

**A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CHIBRAZI, THE URBAN  
CONTACT VERNACULAR LANGUAGE OF MALAŴI: A FOCUS  
ON THE LEXICON AND SEMANTIC MANIPULATION**

**BY**

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**2015**

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## **Declaration of authenticity**

I, Chimwemwe Mayinde Mystic Kamanga, hereby declare that this thesis is my own work.

And, that it has never been presented for any degree of any other university.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

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## **Dedication**

To all my enemies and the enemies of progress

For my family; Zalerapi, UnkhankhuwakuChiuta, Tazayamnthaziyake, Lingalidu, and my father Absalom and my mother Maria Tereza

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## Abstract

Over the years, the language profile of Malaŵi has transformed from a ‘purist’ orientation to a hybrid orientation. Apart from the traditional ethnic languages of the country, there is a language practice or speech style that is generally characterised by the mixing of elements from different languages of the country as well as those from outside. This development has been influenced by language contact, a situation that occurs when speakers of different languages or speech varieties interact thereby bringing their respective languages into interaction as well; and ultimately, bringing about changes of different kinds to the linguistic landscape of the area involved. This study refers to this language practice or speech style as Chibrazi, the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi and defines it as a communication tool in which meaning is encoded by inserting vocabulary drawn from a unique body of lexical items into the grammatical structures of the traditional ethnic languages of Malaŵi. Although Chibrazi is widespread across the country, it remains conspicuously absent in scholarly literature as well as in national documents such as the constitution and the national language policy. It can thus be said that Chibrazi largely remains unknown, even though it is very popular.

In response to this situation, this study provides a basic descriptive analysis of Chibrazi, focusing on semantic manipulation in the production of the lexicon of the language thereby demonstrating that there is a new mixed language that is emerging within Malaŵi’s language profile. The research answers questions such as:

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- What is Chibrazi?
- What are the possible origins of Chibrazi?
- What are some of the examples of Chibrazi?
- What are the semantic manipulation strategies that are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi?
- Who speaks Chibrazi?
- What are some of the people's perceptions of Chibrazi?
- What are the characteristics that Chibrazi shares with other languages of similar nature? and
- How can Chibrazi be interpreted as a language phenomenon?

The research was designed as a triangulated study that was both theoretical and empirical in nature and which employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of enquiry. The research utilised both linguistic and sociolinguistic data, which was analysed statistically and or thematically in line with the specific objectives of the research based on its nature. All in all, this study unravels some of the fundamental processes that are at the core of language development both at individual level and at societal level thereby demonstrating that contact languages are central to scholars' understanding of language in general and language genesis in particular.

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## Abstract (in Chibrazi)

Language profile ya pa Chilawidzi yasinthika from a ‘purist’ orientation to a hybrid orientation. Mophatikizilapo pa ma language amene alipo kale, kwabwela thoks yanyuwani imene imamiksa zilankhulo zosiyanasiyana za Flames ndi za autsi zomwe. Ngini imeneyi yalowelapo malingana ndi language contact, imene imalowa fanzi yolankhula zilankhulo zosiyanasiyana ikamabampana olo kumashalila limozi. Ngini imeneyi imapangisa kuti zilankhulo za fanziyo zizilinkana. Mapeto ake kumakhala kusintha kwa linguistic landscape ya places imene ili involved. Study inoyo ikuyitcha thoks yanyuwaniyi Chibrazi, urban contact vernacular language ya pa Flames. Chibrazi ndi communication tool momwe meaning imamededwa pofaka vocabulary yochokela ku unique body ya ma lexical item mma grammatical structure a zilankhulo zina za pa Chilawidzi.

Ngakhale Chibrazi chili chotchuka Flames yose, sichimapezeka mu zolembe za geri ndi mu ngini ya fuko ngati achina constitution ndi national language policy, moti fanzi yambili siimayaza za Chibrazi. Pothaima situation imeneyi, study inoyo ikupanga provide basic descriptive analysis ya Chibrazi. Focus ya study yi ndi semantic manipulation in the production of lexicon ya Chibrazi. Potelo, study iyiyi ikupanga demonstrate kuti pa Chilawidzi palowa thoks ina. Research imeneyi ikuyankha mikhweshi ngati iyi:

- Chibrazi ndi thoks yotani?
- Chibrazi chinalowa bwanji?
- Ma example a Chibrazi ndi ati?
- Ndi ma semantic manipulation strategy anji amene amayuzidwa pomedwa lexicon ya Chibrazi?



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- Imathoka Chibrazi ndi fanzi yotani?
- Fanzi imachithayima bwanji Chibrazi?
- Chibrazi chimafanana bwanji ndi ma thoks ena angati ichocho? ndipo
- Chibrazi chingapangidwe interpret bwanji ngati language phenomenon?

Research iyi inapangidwa design ngati triangulated study yomwe inali theoretical komaso empirical after kuti inayuzwa qualitative ndi quantitative methods of enquiry. Research yi inayuzwa linguistic data ndi sociolinguistic data yomwe inapangidwa analyse statistically and thematically after zolinga za research yi. Study imeneyi ikuthaimisa mmene language imapangila develop at individual level and at societal level ndipo ikutchekesaso kuti ma contact language amathaimisa mmene language imapangila develop ndi mmene imayambila.

### **Key words**

Chibrazi, conglomeration, contact induced language change, descriptive analysis, language manipulation, Malaŵi, multilingual mixed language, slangs, urban contact vernacular, Viphya Schools.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

#### 1.1. Introduction

Malaŵi shares borders with Tanzania to the north and north east, Mozambique to the east and south east, and Zambia to the west. Apart from the borders, the country also shares different languages with these countries as well as other countries beyond its borders. The country shares Chicheŵa with Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe; it shares Chitumbuka and Chisenga with Zambia; it shares Chisena with Mozambique; and, it shares Kiswahili with Tanzania. In addition to that, Chingoni of Malaŵi is related to isiNdebele, which is spoken in Zimbabwe and isiNdebele, siSwati, isiZulu and isiXhosa, which are spoken in South Africa. Several factors account for such commonality across these countries. Among these factors are geographical proximity, colonial history, migration, trade, industrialisation, urbanisation, ethnic wars and education. All these factors have influenced contact among the peoples of these countries and their respective languages.

In the literature on Malaŵi's language profile, the total number of languages spoken in the country varies from source to source. For example, Matiki (2002) puts the total number of the languages in the country at more than fourteen, while Kayambazinthu (1994) puts the number at sixteen. In terms of the distribution of the languages, Kayambazinthu further observes that Southern Malaŵi is heterogeneous with 33% speakers of Chicheŵa, 23% speakers of Chiyawo, 23% speakers of Chilomwe and 21% speakers of Chisena. Central Malaŵi is

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homogeneous with 91% speakers of Chicheŵa. The remaining 9% of Central Malaŵi is shared by Chisenga, Chiyawo, Chingoni and Chitumbuka, even though Chingoni is effectively dead in Central Region. Kayambazinthu says that Northern Malaŵi is also heterogeneous with Chitumbuka as the regional lingua franca with 64% of the population in the Northern Region as its speakers. Other languages that are spoken in Northern Malaŵi include Chitonga, Chinkhonde, Chilambya, Chinyakyusa, Chingoni, Chindali and Chinyika. These and other languages share the 36% that Kayambazinthu does not elaborate on.

It is important to note however, that data on the language profile of Malaŵi needs to be interpreted critically or handled with care, as Kamwendo put it in a seminar that he presented at the University of South Africa in 2009. Most of the sources of the data are surveys in which language questions were primarily asked to solicit information on ethnic groups rather than language patterns (see for example, Matiki, 2002; Kamwendo, 2000 and Kayambazinthu, 1999, 1994). As such, data on the number of languages spoken in the country tends to be intertwined with data on ethnic groups in the country because each ethnic group is perceived to have its own language. This being the case, the number of languages in the country is deduced from the number of ethnic groups that people identify themselves to belong to rather than from the languages that they actually speak.

## **1.2. Chibrazi, the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi**

Over the years, the language profile of Malaŵi has transformed from a purist orientation to a hybrid orientation. Apart from the traditional ethnic languages of the country, there is a language practice or speech style in which meaning is encoded by inserting vocabulary drawn from a unique body of lexical items into the grammatical structures of the traditional ethnic

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languages of Malaŵi such as the ones presented in the foregoing section. The language practice or speech style is thus generally characterised by the mixing of elements from different languages of the country as well as those from outside.

The language mixture fits what Winford (1997, 2003) identifies as one of the outcomes of contact induced language change; that is, the creation of new contact languages. On that basis, the language practice or speech style is referred to as an emerging new contact language in this study. From Winford's (1997, 2003) discussion of contact languages, *new contact languages* can be defined as one of the products of contact induced language change that involves extreme restructuring and or mixture of elements from more than one language. As a specific instance of the creation of new contact languages, the language mixture in question in this study is more akin to what Winford (1997, 2003) terms *bilingual mixed languages* than *pidgins* or *Creole languages*. However, considering that the term *bilingual mixed language* tends to suggest that the mixing involves only two languages, in this study, the language practice or speech style is referred to as a *multilingual mixed language*. The term is simplified further to become *mixed language*.

