grade Three learners in Chivi District came from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds placed English as pivotal in cultivating a neutral communication classroom learning environment. Also, English as the LOI was viewed as reflecting social justice education practices because proficiency in English provides learners with high chances to occupy more functional roles in society after school. Most occupations in Zimbabwe require someone proficient in English.

On the negative side, the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three in Chivi District was viewed as imposing language attrition or linguistic genocide. In other words, the study findings revealed that the linguistic rights of the learners were violated. To be more precise, the three ILs in Chivi District, namely, Shona, Shangani and Ndebele were not fully recognised in the classrooms. Shangani and Ndebele were not included in the school curriculum. Shona was partially recognised as a subject. This has led yet to another vice in Chivi District classroom learning environment, whereby in one classroom, some learners struggled with two second languages. Shangani and Ndebele speakers had English on the one hand and Shona on the other hand as the second languages. A Shona speaker learner had English only as a second language.

Another policy-related issue was the development of low self-esteem imposed by using English as the LOI, especially from the ethnic Shangani and Ndebele speakers. The findings indicated that they were always mocked upon speaking their mother tongues. Moreover, the fact that a study finding revealed that literacy in English was poor demonstrated that social justice education practices were minimal in Chivi District primary schools. All in all, the findings in line with the main question pointed to a dearth of linguistic diversity, a key characteristic of social justice malpractice in the education arena in Chivi District primary schools.

This section of the research dwelt on the summary of research findings aligned to the fundamental research question. In the next section, attention was given to the summary and conclusions of research results in line with research sub-question One.

5.3.2 Research Sub-Question 1: Perceptions of English as the LOI and its Implications for Social Justice Education Practices in Chivi District Primary Schools

The study findings of research sub-question One were presented in respect of the following sub-themes and categories: conceptualisation of social justice, English as an instrument for global communication, English as a language of employment opportunity, English as a language of educational upward mobility, English as a menace to one's culture and identity, teacher-learner incompetency, elite centred curriculum, promotion of monolingualism and the home environment not conducive for English.

To a larger degree, the research findings under research sub-question One communicated negative perceptions and attitudes towards English as the LOI in primary schools in Chivi District. This was because the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three established that English was a menace to one's culture and identity. Using English as the LOI does not promote the learners' culture and identity. Both the teachers and learners were found to be incompetent in speaking English. This was evidenced by some grammatical and spelling errors on the chalkboards, wall charts and learners' written exercises. The study findings also revealed that the primary school curriculum was elite centred. This is because, apart from being the LOI, English

was also dominant in the codification of the majority of the documents at Grade Three level in Chivi District.

Also, there was evidence of promotion of monolingualism in Chivi District primary schools, where English was the dominant language. The school and the home were two opposing linguistic environments because, at home, learners used ILs to communicate. On arrival at school, English was the mode of communication.

To a lesser degree, the findings in research sub-question one were indicative of positive perceptions towards English as the LOI and its potential to foster social justice education practices in Chivi District primary schools. The participants commended the ability to communicate in English is instrumental for global communication. This implies that the participants were of the view that English proficiency would enhance their interaction with people from other places who do not understand their local languages. That being the case, they would use English to understand one another. Also, the participants pointed out that English was the language of employment opportunities. This means upon mastering English, they were better equipped to get good paying jobs in future. In the process, their lives would have been lifted to higher levels (social upward mobility).

Nevertheless, the findings indicated that much as English might have opportunities, it was a disadvantage, to a large extent, since it stripped the learners' linguistic rights which had a bearing on their culture and identity. In short, the study's findings revealed that the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three could not promote social justice education practices in Chivi District.

The following section aims to discuss the findings in line with research sub-question Two.

5.3.3 Research Sub-Question 2: The Influence of English as the LOI on Social Justice Education Practices in Chivi District Primary Schools

The research findings under this research sub-question were presented in respect of the following categories: conceptualisation of social justice, English as the language of unity, a manifestation of xenocentrism, coercive tendencies and multilingual nature

of the community. In an attempt to provide the answer to the question on how English as the LOI influenced social justice education practices in selected Chivi District primary schools, the conceptualisation of social justice was important to define the focus of the discussion. The key definition of social justice which emerged from the study findings was to view it as freedom, fairness or equal access in terms of language usage in the education system. The consensus on how English as the LOI at Grade Three influenced social justice was that English was viewed as a language of unity. This was because a Grade Three class in Chivi District was a composite one. In one class, there were Ndebele, Shangani and Shona speakers. To that end, the use of English as the LOI was viewed as an effort to promote togetherness among learners from diverse cultural groups.

However, to a large extent, major findings of research sub-question Two articulated drawbacks in using English as the LOI at Grade Three. For instance, the manifestation of xenocentrism was indicated by the majority of the study participants. They reiterated that the use of English as the LOI led to the disliking and despising of their local languages and the culture they portray. In the process, learners gradually lose their identity. Moreover, the findings established that learners were coerced to use English despite that their community was multilingual. This implies that third graders were forced to use English as the LOI against their will because they felt that the mother tongue was more important to them. In light of the above, the research findings aligned to research question Two and portrayed social justice malpractices because there were indications of lack of linguistic diversity in Chivi District primary schools.

In the next section, attention was given to the summary of research findings of research sub-question Three.

5.3.4 Research Sub-Question 3: The Role of English as the LOI in Educational Achievement of Learners when it comes to Fostering Social Justice Education Practices in Chivi District Primary Schools

The research results reflecting research sub-question three were presented under the following sub-themes and categories: English as the language of tests and examinations, English language versus poor academic performance and slowness in thinking, early immersion and subtractive bilingualism. Major findings aligned to this

research sub-question espoused English as the language of tests and examinations. This means Grade Three learners were using English in writing their tests in most of the subjects. This was an advantage to a lesser extent because the findings indicated that poor performance was related to the use of English as the LOI. This was also evidenced in oral lessons observed by the researcher because participants took long to respond to the teachers' questions where English was used as the LOI.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that the use of English as a LOI at Grade Three exposed learners to early immersion into a new language, thereby further exposing them to subtractive bilingualism. This implies that Grade Three learners phased out their mother tongues too early and this would lead to the death of their heritage language. Research sub-question Three was wholly a reflection of some loopholes in the education language policy in Zimbabwe.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents and discusses recommendations for this study in respect of the following sub-themes: recommendations for policy, future training, research methodology and further research.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Policy

The following recommendations for policy implementations are suggested:

- The research recommends that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Zimbabwe formulates and enacts policies that focus on linguistic diversity in the education system. This recommendation follows revelations by the study findings that lack of language diversity is a result of lack of political will. The Minister responsible for education is mandated to introduce ILs in the education system. Without their will, nothing is going to materialise. Therefore, education language policymakers and implementers should collaborate to come up with a policy framework that strikes a balance in terms of linguistic diversity.
- The study recommends an end to the 'shop talk' declarations on African languages to become languages of education and the enforcement of

language policies which fully recognise ILs in education for social justice to be a reality. This is necessitated by the revelations that participants indicated teacher-learner incompetence in English and rampant code-switching during lesson delivery. Serious mobilisation of resources, combined with political will might go a long way to appraise the ILs and their role in the education system.

- The current education system structures and organisation in Zimbabwe, where schooling begins at ECD and goes through primary, secondary and tertiary clusters should be harnessed to propagate the seed of linguistic diversity and social justice in the education system. This recommendation originates from study findings that indicated that ILs are recognised as the LOI/MOI from ECD to Grade Two. Grade Three to Seven and tertiary education, English is the LOI. ILs are only learning areas. Linguistic pluralism and social justice are possible if all languages in the district are on par.
- To empower classroom practice, the study recommends the revamping of the Education Act, giving room for a clear language of education policy. This recommendation is enhanced by study findings that in two selected Chivi District primary schools, there were learners who were struggling with two second languages while others were dealing with one language as the L2. This was happening in one classroom taught by one teacher. Thus, the research findings reveal gross inequality in the form of a differentiated curriculum. This social justice malpractice could be minimised through a clear cut language of education policy and not an act of parliament as the case in Zimbabwe.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Future Training

The following constitutes the recommendations for future training:

- The study recommends that as part of Teacher Education Courses in both teachers' colleges and universities, the Ministry responsible should introduce a Diversity, Social justice and Equity Module to equip teachers on training so that they would be able to handle similar cases on deployment. This recommendation is facilitated by the fact that marginalisation of ILs and manifestation of xenocentrism emerged as key themes during the data

generation process. Knowledge of diversity, social justice and equity would be functional for teachers under training because they would be ready to deal with culturally composed classes from the onset.

- Staff development workshops, national round tables, field trips to different cultural communities and other peer support initiatives can also be harnessed to create an enabling environment to deal with linguistic diversity and social justice issues in the education system at any level. The recommendation originates from the study findings which indicated that Chivi District is multilingual. Therefore, the foregoing approaches are essential in that they develop the spirit of appreciation of other linguistic groups, enhance national cohesion and build a socially just society.
- The study also recommends that training institutions and programmes should embrace pedagogical strategies and content which discourage exclusion of other groups in society but opt for inclusive educational practices. This recommendation emanates from study findings which point to exclusion of ethnic languages and their attrition. The Education Act of 1987 and the proposed Education Amendment Bill of 2019 are campaigning for the demise of ethnic languages (Ndebele and Shangani) in Chivi District and Zimbabwe at large. This is because their introduction into the school curriculum is more theoretical than practical.
- The study recommends the introduction of translation programmes in teacher training institutions. This recommendation follows the revelations by documentary study findings (refer to table 4.3, under school B class 2) that ILs syllabi are designed and codified in English. It is the teacher's responsibility to translate subject content written in English to indigenous languages. To minimise the effect of the teacher's incompetence in English and save time in scheming the subject, it is ideal to impart translation knowledge and skills to the teacher under training.

5.4.3 Recommendations for Research Methodology

The following recommendations for research methodology are suggested:

- Research studies on the LOI in the review of related literature were limited in that they focused on English as the LOI in a holistic manner. That is, they

explored English as the LOI across the primary school grades through to secondary school level, using a qualitative approach. This study recommends that an extension of the research work of this nature using quantitative and/or mixed methodologies could bear more fruit and advance the knowledge base on understanding social justice issues in multilingual communities.

- In a move to expand the scope and horizon of the knowledge base on linguistic diversity in the education sector, the study recommends the adoption of comparative studies at micro levels, for instance, school, district and provincial levels. A comparative study is ideal for identifying similar issues affecting language in the education sector and merging them to create a democratic and socially just society.
- The study recommends that intercultural educators be permanent in the school system as is the case with school services psychologists. One of their core job description should be to carry out mini research projects with learners, perform cultural galas and set up cultural villages to deal with issues of diversity, social justice and equity.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- For further studies, the study recommends the extension of the knowledge base on the influence of English as the LOI in fostering social justice to secondary schools, teacher training colleges and even universities that deal with educational issues. The main aim is to stress the need for a society that is just and to shun discrimination on linguistic grounds. Research work could be extended to both secondary and tertiary institutions with the sole purpose of improving policy and practice.
- Based on the understanding that very little or almost no research on the use of English as the LOI at Grade Three level with a bias on social justice in the education system has been carried out in Zimbabwe, an extensive research study at various levels could improve classroom instruction and promote linguistic inclusivity across the educational sphere. This recommendation emanates from study findings which indicate a gross lack of linguistic diversity in the education sector selected primary schools in Chivi.