The language mixture also fits what Kiessling and Mous (2004) refer to as *urban youth languages of Africa*, which are in a way perceived to be antilanguages. The term *antilanguage* emanates from the concept *antisociety*, which is used to denote a society within a society. The term is generally used to refer to the rebellion that members of a society express against existing societal norms. More specifically, the term *antilanguage* is used to denote a sociolect that expresses conscious social and linguistic opposition, putting emphasis



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on the interpersonal function at the expense of the referential function of language (Halliday, 1978: 164). In other words, an antilanguage is a language that is used to express the antisociety's rebellion against the linguistic norms of the mainstream society. This mixed language has been developed by the youth in the urban areas of the country and it has largely been popularised by them. However, the mixed language has now spread not only to different parts of the country, but also to different social groups.

In his discussion of the antisociety's language, Halliday (1976: 78) states that "An anti-language is a metaphor for an everyday language; and this metaphorical quality appears all the way up and down the system". Put differently, an antilanguage is essentially a metaphoric manipulation of the conventional language. Halliday further states that there are phonological metaphors, grammatical metaphors, morphological metaphors, and perhaps syntactic metaphors as well. Considering that the present research perceives the development of the mixed language to be a manifestation of language change, the study takes the mixed language to be a culmination of the changes that have taken place and continue to take place in Malaŵi's language profile. More particularly, using Labov's (1994: 9) assertion that "language change involves a disturbance of the form/meaning relationship so that people affected by the change no longer signal meaning in the same way as others not affected ..."; the present research essentially perceives the mixed language as a manifestation of semantic change or semantic manipulation, which is one instance of metaphoric manipulation.

The mixed language does not have a particular name that is 'agreed upon' by the Malaŵian society in general or by its speech community. This might be the case because the mixed language is not necessarily attached to any particular ethnic group of the country and because

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it is fairly new. Kamanga (2009) refers to the mixed language as Chibrazi and in keeping with that, Kamanga (2014) also calls the mixed language Chibrazi. This study proposes that the mixed language should be referred to as *Chibrazi*.

The study proposes that the mixed language should be referred to as *Chibrazi* choosing from a number of competing terms that are used to refer to it by various people. The term *Chibrazi* was coined by combining two elements. The first element is the prefix *chi-* that is used to denote language names in most Malaŵian languages. Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka are good examples in this regard. The prefix is used to encode the meaning “the language of the ... tribe or group”. The second element is the word *brazi*. This word is a vernacularisation that is derived from the English word **brother**. The term *brazi* is one of the many terms that male speakers of the mixed language typically use to address one another. Thus, the name Chibrazi essentially implies “the language of brothers”.

The name is significant in that it is used as an expression of the solidarity that is assumed among speakers of the mixed language by virtue of belonging to the same group or speech community. It is important to note however, that while the term *Chibrazi* may, on the basis of the explanation given here, give the impression that females are excluded from the mixed language, this is not the case. The mixed language is spoken by both males and females. It is even not strange to hear females referring to each other or being referred to using the term *brazi*. However, this term might point to a significant trait of the mixed language; that is, that the mixed language is more commonly used by males than it is used by females. Chapter six provides more details on this.

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The present study also proposes that the mixed language should be referred to as an urban contact vernacular language. The term *urban contact vernacular* is chosen from a number of competing terms in the literature. This term is adapted from Mark Sebba's (1997) typology of pidgin. Sebba explains the concept as one type of pidgin. The term is used in this study to denote Chibrazi as a product of contact induced language change that is an instance of the creation of new contact languages. More details on the use of this term in this research are provided in the theoretical framework in chapter two. Suffice it to mention at this stage that this study refers to the mixed language under study as *Chibrazi, the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi*.

I have personally encountered Chibrazi in various places both in the household domain and outside the household domain, and in both rural and urban Malaŵi for a period of more than thirty years. I have also encountered and used Chibrazi at several institutions that I have studied and worked, both in informal and formal set up. The institutions include Bwaila Secondary School; Saint John's Primary School and Dzenza Primary School in Lilongwe; Ludzi Boys Primary School in Mchinji; Ponda Primary School in Karonga; Mgodhi Primary School and Chintheche MCDE (Malaŵi College of Distance Education) in Nkhata-Bay; Njamba MCDE in Blantyre; Viphya Schools and Mzuzu University in Mzuzu; Chancellor College and Domasi College of Education in Zomba; and University of Livingstonia in Rumphi. I have encountered and used Chibrazi in all the cities of the country. I have lived in each one of these cities for more than four years.

In addition to the above, I have encountered and used Chibrazi in all other districts of the country where I have visited and lived for periods ranging from a few days to a number of

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years. It is important to note in this regard that I have not been to only four of the twenty eight districts of the country; one in the Northern Region and three in the Southern Region. I have also encountered and used Chibrazi in various other social and economic domains. For example, at market places, at bus depots or in buses and minibuses, at sports events, and in entertainment places like drinking places. I have also encountered and used Chibrazi in a number of places in South Africa. These include Durban, where I have lived for two years; Pretoria, where I have lived for two years; and Johannesburg, where I have lived for more than three years. Other places that I have encountered and used Chibrazi in South Africa are Cape Town, Queenstown, and Rustenburg. Lastly, I have encountered and used Chibrazi on the social media including Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. It is this kind of ubiquitous presence of Chibrazi that gave me the impetus to conduct this research.

### **1.3. Background to this research**

For a very long time, mixed languages have been ‘sidelined’ in language studies. Some scholars have suggested that one of the major reasons for this situation has been the argument that these languages are ‘substandard’ and therefore not worth serious study. Winford (2003: 1) puts this in a nutshell by saying that “language mixture has always prompted strong emotional reaction, often in the form of ridicule, passionate condemnation, or outright rejection”, and, that “language purists have proscribed it as an aberration of the ‘correct’ language, and their attitude is reflected in a lay perception of mixed languages as deviant, corrupt, and even without status as true languages”. Wardaugh (1992) provides evidence of the marginalization of mixed languages by citing Hymes (1971: 55) who points out that pidgins and Creoles, which are two examples of mixed languages, have been regarded as “marginal, in the circumstances of their origin and in the attitudes towards them on the basis

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of those who speak one of the languages from which they derive”; and “in terms of knowledge about them”; even though they are central to scholars’ understanding of language.

A comparison is made between mixed languages and their source languages; and, the differences are interpreted as shortfalls on the part of the mixed languages. The Chambers Dictionary (1993) meaning of the word **pidgin** as quoted by Sebba (1997: 1) perhaps sums up the attitude against mixed languages. In this dictionary, **pidgin** is defined as “any combination and distortion of two languages as a means of communication...”. This definition implies that the differences between the source languages and the mixed languages are considered to be distortions of the source languages, which are perceived to be pure. Other works that have highlighted the attitude against mixed languages include Githinji (2008, 2003); Swigart (2008); Mufwene (2007, 2006, 2001, 1996, nd); Fink (2005); Holm (2000); Arthur and Winford (1997); Arends, Muysken and Smith (1995); Püitz (1994); Thomason and Kaufman, (1988); and Appel and Muysken (1987).

The examples cited in the above paragraph demonstrate that mixed languages have been held in low esteem, which has made them unpopular among scholars. This state of affairs has tended to create the impression that mixed languages are not languages enough, and that they do not have adequate linguistic structures like other languages. However, this is not the case. Over the years, the literature has demonstrated that mixed languages are complete language systems in their own right. They have their own unique morphological, phonological, syntactic and semantic structures, which although basic, are accepted and applied by their speakers (Thomason and Kaufman, 1988). It is not the case that anything goes (Sebba, 1997) in mixed languages.

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On this basis, it can be said that it is incorrect to judge mixed languages based on comparisons with their source languages because mixed languages and their source languages are just different entities. In fact, speakers of mixed languages and speakers of the languages from which the mixed languages emanate do not necessarily understand one another by virtue of the relationship between their respective languages (see for example, Moto, 2001; Kamowa, 1994; Msimang, 1987). It might thus be said that some mixed languages are not mutually intelligible with their source languages. However, it is important to bear in mind the fact that there are different types and degrees of mutual intelligibility.