- The study recommends that future studies focus on the potential that bilingualism, code-switching and dual-language programmes have on championing social justice practices in the education sector. This recommendation follows the findings of this study that lesson delivery in the two selected primary schools was marred by code-switching, subtractive bilingualism and transitional submersion. The development of bilingual programmes would unlock the potential to provide solutions to linguistic diversity in primary education thereby enhancing social justice education practices. An extension of this work would unlock the potential to provide solutions to linguistic diversity in primary education thereby enhancing social justice education practices.
- This study was conducted in rural areas of Chivi District in Zimbabwe and it involved twenty-two (22) participants selected from the two (2) of the ninety-one (91) rural primary schools. Since this study adopts the qualitative study research design that calls for a small number of participants, the 22 participants and the two research sites could not be generalised to a wider population. Pizarro (2014:89) confirms that qualitative research is often small-scale and micro-scale as it focuses on the thick description of a particular phenomenon, culture, Social reality and experience. Similarly, Hoberg (1999:29) argues that the technique of interviewing participants in focus groups comes largely from marketing research. Groups are composed of 4 to 12 people. The findings of this study are specific to Chivi District primary schools, hence, the involvement of 12 learner participants in FGIs and 10 participants in one-on-one interviews. Although the findings of this study are related to Chivi District primary schools in Zimbabwe, recommendations are made for research work of this nature to be conducted in an urban setup. This would enhance trustworthiness of the study findings and boost the credibility of this current study.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The main constraint of this study was the limited access to internet facilities. This is because the researcher's place of residence was out of reach of the internet source. This meant a lot of time and resources were wasted since the researcher had to travel at least thirty (30) kilometres to access the internet in the nearest town. As a result, in

the period between 6 pm and 8 am, the researcher was usually outside internet network. Hence, this militated against the researcher's time frame to complete some segments of the study. Also, the study was partially affected by travelling logistics. It is approximately 100 kilometres from the researcher's workplace and the intended research site. Since the researcher was a full-time lecturer at a teacher training colleges in Masvingo Province, time and transport logistics were a drawback to timeously carry out the required tasks at the research site. To reduce some of the aforementioned risks and uncertainties, the study concentrated on two of the 91 district primary schools, because of their proximity to his home area.

Furthermore, the study was partially affected by a lack of interest to take part in the study by aspiring research participants. At the ethics stage of seeking informed consent, some research participants indicated that they were not interested to take part and, as a result, the researcher approached the next participants who were cooperative.

This study is embedded in the qualitative research design and it included twenty-two (22) participants from two schools selected from 91 rural primary schools. The total number of research participants together with the research sites was not representative of all rural primary schools in Chivi District.

5.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The major aim of this study was to critically investigate English as the LOI and its implications for social justice in primary schools in Chivi District. Qualitative data generation methods, namely, semi-structured open-ended and FGI's, document analysis and observation, were used to explore English as the LOI at Grade Three to find out the degree to which it reflects social justice education practices. The findings indicated, to a large degree, negative perceptions by stakeholders towards English as the LOI. The study established that language is an integral aspect of the education environment. This is because it is the mode of communication in and the driver for the school curriculum.

However, a socially just education system is a reality in a diversified linguistic environment. An education environment with one language as the MOI is beleaguered

by social injustice features as linguistic genocide, loss of culture and identity, transitional submersion, inferiority complex, among other social vices. This study, therefore, is relevant and important because it is the first of its kind to shed important light on the possible consequences of the Zimbabwe education language policy shift of English as the LOI at Grade Three level, instead of Grade Four. The recommendations for this study call for the Ministry responsible to take drastic steps towards the recognition of ILs as the languages of education, together with English, to create a socially just education system in Chivi District and the Zimbabwean nation at large.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Clearance letter from the University of South Africa



UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2018/11/14

Ref: **2018/11/14/58527680/47/MC**

Dear Mr Mashuro

Name: Mr K Mashuro

Student: 58527680

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2018/11/14 to 2023/11/14

Researcher(s): Name: Mr K Mashuro
E-mail address: mashurokhama@gmail.com
Telephone: +27 74 498 239

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof LG Higgs
E-mail address: Higgslg@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 83 779 1771

Title of research:

The use of English language as a language of instruction and its implications on social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation

Qualification: D. Ed in Educational Foundations

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2018/11/14 to 2023/11/14.

*The **medium risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2018/11/14 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.



University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2018/11/14

Ref: **2018/11/14/58527680/47/MC**

Dear Mr Mashuro

Name: Mr K Mashuro

Student: 58527680

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2018/11/14 to 2023/11/14

Researcher(s): Name: Mr K Mashuro
E-mail address: mashurokhama@gmail.com
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Supervisor(s): Name: Prof LG Higgs
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The use of English language as a language of instruction and its implications on social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation

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*The **medium risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2018/11/14 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.



2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2023/11/14**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

*The reference number **2018/11/14/58527680/47/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*


Kind regards,



Prof MT Gumbo
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
 Gumbomt@unisa.ac.za



Prof V McKay
EXECUTIVE DEAN
 Mckayvi@unisa.ac.za



Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

University of South Africa
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 Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

Appendix B: A Letter Requesting Permission from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

All communications should be addressed to
The Secretary for Primary and Secondary
Education
Telephone: 732005
Telegraphic address: "EDUCATION"
Fax: 794505



ZIMBABWE

Reference: C/426/3 MASVINGO
Ministry of Primary and
Secondary Education
P.O. Box CY 121
Causeway
HARARE

09 Jan 2019

Khama Mashuro
Morgenster Teachers College
P.O.Box Morgenster
Masvingo

**Re: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A DOCTORAL RESEARCH AT SHINDI
AND SADZANGWENA PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN CHIVI DISTRICT
MASVINGO PROVINCE**

Reference is made to your application to carry out a Doctoral research at the above mentioned institution on the research title:

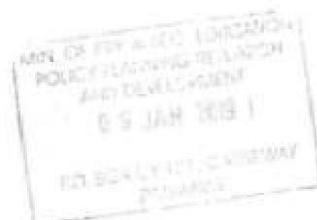
**"THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN
CHIVI DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE. A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION."**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with Provincial Education Director Masvingo Province, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the schools. Where students are involved, parental consent is required.