In counter arguing the purist perception of mixed languages presented above, Winford (2003: 2) states that "... these languages are testaments to the creativity of humans faced with the need to break down language barriers and create a common medium of communication" (also see Sebba, 1997). Winford further observes that "Far from being deviant, language mixture is a creative, rule-governed process that affects all languages in one way or another, though to varying degrees". Therefore, it is not surprising that mixed languages have continued to grow and spread across the world, and that new ones have sprung up. In fact, it is also not surprising that mixed languages are receiving more and more attention from scholars and, perhaps as a result of that, the attitude towards the languages has significantly changed. One of the developments that provide evidence of this is the coming up of journals on the languages. Good examples in this regard are the *Journal of Contact Languages* and the *Journal of Pidgins and Creole Languages*. In addition to that, more and more conferences on contact languages are being held than was the case in the past.

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Urban contact vernaculars, which are another instance of mixed languages, as perceived in the present research, following Sebba (1997), have suffered similar kinds of marginalisation by different quarters of society. A few illustrations are provided here. The first illustration comes from Shuy (1980: 6). Shuy says that when she was awarded a contract by USOE to study Detroit speech, she was reported as a person who was “wasting \$ 120 000 of taxpayers’ money to study *ain’t*”.

The second illustration comes from Mazrui (1995) who presents two instances that illustrate negative perceptions about Sheng of Kenya. Firstly, Mazrui quotes Kabesi Kajuki, commenting on Sheng dictionaries, saying, “... these dictionaries are a great harm and a setback to the development of a standard language...”, and that society stands to gain nothing linguistically from them. In the second instance, Mazrui quotes King’ei (1987: 22) and adds that it seems to be the stated opinion of Professor Peter Gacii, once the Vice Chancellor of Kenyatta University, that Sheng is a subversive factor in Kenya’s language education efforts.

The third illustration of the negative perception of urban contact vernaculars comes from Githinji’s (2008) study of different people’s attitudes towards Sheng. Perhaps Githinji’s study illustrates this point most clearly. The study presents different attitudes that different groups of people have both towards the speakers of Sheng and Sheng itself. In general, some of the people who hold Sheng in negative light do so because the language mixes elements from different language.

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The last example is that of a class discussion that I was part of at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2005. The discussion was centered on Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho of South Africa, but examples from other countries were drawn in to establish a wider understanding of the concept of urban contact vernaculars. Countries represented in the class discussion included Malawi, South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria and Germany. The discussion indicated that sentiments such as the ones expressed in the examples cited here were common in other countries of the world. Indeed, the literature on urban contact vernaculars is full of citations of similar sentiments.

Like all other mixed languages, urban contact vernaculars have been viewed in very negative light by people holding noble positions in society including scholars. It is the position of this research that it might be due to such perceptions that the mixed languages have not received much scholarly attention. It is only around the 1970s that studies on urban contact vernaculars started to flourish. Since then, a substantial amount of research has been conducted on the mixed languages of this type. However, a lot still remains to be done in order to shed more light on the nature of these mixed languages because most of the studies that have been done focus on specific aspects of the mixed languages rather than presenting comprehensive and generic interrogations of the mixed languages.

Despite the aggressive attitude against new contact languages, the mixed languages have continued to thrive and new ones have sprung up. This continued development of new contact languages and the springing up of new ones can be interpreted as an indication of how important these mixed languages are to their speakers. In light of this, it can be argued that it is important to study such mixed languages in order to gain more understanding about



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the phenomenon of language change and language contact in general and about new contact languages in particular. It might also be argued that it is unwise to dismiss these mixed languages merely on the basis of the perception that they are ‘substandard’ linguistic entities.

#### 1.4. Statement of the problem

Underlying sentiments such as those expressed in the examples cited in the section above are deep seated language purist attitudes against mixed languages in general and urban contact vernacular languages like the one under study in particular. *Language purism* can be defined as the desire to protect the supposed purity of a language and attempt to remove ‘corrupt’ or ‘contaminating elements’ from the language (Kamwendo, 2004; citing Crystal, 1997). The individuals or institutions that engage in such an enterprise are referred to as *language purists*. In other words, language purists are people who regard one language to be purer than another or others based on the perception that the other language(s) is or are a degradation of the original status of the purer language(s).

Kamwendo (2004) presents a good illustration of language purist attitude, although not necessarily among the authorities highlighted herein. He discusses language purism in Chitumbuka. Sebba (1997: 4) summarises the concept of language purism and language purists as follows:

Purists reject foreign influences on ‘their’ language and use ‘tradition’ to justify their demands to preserve it in its ‘pure’ state. In contrast with the ‘pure’ language which they admire, and to which they attribute all sorts of positive properties (preciseness, musicality, logicity, lyricism, etc.) they deplore language as ‘corrupt’ when it deviates too much from the written standard, uses too many foreign words, or involves a mixture of languages.

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It is likely that the existence of Chibrazi has not been widely documented in the literature on the language situation in Malaŵi due to the existence of language purist tendencies as well. The literature seems to suggest the existence of an attitude of oblivion about Chibrazi among academics in Malaŵi. For instance, Chibrazi is conspicuously absent from the four sociolinguistic surveys that were conducted between 1996 and 1998 by the University of Malaŵi's Centre for Language Studies, which informed the language policy review process in the country (see Pfaffe, 2004, 2003, 2001, 2000; Kamwendo, 2000; and Kamwendo, Mtenje and Sanhaas, 1999 for more details on the review process). Even in the national language symposia that have been organised by the University of Malaŵi's Centre for Language Studies in light of the implementation of the new language policy in education, Chibrazi is absent (see Pfaffe, 2004, 2003, 2001, 2000; Kamwendo, 2000; and Kamwendo, Mtenje and Sanhaas, 1999). The same is true of Kayambazinthu's (1994) sociolinguistic investigation on the patterns of language use in Malaŵi. Chibrazi is also absent in the country's constitution, even though the constitution has recently been amended.

It is thus not surprising that Chibrazi is not known to academics outside of the country. A good case in point in this regard is Beck (2010: 14), who in commenting on urban languages in Africa, suggests that Malaŵi has not yet developed an urban language, something which Chibrazi is by her definition of the term *urban language*. Chibrazi is also absent in other prominent studies such as McLaughlin (2009) and Kiessling and Mous, (2004). Professor Mous himself confirmed, during my presentation of a paper on Chibrazi at the 2013 African Urban and Youth Languages Conference, that Chibrazi was absent from the literature on Malaŵi in the build up to their paper. On the basis of these points, it can be concluded that Chibrazi has not received scholarly attention.

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It is important that people (Malaŵians in particular) should know or at least have some insight into Chibrazi, so that as individuals, and as a society, they can make informed decisions regarding Chibrazi. It would be beneficial if people can understand what exactly this mixed language; this new contact language, is in order for them to tell it apart from the other local languages and to follow the changes that are taking place in their linguistic landscape. That being the case, this study endeavours to provide a basic exposition of the mixed language in order to enhance people's awareness of it.

### **1.5. Aim and specific objectives of the research**

The main aim of this study was to provide a basic descriptive analysis of the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi thereby demonstrating that there is a new mixed language that is emerging within Malaŵi's language profile. The specific objectives of the research were:

- To define Chibrazi;
- To explore the possible origins of Chibrazi;
- To provide examples of Chibrazi;
- To describe the semantic manipulation strategies that are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi;
- To determine who speaks Chibrazi;
- To describe people's perceptions of Chibrazi;
- To describe the characteristics that Chibrazi shares with other languages of similar nature; and
- To describe how Chibrazi can be interpreted as a language phenomenon.

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Before going any further, it is important to clarify what is meant by providing a basic descriptive analysis of the mixed language in order to avoid confusion. This is with regard to the linguistic aspects of the mixed language. The present study focuses on semantic manipulation in the mixed language because that is the basic change that has taken place in the creation of the mixed language under study. As Labov (1994: 9) says, “language change involves a disturbance of the form/meaning relationship so that people affected by the change no longer signal meaning in the same way as others not affected...”. That is why the mixed language has been introduced as a language practice or speech style in which meaning is encoded by inserting vocabulary drawn from a unique body of lexical items into the grammatical structures of the traditional ethnic languages of Malaŵi. Morphophonotactic description of the mixed language is deferred to other studies. This study only briefly touches on the basic grammatical structure of Chibrazi; what makes Chibrazi unique from other Malaŵian languages; and variation within Chibrazi.

### 1.6. Research Questions

In order to achieve the aim and the specific objectives of this research, the present study asked seven questions. The questions are listed in the bullets below.

- What are the possible origins of Chibrazi?
- What are some of the examples of Chibrazi?
- What semantic manipulation strategies are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi?
- Who speaks Chibrazi?
- What are some of the people’s perceptions of Chibrazi?
- What characteristics does Chibrazi share with other languages of similar nature?
- How can Chibrazi be interpreted as a language phenomenon?

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### **1.7. Significance of the present research**

This research was conducted on the basis of the stance that it is important that people should understand what the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi is, especially considering the present state of oblivion that seems to prevail regarding the mixed language. The significance of the research can be summarised in four points, just to mention some. Firstly, this research is significant for Malaŵian linguists, especially those with an interest in language contact. Such people will benefit from this study through the insights into urban contact vernaculars that this study provides. Such insights might be used for their research on Malaŵian languages.