You are also required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.

T. Thabela (Mrs.)

SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION



Appendix C: Letter Requesting Permission from the Provincial Education Director, District Schools Inspector and the Schools

THE DEPUTY HEAD
 L. PRIMARY SCHOOL
 P. O. BOX 3212
 NGUNDU
 DATE: 15/02/19
 SIGN: [Signature]

MIN. OF PRY & SEC. EDUCATION
 PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR
 MASVINGO PROVINCIAL OFFICE
 08 FEB 2019
 P.O. BOX 89
 MASVINGO
 TEL: 0392 264331

All communications should be addressed to
 "The Provincial Education Director for Primary and Secondary Education"
 Telephone: 263585/264331
 Fax: 039-263261
 moesacmasvingo@gmail.com



Reference: C/440/1
 Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
 P O Box 89
 Masvingo

1 February 2019

Khama Mashuro
 Morgenster Teachers College
 P.O. Box Morgenster
 Masvingo

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A DOCTRAL RESEARCH IN CHIVI DISTRICT: SHINDI AND SADZANGWENA PRIMARY SCHOOLS: MASVINGO PROVINCE

Reference is made to your letter dated 9 January 2019 concerning the above matter.

Please be advised that the Secretary of Primary and Secondary Education has granted permission to carry out your research in Chivi District Schools on;

"THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN CHIVI DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE. A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION."

You are also advised to liaise with the District Schools Inspector who is responsible for the schools which are part of the sample for your research.

ppsmhike
 Z. M. Chitiga
 Provincial Education Director
MASVINGO PROVINCE

MIN. OF PRY & SEC. EDUCATION
 PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR
 MASVINGO PROVINCIAL OFFICE
 01 FEB 2019
 P.O. BOX 89, MASVINGO
 ZIM. TEL: 0392-264331
 FAX: 039-263261

THE HEAD
 SADZANGWENA P. SCHOOL
 20 FEB 2019
 P.O. BOX 3207

**Appendix D: Letter of Informed Consent (English): Parents or Guardians of
Minor Learners**

This letter of informed consent is directed to parents or guardians of minor learners. Please read this consent form carefully before you decide to fill it in (complete it). This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. I will explain it all to you but please feel free to ask for further explanations if necessary.

Dear Parent

Your Child is invited to participate in a study entitled, The use of English as a language of instruction and its implications on social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe : A critical investigation.

I am undertaking this study as part of my doctoral research at the University of South Africa. The purpose of the study is to develop a framework for the promotion of indigenous languages to become languages of instruction across the curriculum in Zimbabwe and the possible benefits of the study are the improvement of teaching and learning using indigenous languages as media of instruction. I am asking permission to include your child in this study because he /she is in Grade 3, a grade in which this research study is being carried out. I expect to have 11 other children participating in the study.

If you allow your child to participate, I shall request him/her to take part in a focus group interview. Focus group interviews will be held at respective schools with Grade 3 learners. These will take place during lunch time and after lessons during co-curricular activities with the approval of the school head. This is done to avoid disturbances of the daily flow of lessons. A special room in the form of a classroom will be requested from the school authority to be used to accommodate the participants. They are intended to take 45 minutes long.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and can be identified with your child will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission. His/her responses will not be linked to his/her name or your name or the school's name in any written or verbal report based on this study. Such a report will be used for research purposes only.

There are no foreseeable risks to your child by participating in the study. Your child will receive no direct benefit from participating in the study; however, the possible benefits to education are that the study will help in the development of a framework for language diversity in primary schools and the promotion of indigenous languages to become media of instruction.

Neither your child nor you will receive any type of payment for participating in this study.

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may decline to participate or to withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal or refusal to participate will not affect him/her in any way. Similarly, you can agree to allow your child to be in the study now and change your mind later without any penalty.

The study will take place during regular classroom activities, especially at lunch and during co-curricular activities with the prior approval of the school and your child's teacher. However, if you do not want your child to participate, he/she may be involved in co-curricular activities.

In addition to your permission, your child must agree to participate in the study and you and your child will also be asked to sign the assent form which accompanies this letter. If your child does not wish to participate in the study, he or she will not be included and there will be no penalty. The information gathered from the study and your child's participation in the study will be stored securely on a password locked computer in my locked office for five years after the study. Thereafter, records will be erased.

The benefits of this study are to develop a framework for the promotion of indigenous languages to become languages of instruction across the curriculum in Zimbabwe. The study also paves a way for the learners to espouse their home languages, culture and identity. Potential risks in this study may be associated with emotional discomfort. However, in the event that participants experience emotional discomfort, schools guidance and counselors may be requested to assist.

There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

If you have questions about this study please ask me or my study supervisor, Professor LG Higgs Department of Educational Foundations, College of Education, University of South Africa. My contact number is 0774 498 239 and my e-mail is mashurokhama@gmail.com.

The e-mail of my supervisor is Higgslg@unisa.ac.za.

Permission for the study has already been given by The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. You are making a decision about allowing your child to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to allow him or her to participate in the study. You may keep a copy of this letter.

Name of child:

Sincerely

Parent/guardian's name (print) Parent/guardian's signature: Date:

Researcher's name (print) Researcher's signature Date:

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION OF MINOR LEARNERS IN THIS STUDY (Return slip)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to allow my child to take part in this research has informed me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and my child/ward is prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that my child is free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that the participation of my child will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to digital recordings of the data collection processes.

Name of parent or guardian.....

Relationship to child/Designation.....

Signature of parent or guardian.....

Cell/ Phone number.....

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print) _____

Researcher's signatureDate.....

Appendix E: Gwaro rechibvumirano chokuita tsvakurudzo rinobata vabereki

Verengai gwaro rino rose musatimapindura.

Zita romutsvakurudzi: Khama Mashuro

Basa: Mudzidzisi Morgenster Teachers' College

Email: mashurokhama@gmail.com.

Nhamba yerunharembosha: +263774 498 239

Nhamba yomudzidzi 5852-7680. University of South Africa (UNISA)

Musoro wetsvakurudzo: Ongororo yemutauro weChiRungu saiwo mutauro unoshandiswa pakudzidzisa padanho repuraimari mudunhu rekwa Chivi munyika ye Zimbabwe.

Zita rangu ndiKhama Mashuro. Ndiri mudzidzi paUniversity of South Africa (UNISA). Ndinokumbira nenzira yakatsananguka mvumo yokuti ndishandise mwana wenyu ape mhinduro panhaurirano dzomumapoka dzenyaya iri pamusoro pemutauro unoshandiswa pakudzidzisa muzvikoro zvepuraimari. Tsvakurudzo iyi ndinoitungamirirwa naProfessor LG Higgs uye nemitemo yokuita tsvakurudzo muvanhu yeUniversity of South Africa.

Chinangwa chetsvakurudzo

Tsvakurudzo ino yakananga kutsvaka zvinobatsira nezvinokanganiswa nekushandiswa ne kushandisa mutauro weChiRungu pakudzidza nekudzidzisa. Minduro dzichapiwa dzichabatsira kusimudzira kushandiswa kwe mitauro yevagari vemuZimbabwe muzvidzidzo zvavo zvose.

Nzira

Mutsvakurudzo iyi pachava nenhaurirano mumapoka. Nhaurirano iyi ichatorwa netepurekodha. Hapana chinobatika kana mari yandinovimbisa kwamuri kana kumwana wenyu. Ruzivo ruchawanikwa ndirwo rwuchabatsira kusimudzira kushandiswa kwemitauro yemuZimbabwe pakudzidzisanekudzidza. Hapane njodzi dzingangowanikwa dzinokanganisa kugadzikana kwepfungwa dzemwana pakuitwa kwetsvakurudzo iyi. Pachenge pane nyanzwi dzinobetsera vana kuti pfungwa dzavo dzigadzikane. Ndinovimbisa tsindidzo yeumboho ichapiwa mutsvakurudzo ino. Ndinovimbisa kubudisa zvandinenge ndawana nemazitasiri (mazitaasirichaiwo). Mwana wenyu ane kodzero yokusapindura imwe mibvunzo kana kubuda mutsvakurudzo iyi pasina zvingaitwa.

Kutaura zvinenge zvabuda

Mushure metsvakurudzo vese vakapinda munhaurirano dzirimaringe netsvakurudzo iyi vanozoudzwa zvakabuda mutsvakurudzo iyi pamusangano uchaitwa. VeMinistry of Primary and Secondary Education vachanyorerwa bepa rezvinenge zvabuda pathesis Kuzvipira

Mushure mokutsanangurwa zvose zvirimaererano netsvakurudzo iyi, ndinobvumira mwanawangu kuti apinde munhaurirano yetsvakurudzo iyi kana achinge akachengetedzwa nokudzivirirwa pane zvichaitwa zvose.

Zita romubereki/muchengeti anomirira
mwana.....
Ukamanomwana.....
Nhambayerunharembosha.....
Chisainwa.....

Appendix F: A Letter Requesting Assent from Learners in a Primary School to Participate in a Research Project

This letter of informed consent is directed to participants younger than 18 years. Read this consent form carefully before you decide to fill it in. This consent form may contain words that you do not understand-feel free to ask.

Dear learner,

Date_____

My name is Teacher Khama Mashuro and would like to ask you if I can come and talk to you about the language(s) you and your teacher use during learning. I am trying to learn more about the languages used by children with their teachers as well as when they play with friends.



If you say YES to do this, I will come and talk to you when you are with your friends as well as when you play on the playground. I will also ask you to do some activities with me. I will not ask you to do anything that may hurt you or that you don't want to do.

I will also ask your parents if you can take part. If you do not want to take part, it will also be fine with me. Remember, you can say yes or you can say no and no one will be upset if you don't want to take part or even if you change your mind later and want to stop. You can ask any questions that you have now. If you have a question later that you didn't think of now, ask me next time I visit your school.

Please speak to mommy or daddy about taking part before you sign this letter. Signing your name at the bottom means that you agree to be in this study. A copy of this letter will be given to your parents.

Regards

Teacher Khama Mashuro

Your Name	Yes, I will take part 	No I don't want to take part 
------------------	---	--

Name of the researcher		
Date		
Witness		

MINORS'S ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY (Return slip)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified. I agree to digital recording of the data collection processes.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Learner's Name & Surname _____ (please print)

Learner's Signature _____

Date _____

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print) _____

Researcher's signature _____

Date _____

Appendix G: Focus Group Consent/Assent and Confidentiality Agreement

I _____ grant consent/assent that the information I share during the focus group may be used by Mr. Khama Mashurofor research purposes. I am aware that the group discussions will be digitally recorded and grant consent/assent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I undertake not to divulge any information that is shared in the group discussions to any person outside the group in order to maintain confidentiality.

Participant 's Name (Please print): _____

Participant Signature: _____

Researcher's Name: (Please print): _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

If you are and adult who gives permission, you **consent** then delete assent

If you are a learner who gives permission, you **assent** and then delete consent

Appendix H: Letter of Informed Consent: Adult Participants

Date: 2019

Title: The use of English language as a language of instruction and its implications on social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation.

My name is Khama Mashuro and I am doing research under the supervision of Professor LG Higgs, a Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations towards a Doctor of Education degree at the University of South Africa. I am inviting you to participate in a study entitled: The use of English as a language of instruction and its implications on social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation.