Secondly, language teachers in Malaŵi will benefit from this study in a number of ways with regards to language issues in the classroom as well as outside the classroom. For instance, they will be able to understand the source of some of the language problems that their learners exhibit or that they themselves have with the language of their learners. This statement is made with reference to those problems that would be caused by interference of Chibrazi in the other languages that are taught in school as well as learners' general communication skills both oral and written.

Thirdly, the results of this study can be used by language policy makers and implementers. This should be seen in the light of the definitions of language policy provided by Gorman (1973: 73) and language planning as provided by Cooper (1989: 45). People in these fields will find the results of this study useful in determining whether Chibrazi plays any socioeconomic role in Malaŵi. Based on responses to that question, they could decide on a clear position about the urban contact vernacular language and on the kind of function(s) that

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Chibrazi could be accorded. Whatever position or status that may be established, it would be better than the present silent position about the urban contact vernacular language in as far as policy is concerned.

The results of this study will also be significant to the speakers of Chibrazi themselves. The study will provide the speakers of Chibrazi with the awareness that their way of communicating is different from the conventional way of communicating. In addition to that, the study will provide the speakers of Chibrazi with some insight into the nature of the mixed language. That being the case, the study will at least open up room for establishing some deeper understanding of the urban contact vernacular language. This is not the case presently.

While the rationale presented here is focused on Malaŵi as a country, the benefits of this research extend beyond the borders of the country. As it is highlighted in this chapter, urban contact vernacular is a worldwide phenomenon. Considering the point that this language phenomenon does not fit neatly into prevailing theories of language change, the present research presents one possible alternative framework in which the phenomenon can be explored. This approach can be adapted and or adopted for use in the analysis of other African urban contact vernaculars.

It is important to note however, that while the present study may raise a lot of controversial issues that will most likely lead to heated contestation, the essence of my undertaking the study dwells in that very controversy that might ensue. This is because the answers to the many mysteries surrounding the urban contact vernacular language under study lie in those

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very controversies. The study projects that after all the controversy is critiqued, and after every effort to ‘put down’ the urban contact vernacular language under study is executed, there will still be a mixed language called Chibrazi or whatever other name that will be used, penetrating the linguistic landscape of the Malaŵian society, waiting to be dealt with by people of all sectors of the nation. Therefore, it is proper to provide an exposition of this urban contact vernacular language.

Ultimately, it is hoped that through the exposition provided in this study, an opportunity will be opened for people of different quarters to examine the role of Chibrazi in the socioeconomic development of Malaŵi; whether as a resource or as a vice. Using information presented in the present research, instead of rushing into conclusions about Chibrazi, people (especially Malaŵians) might scrutinise the urban contact vernacular language more closely and explore what they, in their various positions in society (both purist and otherwise) or their society at large, stand to gain or lose in accommodating or not accommodating the urban contact vernacular language; or at least being antagonistic or non-antagonistic to it. In other words, it is envisaged that this study will (re)initiate very important scholarly dialogue on the language situation of Malaŵi. All in all, this research considers the enterprise undertaken in this study as having some socioeconomic significance in the development of the country, although it does not necessarily provide further explanation beyond the rationale presented.

### **1.8. Research design and research methodology**

This research was designed as a descriptive analysis of Chibrazi, which aimed at presenting an exposition of the mixed language. In broad perspective, this research is a sociolinguistic study that falls within the realm of historical and comparative linguistics, which includes the

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genesis of language. More specifically, the present research falls within the branch of linguistics that deals with language contact or contact induced language change. The research was designed as a mixed method study that was both theoretical and empirical in nature and which employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of enquiry. This was done so that as much linguistic as well as contextual information could be gathered, and so that the conclusions that were going to be reached could be comprehensive because the study needed to provide sufficient insight into the linguistic behaviour of people.

The theoretical aspect of the research included some of the basic and most important theoretical concepts that were employed to explain Chibrazi in this research. This information came from a review of literature on contact induced language change or African urban contact vernaculars; as they are referred to in this study and studies on the language situation of Malaŵi in general. This information was used to provide a theoretical interpretation of Chibrazi. The empirical component of the research is made up of two types of data. The first type of empirical data is made up of linguistic data of two kinds. The first kind of linguistic data comprises a sample of naturally occurring speech in Chibrazi that includes pieces of vocabulary, chunks extracted from conversations, and common sayings. The second kind of linguistic data comprises examples of Chibrazi that were supplied by participants in a case study that was conducted as part of this research. The second type of empirical data that was used in this research comprises information on people's exposure to Chibrazi and their opinions about different aspects on Chibrazi that were explored in this research. The empirical data was collected using a questionnaire, follow up interviews, participant observation, and non-participant observation.



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The data that was obtained from the questionnaire was analysed using the computer programme Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) with the assistance of two members of the Statistics Department at the University of Pretoria, Ms. Joyce Jordaan and Ms. Nina Strydom. I personally analysed the data that was obtained through the other data collection methods manually. The data on the Chibrazi linguistic items was analysed thematically in line with the specific objectives of the research. The analysis also included making links between and among the different pieces of information obtained through this research mainly for purposes of corroboration. The contextual information that was captured alongside the specified data was crucial in the analysis. In addition to that, I used my personal knowledge of Chibrazi and other Malaŵian languages. It should be noted in this regard, that I possess mother tongue competence and performance in Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka; hence, the analysis hinges heavily on these three languages.

## **1.9. Conclusion**

This chapter has presented an overview of the research in this thesis by outlining the key aspects of the research. It has briefly introduced the research in this thesis as generally falling under sociolinguistics and within the realm of historical and comparative linguistics. More particularly, the chapter has introduced this research as an exposition of Chibrazi that provides a basic descriptive analysis of the mixed language. In clarifying that, the chapter has provided a brief background to the urban contact vernacular language under study and presented the aim of the research, and the specific objectives of the research as well as the questions that this research sought to provide answers to. The chapter has also provided a rationale for conducting the study.

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The thesis continues with an explanation of the theoretical framework of the research and a review of the literature. That is followed by a more detailed presentation of the research design and research methods that were used in this research. Thereafter, the thesis tackles each one of the specific objectives and questions of the research in roughly the order in which they are listed in sections 1.5 and 1.6. It should be pointed out that certain specific objectives and questions span more than one chapter. As such, the demarcation of the chapters is not too strict in terms of these.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### 2.1. Introduction

It is generally accepted that languages are living entities and that like all other living things, all living languages change over time. Scholars such as Mufwene (2007); Hagège (1993) and Bright (1977) support this assertion. Language change is a linguistic situation that occurs when speakers of different languages or speech varieties interact thereby bringing their respective languages into interaction as well; and ultimately, bringing about changes of different kinds to the language situation involved. Some of the prominent scholars that have studied language change and that provide detailed discussions of the concept are Mufwene (2007); Holm (2000); Sebba (1997); Püitz (1994); Thomason and Kaufman (1988); Appel and Muysken (1987); Wardaugh (1998, 1992, 1986), Hagège (1993); and Bright (1977). Each of the languages of the groups that come into contact gets affected by the language(s) of the other group(s) involved in the contact. New languages can also be born in such situations.

The branch of linguistics that deals with how languages change, the kind of changes that occur to language and why the changes occur is called historical and comparative linguistics. The term historical and genetic linguistics is also used by some scholars (see for example, Mufwene, 2007, 2001). This branch of linguistics is historical because it deals with the history of languages, and it is comparative because it deals with relations between languages. The genesis of languages is at the core of these studies.

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Theories of historical and comparative linguistics are based on the observations that there are resemblances between or among certain languages, and that the differences between or among languages showing such resemblances are systematic. And, in particular, that the languages manifest regular sound correspondences (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993). The ultimate basis of this branch of linguistics is that languages showing such resemblance are genetically related; that is, they descended from a common source language.

It is generally agreed in the literature that while mixed languages like the one under study in the present research fall within the broad realm of historical and comparative linguistics or genetic linguistics, they do not neatly fit into any specific theory of language change (see for example, Beck, 2010; McLaughlin, 2009; Mufwene, 2007; and Kiessling and Mous, 2004). However, following the growth of research in the area of these mixed languages, there is movement towards the generation of theories that are more accommodative of the mixed languages. The two conferences on African Urban Youth languages: one that took place in 2013 and another in 2015 are two particularly important developments in this regard. In the absence of a such a theory, this research draws on a number of approaches within the broad realm of historical and comparative linguistics or genetic linguistics in order to establish a theoretical framework in which to describe the language phenomenon under study. Generally, this happens in three ways.