This study is expected to collect important information that could develop a framework for the promotion of indigenous languages to become languages of instruction across the curriculum in Zimbabwe. The study also paves a way for the learners to espouse their home languages, culture and identity and enhances linguistic diversity.

You are invited because of your location in rural areas where indigenous languages are spoken by the majority of learners. This has made you information rich and easily accessible.

I obtained your contact details from the heads of your schools since they keep contact details of their staff members, School Development Committee members and learners as well. The total number of participants is 22.

The study involves semi-structured interviews. The interviews will be conducted with the school heads, grade 3 teachers, parents and education officers at the district.

The interviews are scheduled to take 45 minutes per session. Therefore, the expected duration of all the interviews to be conducted is about 3 hours.

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent/ assent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

The information you provide will help in the development of a framework for language diversity in primary schools and the promotion of indigenous languages to become media of instruction.

The focus of this study is to explore English as the language of instruction and its implications on social justice in primary schools, particularly at primary grade 3 level. There is a possibility of emotional discomfort since I will be asking pupils their competence in using English as the medium of instruction. This may lead to emotional discomfort especially in a situation where the pupil is not coping well with the language. Thus the study involves children under the age of 18, therefore the anticipated risks are in the emotional discomfort category. In addition, teachers, parents and education officers are directly involved in the study. Although they are adults above 18 years, the use of a language which is not their mother tongue inconveniences and/or discomforts the participant and inflicts emotional discomfort among the participants. A brief explanation of the purpose of the study will be given to the participants prior data collection process as a measure to minimise emotional distress. Should learners show signs of emotional discomfort, school counsellors in the form of Health and Life Skills teachers will be kindly requested to intervene.

For parents and teachers, the researcher will make an effort to establish a contractual relationship before the interviews, whereby the informant feels that the researcher is a beggar who wants information from him or her. The researcher will endeavour to create an environment in which the participant feels that he or she is on top of the situation. That way, participants may reduce emotional discomfort.

The information obtained will be treated with confidentiality. The names of participants and schools will not appear at any point of information collecting or in the final report. The information that I will collect from this research will be stored securely on a password locked computer in my locked office for five years after the study. Any information about participants will have a code in place of his/her name and school. Participants' participation is voluntary and they have the right to withdraw at any point of the study, for any reason and without penalty. No any other person has the access to the information from the participants. While the information from the participants may be used for publications, journal articles, research report or conference

proceedings, participants confidentiality will be protected. Where names are required, pseudonyms will be used.

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. When the researcher feels it necessary to destroy the information he may set it on fire.

Participants will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for their participation in the research.

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

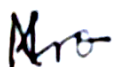
If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Mr. Mashuro Khama on 0774 498 239 or email mashurokhama@gmail.com. The findings are accessible for a period of 5 years

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Professor LG, Higgslg@unisa.ac.za. Telephone: 083 779 1771

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor LG Higgslg@unisa.ac.za, Telephone: 083 779 1771

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.



Khama Mashuro

Adult participants consent form (Return slip)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified. I agree to the digital recording of data collection sessions.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname (please print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date_____

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print) _____

Researcher's signature _____ Date_____

Appendix I: Focus Group Interviews Questions for Learners

Opening Prayer: From one of the participants

Establishing rapport

Thank you for coming to this discussion. I am Mr. Khama Mashuro, a DEd (Socio-Education) student with the University of South Africa (UNISA). In our last meeting, I explained to you that we were to meet so that you will talk to me about the languages) which you use during learning at school. Like I said in the assent letter, your name will be kept confidential. You are kindly asked to be honest in giving your views. You should not feel forced to say something you are do not like. If you want to withdraw from the research, you are free to do so and you are not going to be punished.

Purpose

This focus group discussion aims to get information from you pertaining to English as the language of instruction and its implications on social justice in primary schools. The information you will give will help in the development of a framework for language diversity in primary schools and the promotion of indigenous languages to become media of instruction.

Time line

Focus group discussions should take about 45 minutes.

Questions:

Can you name the language that you speak at home?

Which other language(s) do you speak at home?

How many subjects do you learn at school?

May you tell me the language(s) you use when learning the subjects, you named above?

When with your friends in and outside the classroom, which language(s) do you commonly use?

Which language(s) do you like most to use during learning? Why do you like this/these languages?

What do you think about using home languages in learning all the subjects?

What can you say about using English language in learning all the subjects?

What are the advantages of using English language in learning all the subjects?

What are the advantages of using indigenous languages in learning all the subjects?

Closing: I appreciate the time you have devoted to this interview. If you need to talk more about this issue, please feel free to get in touch with me
Thank you very much

Appendix J: Interview Questions for School Heads

Opening Prayer: From one of the participants

Establishing rapport

Thank you for coming to this discussion. I am Khama Mashuro, a DEd (Socio-Education) student with the University of South Africa (UNISA). At our last meeting, I explained to you that we were to meet so that you will talk to me about your views on English as the language of instruction in primary schools. Like I stressed in the consent letter, your name will be kept confidential. You are kindly asked to be honest in giving your views. You should not feel forced to say something you are uncomfortable with. If you wish to withdraw from the research, you are free to do so and will not be penalized.

Purpose

The interview seeks to elicit information from you pertaining to English as the language of instruction and its implication on social justice. The information you provide will help in the development of a framework for language diversity and the promotion of indigenous languages in primary schools.

Time line

The interview should take about 45 minutes.

Transition

For how long have you been in the teaching profession? Which post do you hold?

What is your home language?

How many subjects are taught at primary school level?

May you give a brief explanation of the language of education policy in Zimbabwe?

What are the native languages of the learners in this district?

Which is the commonly used language in teaching and learning?

Do teachers disobey the language policy? Give reasons.

Which teaching approaches can be used in schools in order to motivate learners?

How effective are the indigenous languages in learners' academic achievements?

How is English a barrier in academic achievement of learners?

Closing

I appreciate the time you have devoted to this interview. If you need to talk more about this issue, please feel free to get in touch with me.

Thank you very much.

Appendix K: Interview Questions for Teachers

Opening Prayer: From one of the participants

Establishing rapport

Thank you for coming to this discussion. I am Mr. Khama Mashuro, a DEd (Socio-Education) student with the University of South Africa (UNISA). At our last meeting, I explained to you that we were to meet so that you will talk to me about your views on English as the language of instruction in primary schools. Like I stressed in the consent letter, your name will be kept confidential. You are kindly asked to be honest in giving your views. You should not feel forced to say something you are uncomfortable with. If you wish to withdraw from the research, you are free to do so and will not be penalized.

Purpose

The interview seeks to elicit information from you pertaining to English as the language of instruction and its implication on social justice. The information you provide will help in the development of a framework for language diversity and the promotion of indigenous languages in primary schools.

Time line

The interview should take about 45 minutes.

Transition

For how long have you been in the teaching profession? Which post do you hold?

What is your heritage language?

Which other languages do you speak?

How many subjects do you teach at primary grade three?

Which language do you use in teaching and learning at primary grade three?

Which are the home languages of the learners in your class?

Are there opportunities for learners to speak English in and outside school environment?

What is your perception about use of English as the language of instruction?

What is your perception about use of home languages in teaching and learning?

Are there benefits in using indigenous languages as the language of instruction?

How does use of English as the language of instruction foster social justice practices in the education system?

Closing

I appreciate the time you have devoted to this interview. If you need to talk more about this issue, please feel free to get in touch with me.

Thank you very much.

Appendix L: Interview Questions for Parents (School Development Committee members)

Opening Prayer: From one of the participants

Establishing rapport

Thank you for coming to this discussion. I am Khama Mashuro, a DEd (Socio-Education) student with the University of South Africa (UNISA). At our last meeting, I explained to you that we were to meet so that you will talk to me about your views on English as the language of instruction in primary schools. Like I stressed in the consent letter, your name will be kept confidential. You are kindly asked to be honest in giving your views. You should not feel forced to say something you are uncomfortable with. If you wish to withdraw from the research, you are free to do so and will not be penalized.

Purpose

The interview seeks to elicit information from you pertaining to English as the language of instruction and its implication on social justice. The information you provide will help in the development of a framework for language diversity and the promotion of indigenous languages in primary schools.

Time line

The interview should take about 45 minutes.

Transition

For how long have you been in the SDC? Which post do you hold?

What is your home language?

Which language is commonly used in teaching and learning at your local school?

What is your perception about the use of English as the language of instruction?

What is your perception about the use of indigenous languages as the language of instruction?

Why do you like the use of English as the language of instruction?

What are the benefits of using indigenous languages in teaching and learning?

In your opinion, is there fairness in using English in place of indigenous languages as the language of instruction?

Closing

I appreciate the time you have devoted to this interview. If you need to talk more about this issue, please feel free to get in touch with me.

Thank you very much.

Appendix M: Interview Questions for Education Officers

Opening Prayer: From one of the participants

Establishing rapport

Thank you for coming to this discussion. I am Khama Mashuro, a DEd (Socio-Education) student with the University of South Africa (UNISA). At our last meeting, I explained to you that we were to meet so that you will talk to me about your views on English as the language of instruction in primary schools. Like I stressed in the consent letter, your name will be kept confidential. You are kindly asked to be honest in giving your views. You should not feel forced to say something you are uncomfortable with. If you wish to withdraw from the research, you are free to do so and will not be penalized.

Purpose

The interview seeks to elicit information from you pertaining to English as the language of instruction and its implication on social justice. The information you provide will help in the development of a framework for language diversity and the promotion of indigenous languages in primary schools.

Time line

The interview should take about 45 minutes.

Transition

For how long have you been in the education system? Which post do you hold?

What is your home language?

How many subjects are taught at primary school level?

May you give a brief explanation of the language of education policy in Zimbabwe?

What are the native languages of the learners in this district?

Which is the commonly used language in teaching and learning?

Do teachers disobey the language policy? Give reasons.

Which teaching approaches can be used in schools in order to motivate learners?

How effective are the ILs in learners' academic achievements?

How is English a barrier in academic achievement of learners?

Closing

I appreciate the time you have devoted to this interview. If you need to talk more about this issue, please feel free to get in touch with me.
Thank you very much.

Appendix N: A letter requesting Assent from Learners in a Primary School to Participate in Observations

This letter of informed assent is directed to participants younger than 18 years. Read this assent form carefully before you decide to fill it in. This assent form may contain words that you do not understand-feel free to ask.

Dear learner,

Date_____

My name is Teacher Khama Mashuro and would like to ask you if I can come and talk to you about the language(s) you and your teacher use during learning. I am trying to learn more about the languages used by children with their teachers as well as when they play with friends.



If you say YES to do this, I will come and talk to you when you are with your friends as well as when you play on the playground. I will also ask you to do some activities with me. I will not ask you to do anything that may hurt you or that you don't want to do.

I will also ask your parents if you can take part. If you do not want to take part, it will also be fine with me. Remember, you can say yes or you can say no and no one will be upset if you don't want to take part or even if you change your mind later and want to stop. You can ask any questions that you have now. If you have a question later that you didn't think of now, ask me next time I visit your school.

Please speak to mommy or daddy about taking part before you sign this letter. Signing your name at the bottom means that you agree to be in this study. A copy of this letter will be given to your parents.