Firstly, the research adapts the approach that is used by Winford (2002) in explaining language change, language contact or contact induced language change. In adapting this approach, this research situates the language phenomenon under study within the framework of the creation of new contact languages, which is one of the three broad outcomes of

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language contact; the other ones being language maintenance and language shift. This research also uses Winford's (2002) categorisation of new contact languages to harmonise the diversity in the literature in terms of the typology of new contact languages. Thus, while new contact languages are categorised into three: pidgins, Creoles and bilingual mixed languages; this study considers the mixed language under study as falling under the realm of bilingual mixed languages. Hence, the study refers to the language phenomenon under study as a mixed language or a hybrid language.

Secondly, this research adapts the term *urban contact vernacular* in describing Chibrazi as a product of contact induced language change that is an instance of the creation of new contact languages. This term is taken from Mark Sebba's typology of pidgins and Creoles (Sebba, 1997). The research argues that the term *urban contact vernacular* encompasses several other terms that can be used to interpret this particular product of language contact. Thus, it touches on several other terms that are used by other scholars who study the general phenomenon of language change. The theoretical underpinnings of such terminology also form part of the theoretical component of this research.

Thirdly, the present research analyses Chibrazi within the context of Labov's (1994: 9) assertion that "language change involves a disturbance of the form/meaning relationship so that people affected by the change no longer signal meaning in the same way as others not affected..." by the change. However, the research notes that the disturbance to the form/meaning relationship, which is generally referred to as semantic change, is only one instance of change in language; others being morphological change, phonological change, syntactic change, and lexical change; as outlined by Fromkin and Rodman (1993). As stated

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in the introductory chapter, the present research takes this approach because it considers Chibrazi to be basically a language practice or speech style in which meaning is encoded by inserting vocabulary drawn from a unique body of lexical items into the grammatical structures of the traditional ethnic languages of Malaŵi. It is this that sets Chibrazi apart from the other Malaŵian languages. To put that differently, the present research analyses the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi in terms of semantic change.

The analysis of Chibrazi in terms of morphophonotactic change; that is, morphological change, phonological change, and syntactic change is deferred to other studies. The analysis of the mixed language is done with reference to three of the traditional ethnic languages of Malaŵi; that is, Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka, which are isolated on the basis of my personal linguistic repertoire. The study also analyses some sociolinguistic aspects of the mixed language. These include the speech community of the mixed language; the possible origins of the mixed language; some of the people's attitudes towards the mixed language; and how the language can be interpreted as language phenomenon.

It should be pointed out however, that the review of the literature in this study is split between two chapters. The current chapter forms the first part of the literature review. This part of the review deals with how languages change, the kinds of changes that occur to language, and why the changes occur in general. In addition to that, this part of the review also presents some of the seminal work that cuts across African urban contact vernaculars. The review of literature on specific African urban contact vernaculars, which is the second part of the literature review, is presented in chapter eight where it provides background to the discussion of the features that Chibrazi shares with other similar languages.

## 2.2. Language change

“Whenever people of different languages come into contact, there is a natural tendency for them to seek ways of bypassing the communication barriers facing them by seeking compromise between their forms of speech” (Winford, 2002: 2). There are different communication barriers that may arise due to language contact. For example, one group of people may find it difficult to pronounce certain sounds in the language(s) of the people they come into contact with because such sounds do not exist in their own languages. When such a situation arises, people may make changes to the difficult sounds leading to the birth of new phonology in the contact languages. Similar changes may happen to other aspects of language. As time passes, changes such as these become more and more popular thereby creating a new linguistic landscape within the groups that come into contact.

It is generally observed in the literature on language contact that whenever language contact occurs, language differences tend to represent social, political and geographic divisions of the people involved (see for example, Sebba, 1997). Consequently, these divisions reflect socio-economic differences among the people. These differences tend to create barriers to communication among the people that come into contact. Therefore, the people are prompted to find means of mitigating or even eradicating those communication barriers in order to fulfill their intentions. The creation of urban contact vernaculars is one instance of such an initiative. The development of the contact between or among languages can thus be seen as a matter of establishing common ground among different people or groups of people. As the people establish the common ground, their respective languages undergo different changes. This is generally referred to as language change. In the literature, the more general terms *language influence*, *interlanguage influence* and *language interference* are also used to

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denote the notion of language change (see for example, Winford (2002) and Langacker (1972) who use the term *interlanguage influence*).

While language contact has been identified as the main cause of language change, it is important to note that language change occurs as a result of the interaction of different factors that come into play within the language contact situations. The factors may be social or linguistic in nature. Different scholars have identified different factors as causes of language change. For example, Lehmann (1992) identifies borrowing, which is explained further under the section on outcomes of language contact below, as one of the major causes of language change. It is enough to observe at this point that whenever a language borrows linguistic elements from another language, there are some changes that the borrowing language undergoes in order to ensure that there is compatibility between the borrowed elements and the borrowing language.

Lehmann (1992) also mentions imperfect learning of language by children as another factor that causes language change. In this regard, Lehmann observes that children display inadequacies in pronunciation, syntax and use of words, which are gradually eliminated as they grow up, but he cautions that the effect of this on language change is yet to be compiled into principles. One point that needs to be raised with respect to this factor is that the issue of inadequacies in language is not necessarily restricted to children. Even adults display inadequacies in their attempts, not only to learn other languages, but generally, to replicate other people's language or utterances.



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While Mufwene (2006) agrees with Lehman about inadequacies, his view is not restricted to children. Mufwene (2006: 23) states that “... changes have their origins in the practices of speakers, through their innovations or their inability to replicate each other’s competence”. In fact, Mufwene’s observation is reminiscent of Lehman’s other observation about the factors that cause language change. Lehmann observes that another possible cause of language change may lie in human imagination. In this regard, he observes that “speakers tire of expressions handed down from generation to generation ...” (Lehmann, 1992: 276), hence they create new ways of expressing themselves. As time passes, other people copy these innovations and, as more and more people do so, the changes in language become obvious. This is actually the process through which urban contact vernaculars emerge and thrive.

Fromkin and Rodman (1993: 322) observe that “changes in language are changes in the grammars of the speakers of the language, and are perpetrated when new generations of children learn the language by acquiring the new grammar”. In fact, changes in language become more and more noticeable as more and more people embrace the changes that are introduced in their language. It is important to note that the changes that take place in language can be obvious in certain cases, but they are not as obvious in other cases. Changes in language can be noticed by comparing old forms of a particular language to new forms or by comparing linguistic forms across dialects of the same language. In light of this point, language change is more noticeable in languages with written traditions than in languages that do not have written records. This poses a complication in the case of new contact languages, especially those that have sprung up in recent decades like urban contact vernaculars. As noted earlier, studies in urban contact vernaculars do not stretch too far back

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and most of these; for example, the mixed language under study in the present research, do not have written records.

The situation is even worse in cases where the donor languages also do not have sufficient written records as is the case in terms of the mixed language under study. This implies that the comparison would have to be done on the basis of oral recollections. This is something that raises concerns about the reliability of the data. However, oral recollections are probably the second best option; otherwise, the study of these languages would not be possible. Another complication about the study of urban contact vernaculars is that the comparison is made not necessarily between the old and new forms of a particular language, but rather between existing languages, which harbour the old forms and emerging languages, which contain the new forms.

Complications such as these are some of the reasons why some scholars contest assertions about urban contact vernaculars as languages in their own right. Such scholars are more apt to accept urban contact vernaculars as dialects of the languages that are used as grammatical bases of the urban contact vernaculars. However, such a stance tends to ignore some fundamental realities about urban contact vernaculars. One such reality is the fact that urban contact vernaculars are not necessarily mutually intelligible with the languages that are used as their grammatical bases as is the case with typical dialects of the same language. Complications like these should be born in mind as the presentation of the theoretical framework proceeds to avoid interpreting this section on language change as contradictory to other sections of the thesis.

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### 2.3. Types of language change

Language change can take place in different forms and it can happen to one aspect of a language, a number of aspects, or even all aspects of a language. Fromkin and Rodman (1993) identify five types of change that can take place in language: morphological change, phonological change, syntactic change, lexical change, and semantic change. Morphological change refers to language change that occurs due to the loss of morphemes, the addition of morphemes, or other changes in the rules of a language's morphology. A good example of morphological change in English is affixation, which is used in derivation. Another example of morphological change in English is in its case system. English lost much of its case system as a result of the change that took place in its phonological rules (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993).

Phonological change refers to language change that occurs due to either the addition of new phonemes or the loss of phonemes in a language. Such changes may come about as a result of changes in the status of allophones or the interaction of phonological rules. As an example, Fromkin and Rodman (1993) cite the Great Vowel Shift between 1400 and 1600, which is the major change in the history of English that resulted in new phonemic representations of old words and morphemes. In his study of historical linguistics, Hock (1991) describes sound change citing the *regularity hypothesis*, which was developed in the 1870s by a group of linguists that are presently referred to as Neogrammarians, noting that this group created a lot of attention, controversy and excitement with the claim that unlike all other linguistic change, sound change is regular and operates without exceptions. Hock (1991: 34) defines sound change as "... change of pronunciation which is not conditioned by non-phonetic factors".

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Such change is said to take place at a particular time, in a particular speech community, hence, it is regular.

Syntactic change refers to the changes that take place in the grammatical structure of a language. A good example of such change is word order in sentences. For example, English originally allowed both Subject Object Verb (SOV) and Subject Verb Object (SVO) constructions (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993). Today, English only allows SVO constructions as the conventional structure. According to Fromkin and Rodman (1993), syntactic change may take centuries to be fully completed and it often has intermediate stages.

Lexical change refers to changes that take place to the lexicon of a language. The changes include addition of new words and the loss of words. One of the commonest ways in which new words are added into a language is compounding. This is the recombination of old words to form new ones with new meanings. The other commonest way is derivation of new words from other words through processes such as blending, back formation, acronym and clipping. A language may also add new words to its lexicon through the process of linguistic borrowing. This concept is explained further below under language maintenance.

Semantic change refers to changes that take place in the meaning system of a language. Some of the most common causes of semantic change are scientific and social advancement. In this regard, as a society advances scientifically and/ or socially, there comes a natural need for the language(s) of the society to accommodate the advances; hence, changes are introduced in the

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language(s). Another cause of semantic change lies in the fact that languages permit speakers to produce a virtual infinity of utterances using a very limited set of speech sounds with at least some hope of being understood, although they simultaneously place a limit on the meanings that can be conveyed without ambiguity (Hock, 1991). That means that an unlimited number of utterances can be produced in a language using a limited number of speech sounds. Hock (1991: 281) further notes that

It is apparently in order to compensate for this restriction that we permit a great deal of ‘sloppiness’ in meaning: The same phonetic expression is allowed to convey quite different shades of meaning, or even completely unrelated meanings, provided that the linguistic, social, and cultural contexts make it possible to recover something approximating the intended meaning.

There are three instances of semantic change according to the literature. These are semantic broadening, semantic narrowing and semantic shift. Semantic broadening is a type of change whereby the meaning of a word becomes broader. The word means everything that it used to mean and something else. For example, the Old English word *dogge* meant a specific type of dog, but now it is used to refer to all members of the species *carnis familiaris* (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993). In other words, in semantic broadening, a word broadens in terms of the contexts in which it is used. Semantic narrowing is a type of change whereby the meaning of a word becomes narrower. The word stops to include a whole range of items and it is specialised to one instance or a few instances of that range. A good example of this is the word *hound*, which originally meant “dog”, but now refers to one particular type of animal (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993). In other words, in semantic narrowing, a word becomes narrower in terms of the contexts in which it is used. Semantic shift implies that the referent of a word shifts from one element to another. Fromkin and Rodman, (1993) give the example

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of *lust*, which previously simply meant “pleasure” without any negative or sexual connotations. Semantic shift happens more commonly through the process of linguistic borrowing, which is elaborated in the next sub section.

## **2.4. Outcomes of language contact**

As it has been noted already, the literature on contact linguistics presents different outcomes of language contact depending on the degree and nature of the contact in which the languages are involved and depending on the influence that languages exert on one another. This study isolates three broad outcomes of language change as being relevant to explaining African urban contact vernaculars: language maintenance, language shift, and the creation of new contact languages on the basis of Winford’s (2002) explanation. Each one of these three outcomes is explained below.

### **2.4.1. Language maintenance**

Language maintenance refers to the preservation of a native language by a speech community over generations. At first glance, this definition sounds to be contradictory of the concept of language change. However, it is not in that preservation does not imply that the language of the maintaining community remains intact. As already observed above, all living languages change over time. Therefore, the language of the maintaining community changes, but it only changes by small degrees. While changes occur in the language, the various subsystems of the language (that is, the phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and the core lexicon) remain relatively intact (Winford, 2002). Winford identifies two different cases of language maintenance, each one of which involves a different degree of influence on the lexicon and structure of a group’s native language from the external language or languages that it comes into contact with. These are discussed below.

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The first case of language maintenance is linguistic borrowing. According to Lehmann (1992), borrowing is a process whereby speakers of one language introduce into their language or speech variety elements of another language or speech variety. Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 37) define borrowing as “the incorporation of foreign features into a group’s language by speakers of that language”. One thing that comes across very clearly from these two definitions is that linguistic borrowing involves more than one linguistic element or feature. In this regard, it is important to note that the linguistic features that are borrowed from one language to another differ from situation to situation both in terms of the number of elements involved and the magnitude of the borrowing.

Linguists have argued that borrowing is a necessary phenomenon for the survival of language. For instance, Appel and Muysken (1987) argue that it is hard to imagine a language that has not borrowed from some other language, even though speakers of different languages may not accept that their language has borrowed. One of the main reasons why speech communities borrow is so that they can “... cope linguistically with a world that is always changing”, although “changes in our world are neither necessary nor sufficient to bring about changes in our language” (Keller, 1994: 5). In order for one to have clear understanding of the borrowing that has taken place in a particular language, one would have to engage in a process of etymology, which is the study of the history or origins of individual words. However, this process is ‘easier’ in languages with written records than in languages without such.

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Linguistic borrowing manifests at different levels: at the morphological level, where parts of words are borrowed; at the phonological level, where sounds are borrowed; at the lexical level, where whole words are borrowed; at the syntactic level, where syntactic features are borrowed; and at the semantic level, where semantic elements are borrowed. The type of borrowing and the extent of borrowing differ from one language contact situation to another. However, such a division of linguistic borrowing can be, and it indeed is, cumbersome. Therefore, it might be easier to simply categorise linguistic borrowing into two: lexical borrowing and structural borrowing, although there is a thin line between the two categories of borrowing as the two types of borrowing impact on one another.

Perhaps the most common and ‘most easily’ discernible kind of borrowing is lexical borrowing. Lexical borrowing can be defined as the introduction of words or parts thereof from one language in another language. In the literature, lexical borrowing is further categorised in different ways by different scholars based on the nature of the borrowing. Some borrowed words or parts thereof undergo certain changes when they are transferred into another language, while others remain (relatively) intact.

Two examples are provided here. Appel and Muysken (1987) categorise lexical borrowing into three: loanwords, loan blends and loan shifts, while Lehmann (1992) categorises lexical borrowing into loanwords, loan shifts or loan translations or calques, and extensions. In the latter categorisation, loanwords are lexical borrowings in which the sounds of the original language are substituted by those of the borrowing language such that the borrowed words mirror the phonemes of the foreign language. Loan shifts are lexical borrowings that



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reproduce the morphemes of a foreign language using native material. Extensions are lexical borrowings that involve changes in meaning under the influence of a foreign language.

Such categorisations of lexical borrowing are important in that they help to distinguish between the different processes that a language undergoes in as far as borrowing is concerned. However, while in some instances it might be fairly easy to tell the different types of lexical borrowing apart, in other cases, such an enterprise may not be straight forward. In this regard, Lehmann (1992: 264) cautions that,

In order to understand borrowings of various types, we must know the degree of command that speakers have of the languages in question; for the extent of reproduction is often determined by the extent of control that speakers have acquired of a second language, especially before conventions of borrowing have been established.

As pointed out above, apart from borrowing vocabulary, languages or speech varieties in contact may also borrow structural features of other languages or speech varieties. These could be morphological, phonological, or even syntactic. This type of borrowing is referred to as grammatical or structural borrowing as it involves the incorporation of foreign rules from one language or speech variety in another language or speech variety. Such change in a language involves what is referred to as structural convergence, which occurs when the same languages or speech varieties are spoken in close proximity (in the same area and mostly by the same people) for a long time (Appel and Muysken, 1987)<sup>1</sup>. As the bilingual or multilingual speakers mutually borrow language features, the different languages are made to

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<sup>1</sup> The present research considers Chibrazi to be a manifestation of the structural convergence of Malaŵian languages. However, the research does not explore this notion any further because that notion falls outside of the scope of the present research.

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sound and appear similar. Language convergence creates what is referred to as a *Sprachbund*, which is German for “language league”. Border areas and communities characterised by a high degree of multilingualism are some of the best examples of situations in which structural convergence takes place (Winford, 2002).

It is important to note that some borrowed words, parts thereof, or structural features undergo certain changes when they are transferred into another language, although others may remain (relatively) intact. Whenever a language borrows words, parts thereof or structural features from another language, other linguistic elements may be acquired in order to accommodate the new (that is, the borrowed) elements. For example, when foreign sounds occur in borrowed words, they are generally modified in keeping with the sounds of the borrowing language and the borrowing language also brings about morphological modification because borrowings generally take on the patterns of native elements (Lehman, 1992). Borrowing can also lead to new grammatical rules in the borrowing language. It is also important to note that the word “borrowing” may appear to be misleading as it tends to suggest that the borrowing language ‘returns’ the borrowed items at some point. However, this is not the case: linguistic borrowing is permanent. Borrowed items are never ‘returned’ to the donor languages. Haugen (1950) discusses this point in more detail.