Regards

Teacher: Khama Mashuro_____

Your Name	Yes, I will take part	No I don't want to take part
		
Name of the researcher		
Date		
Witness		

MINORS'S ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY (Return slip)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified. I agree to digital recording of the data collection processes.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Learners's Name & Surname (please print) _____

Learners's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print) _____

Researcher's signature Date

Appendix O: A Letter of Informed Consent for the Teachers in Observations

This letter of informed consent is directed to participants above 18 years. Read this consent form carefully before you decide to fill it in. This consent form may contain words that you do not understand-feel free to ask.

My topic is: The use of English language as a language of instruction and its implications on social justice in primary schools in Chivi District, Zimbabwe: A critical investigation.

My name is Khama Mashuro and I am a student at the University of South Africa (UNISA). I hereby humbly ask you to take part in my research by participating in observations related to the above topic. I will ask your agreement as well before I can start with the research. The research will take place under the supervision of Professor LG Higgs Higgslg@unisa.ac.za.with the ethical approval of the University of South Africa (UNISA).

The study aims to explore English as the language of instruction in primary schools. It is hoped that the findings will be able to offer some insights into the importance of language diversity in teaching and learning in primary schools

I would like to invite you to participate in this study so that your views could be heard with regard to the importance of language diversity in teaching and learning in primary schools.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. The choice to participate is yours. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time and you will not be penalized. If you agree to take part, this research will involve your participation in observations which will take about 1 working day. During observations, you are not supposed to respond to any questions. The study poses no foreseeable risk to its participants. However, should you feel any emotional discomfort during or after the observations, you should speak to the school guidance and counselor about this. Your participation is likely to help with more information that can improve the recognition of indigenous languages in teaching and learning.

In order to protect your identity only pseudo names (not real names) shall appear. It is very important that you first talk to your parents or guardians of your intention to

participate in this study so that you may be granted permission, only then can you sign the form.

When I am finished with my study, I shall return to your school to give you a short age appropriate talk about some of the helpful and interesting things I found out in my study. I shall invite you to come and listen to my talk. A written report will also be given to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Schools. The proposed age appropriate framework to promote indigenous languages in teaching and learning will be presented to teachers and students to improve linguistic diversity in their learning in primary schools. I will also publish the results in order that other interested people may learn from my research.

You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the research. However, the possible benefits to education are that the information they will provide pertaining to English as the language of instruction in primary schools will help in the development of a framework for a comprehensive language of education policy in Zimbabwe.

If you decide to be part of my study, you will be asked to sign the form on the next page. If you have questions about this study, please ask me or my study supervisor Prof LG Higgs, Department of Educational Philosophy, College of Education, University of South Africa. The email of my supervisor is isHiggslg@unisa.ac.za. My contact number is 0774 498 239 and my email is mashurokhama@gmail.com

Yours Faithfully

Mr Khama Mashuro

DEd Student (UNISA- College of Education)

(Cell no/: 0774 498 239, Email address:(mashurokhama@gmail.com)

PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY (Return slip)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified. I agree to digital recording of the data collection processes.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant's Name & Surname (please print) _____

Participant's Signature : _____ Date : _____

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print) _____

Researcher's signature _____ Date: _____

Appendix P: Confidentiality Agreement for all Observations Sessions

Group Contract

I.....
hereby undertake to keep all the information that comes from the observation sessions confidential.

2 To protect myself and other group members, I undertake to keep my own identity and that of other members confidential.

3 I hereby also undertake to give my total co-operation in the observation sessions so that we can fully benefit from the observation process.

Name.....

Date.....Place.....

Signature of participant.....

APPENDIX Q: Observation Schedule for Teachers

Establishing rapport

Thank you for allowing me to be part of your class. I am Khama Mashuro, a DEd (Socio- Education) student with the University of South Africa (UNISA). At our last meeting, I explained to you that I intend to be part of your class so that I will learn more about English as the language of instruction in primary schools. Like I stressed in the consent letter, your name will be kept confidential. You are kindly asked to be honest in your executing your daily duties. You should not feel forced to alter the way you carry out your daily lessons. If you wish to withdraw from the research, you are free to do so and will not be penalized.

Purpose

The observation process seeks to elicit information from you pertaining English as the language of instruction and its implications on social justice. The information to be gathered will help in the development of a framework for language diversity and the promotion of indigenous languages in primary schools.

Time line

The observation process should take about 1 working day.

Focus area	Mode of communication
Wall charts	
Chalk board	
Lesson delivery	
Co-curricular activities	
Assembly proceedings	

Closing

I appreciate the time you have awarded me to be part of your class. If you need to talk more about this issue, please feel free to get in touch with me.

Thank you very much.

Appendix R: Observation Schedule for Learners

Establishing rapport

Thank you for allowing me to be part of your class. I am Khama Mashuro, a DEd (Socio- Education) student with the University of South Africa (UNISA). At our last meeting, I explained to you that I intend to be part of your class so that we will learn together for the whole day. Like I stressed in the consent letter, your name will be kept confidential. You are kindly asked to be honest in whatever you are doing. You should not feel forced to alter the way you carry out your daily lessons. If you wish to withdraw from the research, you are free to do so and will not be penalized.

Purpose

The observation process seeks to elicit information from you pertaining English as the language of instruction. The information to be gathered will help in the development of a framework for language diversity and the promotion of indigenous languages in primary schools.

Time line

The observation process should take about 1 working day.

Focus area	Mode of communication
Teacher-pupil interaction during lessons	
Pupil-pupil interaction during lessons	
Pupil-pupil interaction during break, lunch and co-curricular activities	
Assembly proceedings	

Closing

I appreciate the time we have spent together as learners. If you need to talk more about this issue, please feel free to get in touch with me.

Thank you very much.

Appendix S: Language Editing Certificate

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING

20 July 2021

To whom it may concern:

This is to confirm that I have edited the following PhD thesis: **THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN CHIVI DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE: A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION**

by Khama Mashuro for language use. The layout of the document remains the responsibility of the student.

Eleanor M Lemmer
864 Justice Mohamet Street
Brooklyn
Pretoria