Two things are important to note with regard to morphological, phonological or syntactic borrowing, which can also be referred to as morphophonotactic borrowing. The first point is that in some instances structural change may take place as part of semantic change, while in other instances it may take place independent of semantic change. The second point is that

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this study only dwells on semantic change in its linguistic analysis and description of Chibrazi. The study does not explore morphophonotactic change in Chibrazi. The study only presents very minimal morphophonotactic analysis where it is unavoidable. Morphophonotactic analysis of Chibrazi is deferred to other studies of the mixed language. This is so because of limitations of space and because Chibrazi uses the syntactic structures of other Malaŵian languages. In other words, it is the meaning system in Chibrazi that makes it different from other Malaŵian languages.

The second case of language maintenance is code switching, which is a conversational situation; in fact a conversational strategy, that “involves the alternative use of two “or more” languages (or dialects) within the same stretch of speech, often within the same sentence” (Winford, 1987: 13). In order for code switching to take place, there must be bilingualism or multilingualism. The literature presents some controversy regarding the definition of these two terms. The diversity ranges from Bloomfield (1933) who proposes that a person should possess native-like control of two or more languages in order to qualify as a bilingual or multilingual; to Macnamara (1969) who proposes that one should have second language skills in one of the four language skills in order to qualify as a bilingual or a multilingual. Roughly speaking though, bilingualism can be defined as the ability to speak and/or understand two languages, while multilingualism can be defined as the ability to speak and/or understand more than two languages.

People in bilingual and multilingual communities often find themselves in situations whereby they have to choose to use one language or another or a combination of languages as dictated by conditions in which the conversation that they are engaged in takes place. There are, in

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fact, two basic scenarios of bilingualism and multilingualism. The first one is at individual level. That is, the people who come into contact possess two or more languages each. The second one is at societal level. That is, the people who come into contact are of different linguistic backgrounds because two or more languages are spoken in their community. Appel and Muysken (1987: 2) refer to the former as individual bilingualism and the latter as societal bilingualism.

In code switching situations, the choice of one code or another depends on the situation or domain of speech because the codes tend to be used for naturally exclusive functions (Winford, 2002). For example, while one code may be used in formal situations (like delivering a public speech or conducting a job interview), another would be used in informal situations (like chatting with a colleague or buying commodities at a market). A number of theories have been developed to explain the concept of code switching.

One theory that is widely used to explain code switching is the Matrix Language Frame Model that was developed by Myers-Scotton (Myers-Scotton, 1993a). According to the model, code switching comprises two languages, one a matrix language (ML) and the other an embedded language (EL). The matrix language is the more dominant language of the languages involved in code switching. This might be identified as the first language of the speaker or the language in which the morphemes or words are more frequently used in speech. The language or language variety basically provides the grammatical framework of the conversation. The embedded language is the less dominant language, which gets inserted into the matrix language during conversation.

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Another theory that is used to explain code switching is the Communication Accommodation Theory. This theory was developed by Howard Giles (Giles, Coupland and Coupland, 1991). The theory seeks to explain the cognitive reasons for code switching and other speech changes. According to the theory, a speaker seeks to either emphasise or minimise the social differences between herself or himself and her or his interlocutor(s). It asserts that when speakers seek approval in a social situation, they are likely to converge their speech with that of their interlocutor(s); and diverge from the speech of their interlocutor(s) if they want to emphasise social distance. Convergence implies ‘closing the social gap’ between or among interlocutors, while divergence implies ‘widening the gap’. In another theory that is related to Giles’, the Markedness Model, Myers-Scotton (1993a) posits that language users are rational, and that they choose a code that clearly marks their rights and obligations, relative to their interlocutor(s).

Another important concept that is related to code switching is code mixing. According to Bokamba (1985: 3-4), the difference between code switching and code mixing is that the former is the “embedding or mixing of words, phrases, and sentences from two codes within the same speech event and across sentences; while the latter is the “embedding or mixing of various linguistic units, i.e. morphemes, words, phrases and clauses from two distinct grammatical systems or sub-systems within the same speech situation”. To a large extent, the same points that have been explained about code switching are applicable to code mixing. The only difference is that while code switching is inter-sentential, code mixing is intra-sentential. In other words, code switching takes place across sentences, while code mixing takes place within sentences.

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### 2.4.2. Language shift

The second outcome of language contact is language shift. Language shift is a situation whereby speakers of one language tend to stop using their own language in some or all domains of communication and start to replace it with another (Winford, 2002; Wardaugh, 1986). In other words, language shift refers to a speech community's partial or total abandonment of their language in favour of another language. Mufwene (2006: 23) explains the motivation behind language shift by saying that:

If particular populations shift from their traditional vernacular to other languages, it must be because the alternatives appeal more to them or serve their communicative interests "better", for any number of social reasons, or because they find themselves in situations where communication can be established (the most efficiently or faster) only in the other language.

Unlike in language maintenance, where change occurs to a community's language itself or languages themselves, in language shift change occurs to the linguistic practices of a community. In other words, while in language maintenance the change is more in the forms of language or languages that a community speaks, in language shift the change is more about the language or languages that a community chooses to communicate in.

Winford (2002) outlines two categories of language shift. In the first category, there are cases involving immigrant or other minority groups that shift either partially or completely to the language of the dominant majority, but carry over features of their first language into their version of the target language. Sometimes the shifting group is eventually absorbed into the target language community as a whole thereby becoming permanently established in the language. In other cases, a minority group may preserve its first language for certain functions, while acquiring the dominant language for other functions. The second category of

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language shift involves languages that are introduced into shifting communities through invasion or colonisation. In this case, invaded or colonised groups are forced to abandon their own languages or speech varieties and acquire the language of the invaders or colonisers. Language shift can thus be perceived as a survival strategy for the shifting group.

The essence of language shift is that when languages or speech varieties come into contact, especially where the languages or speech varieties have unequal socioeconomic statuses or ethnolinguistic vitality, the contact may lead to one language or speech variety replacing another. In the literature, the terms “superstrate” and “substrate” are used to describe the socioeconomic statuses of languages or speech varieties in contact. The superstrate is the language or language variety that is regarded to be superior in terms of socioeconomic status, while the substrate is the language or language variety that is regarded to be subordinate in terms of socioeconomic status. The replacement of one language or language variety with another may occur either only in certain domains or functions of use or, in extreme cases, it may occur in all domains or functions of use. The extreme case of language shift is language death, the slow attrition and decay of the language previously used by the shifting group (Crystal, 2000).

In closing this sub section, it is important to highlight one other concept that is found in the literature on language change bearing in mind the fact that with the changing of language comes the making of choices. That is, the concept is *diglossia*. Ferguson (1959: 336) defines diglossia as:

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A relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional dialect), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation (Wardough (1986: 87).

In more straight forward terms, “diglossia is a situation in which two languages, one High (H) and the other(s) Low (L), fulfill complementary functions in the community” (Winford, 2002: 26). The languages or language varieties belonging to these two categories are kept apart based on the functions for which they are used, and each is viewed differently by the people who are aware of both. Generally, the H variety has higher prestige, is more beautiful, more logical and more expressive than the L variety, which shows a tendency to borrow words from the H variety (Wardough, 1986).

This description shows that a diglossic situation exists in a society when the society has two distinct codes that show clear functional separation. That is, one code is employed in one set of circumstances, while the other is used in another set of circumstances. However, three points need to be noted with regard to the issue of diglossia. Firstly, diglossia is not restricted to two languages or language varieties: there could be more than two languages in certain cases. That is why other scholars even talk about triglossia, where three languages are concerned. Other scholars simply use the term *heteroglossia* to denote the fact that more than two languages are involved. That might also mean that there could be other languages or language varieties between the H and the L.



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Secondly, some scholars may tend to suggest that talking about language in the sense of diglossia implies that languages in multilingual contexts are ‘boxed’ and remain in certain domains (see for example, Pennycook, 2010; Heller, 2007; and Makoni and Pennycook, 2007). This study does not subscribe to the perception of languages being ‘boxed’ and remaining in certain domains. This study brings up the concept of diglossia to point out the fact that bilingual and multilingual speakers make certain deliberate choices between and among the languages within their linguistic repertoires during communication. And, their choices are not random, but systematic on the basis of, among other things, the functions that they intend for the languages to play in the course of interaction.

Thirdly, certain scholars may perceive the concept of diglossia as almost obsolete because it appears to be rare in modern linguistics. However, the present research finds the concept to be useful in explaining the language practices of bilingual and multilingual speakers who are always increasing. The study particularly evokes the concept of diglossia in relation to Rudwick’s (2005) exploration of the potential of isiTsotsi, a mixed variety that is spoken in one South African township, as the Low variety in the township domain. The study believes that this applies to other African urban contact vernaculars as well including the mixed language under study. However, the exploration of diglossia with regard to Chibrazi is deferred to other studies.

#### **2.4.3. The creation of new contact languages**

The third outcome of language contact is the creation of new contact languages. Winford (2002: 18) observes that the creations of new contact languages “... involve such extreme restructuring and/or such pervasive mixture of elements from more than one language that

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they cannot be considered cases of either maintenance or shift in the strict sense of those terms”. The literature consulted in the present research presents an array of categorisation of new contact languages that are created in contact situations. In this research, Winford’s (2002) categorisation of new contact languages is used to harmonise the diversity in the literature in this regard. Thus, new contact languages are categorised into three: pidgins, Creoles and bilingual mixed languages.

In this review, Creole language or simply Creole is not discussed in detail because of the similarity that between Creoles and pidgins. Suffice it to note that in some studies, the term is used to refer to a language that has developed from a pidgin. In other words, in studies where such is the case, a Creole is generally regarded as an advanced stage of a pidgin. Such being the case, in the literature on contact induced languages, pidgins and Creoles are sometimes placed on a continuum with pidgin on the one end and creole on the other. The term bilingual mixed language is explained further below. At this stage, it is enough to state that a mixed language is a language that arises through the fusion of usually two source languages, normally though situations of thorough bilingualism (Meakins, 2013). It is also important to point out the fact that a mixed language cannot be classified as belonging to any of its source languages.

According to Winford (2003), while the word pidgin is a fairly recent term that is used to describe outcomes of language contact, languages of such nature are quite old. Winford cites the example of Mediterranean Lingua Franca, which is believed to have been in existence in the middle ages from the Sixteenth Century as evidence of this. It is now generally accepted in contact language literature that the term pidgin comes from the English word “business”.

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The use of this word in this sense is reflective of the most typical function of pidgins; that is, business. The term was originally applied to Chinese Pidgin English, but it was later generalised as a label for all contact varieties of this nature (Winford, 2003), as is the case even at present.

The literature on pidgin and pidginisation presents various definitions of the term pidgin. A few examples are provided here in order to capture the basic characteristics of the languages of this nature. Holm (2000) defines a pidgin as a reduced language that results from extended contact between groups of people with no language in common, which evolves when they need some means of verbal communication, yet no group learns the native language of any other group for social reasons that may include lack of trust or lack of close contact. For this reason, a pidgin can be described as a lingua franca, a language that is used habitually by people whose mother tongues are different in order to facilitate communication between them (Wardaugh, 1992).

In his definition of the term pidgin, Winford (2003: 268) provides an idea about how pidgins are actually developed by saying that "... pidgins are adult creations, involving processes of learning and selective adaptation of linguistic resources that are reminiscent of those found in adult second language acquisition". The process of the creation of pidgins itself, pidginisation, can be defined as a complex process of sociolinguistic change comprising reduction in inner form, with convergence, in the context of restriction in use (Hymes, 1971; cited by Wardaugh, 1992).

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There are two common scenarios in which new contact languages are created (Sebba, 1997). Some new contact languages are created in contact situations whereby the people involved do not share a common language, while other new contact languages are created in situations whereby the people involved share at least one common language. On the African continent, the creation of new contact languages has been most obvious in urban centers that have developed as a result of migration and industrialisation both of which are closely intertwined with colonisation. Thus, the new contact languages that have developed in these centers are generally referred to as urban languages. Generally speaking, in terms of the two scenarios in which new contact languages are created, African urban languages are instances of the latter scenario. The speech communities of the languages fall under the category of communities characterised by a high degree of both individual and societal bilingualism and multilingualism.

Beck (2010: 17) observes that there are two types of African urban languages:

From a historical perspective, we need to at least roughly distinguish two sets of urban languages, distinguished by their historical origins: urban languages whose origins were related to the importance of cities in trade networks predating, to varying degrees, European colonial rule, which began around 1880; and urban languages whose emergence can be traced to the development of an autonomous African modernity against the backdrop of the conflicting priorities of local, colonial and postcolonial-global interests. While the second phase began with colonial times, its heyday was during the postcolonial urbanization processes of the past 40 years. Within that phase, two types of urban languages need to be distinguished: those that are associated with slang and youth languages, and those that are not.

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Those African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages are referred to as new urban languages, while those African urban languages that are not associated with slang and youth languages are referred to as old urban languages (Beck, 2010). The present research is concerned with the former rather than the latter, even though it does not make any attempt to follow the approach of distinguishing the two. It is also important to note that there are possibilities of overlaps between the two types of urban language in the present research.

Looking at the nature of the three types of new contact languages presented above, the present research proposes that the African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages generally fall within the category of bilingual mixed languages. The basis for classifying the languages in this manner is the fact that the languages are made up of a mixture of elements from different languages. However, the more appropriate term for African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages would be *multilingual mixed languages* because most of the languages combine elements from more than two languages.

Generally, one of the main sources of African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages is linguistic borrowing. In particular, lexical borrowing is probably the most common process through which the vocabularies of the languages are innovated. The languages from which the vocabularies and other structural elements are borrowed represent the sum totals of the languages in the contacts that lead to their emergence and development.

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However, it should be pointed out that normally, linguistic borrowing occurs between two existing languages. In that case, one existing language borrows linguistic elements from another existing language. As Hudson (1980; cited by Msimang, 1987) observes, in borrowing, words are transferred from a foreign language into a pre-existing native language. However, in the other instance, which is the case in African mixed languages, while linguistic elements are borrowed from existing languages, instead of the borrowed items being incorporated into an existing language; they are rather incorporated into an emerging language. For example, Msimang (1987) observes that Tsotsitaal does not have such a pre-existing native language on the basis of Hudson's observation. This situation is prevalent in all African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages that have been cited in this research. This might be part of the rationale behind labeling these languages as not fitting into theories of language change.

However, African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages manifest traits of the other two outcomes of language contact; that is, language maintenance and language shift as well. In terms of language shift, African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages can be said to represent a unique kind of language shift that has manifested in two phases. In the first phase, Africans shifted from their indigenous languages to colonial languages. In the second phase, Africans are shifting from the colonial languages that they adopted back to their indigenous languages. The difference between the indigenous languages of the two phases is that while the former are 'pure', the latter are mixed in accordance with the changes that have taken place within the linguistic landscape on the basis of language contact. The fact that the African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages are built on the grammars of indigenous languages can be seen as maintenance of the indigenous languages, though in a different form.

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It is important to note that “the birth of a language (variety) can be declared only retrospectively, when its separate existence (determined by what Claudenson, 1992 identifies as “autonomization” and “normalization” of the system) is recognised relative to its proto-variety and/ or other related ones” (Mufwene, 2006: 4). Therefore, it is not surprising that the genesis of languages is a controversial topic that cannot easily be settled among scholars. The controversy is even more pronounced with regard to African urban contact vernaculars because the mixed languages do not enjoy the same statuses as the conventional languages. For instance, they are not attached to any particular ethnic group. And, they either do not have written traditions or their written traditions are not deep seated, but only emerging. The urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi is one good case in point in this regard. In order to appreciate it as an emerging language, it has to be compared to other languages such as Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka. In addition to that, the mixed language is not attached to any particular ethnic group of the country. And, it does not have a written tradition.

It is equally not surprising that African urban contact vernaculars are interpreted in various ways on the basis of the language mixture that they manifest. For instance, one interesting school of thought holds African urban contact vernaculars as code switching or code mixing. In this regard, one language is perceived as the matrix language, while another language or other languages as the embedded language(s). These are the languages that Mufwene calls the proto-varieties. However, with respect to code switching and code mixing, the literature (see for example, Msimang, 1987) raises the question of whether African urban contact vernaculars are manifestations of one or the other. Different scholars answer this question in different ways. For example, in his examination of South Africa’s Tsotsitaal, Msimang (1987) concludes that the language might be more akin to code mixing than code switching. He notes however, that it is not precisely that. Looking at the concepts of code switching and

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code mixing, one can see how the complexity of placing African urban contact vernaculars within the realm of language change arises. The concepts typically apply to already existing languages and not new languages.

It can be seen that language maintenance is about changes that take place to the forms of languages, while language shift is about changes that take place to the language practices of speakers of particular languages. It is important to note that in as far as this research is concerned; urban contact vernacular languages are instances of language maintenance by virtue of utilising the grammatical structures of existing traditional languages. However, what make the urban contact vernaculars different from the languages that supply them with the grammatical structures are their lexicons; which heavily rely on borrowing from other existing languages. In fact, borrowing is the basis of the vocabularies of urban contact vernaculars. It is borrowing that makes the urban contact vernacular languages look different from the traditional language. Thus, as people move away from the original languages to the urban contact vernacular languages in their daily linguistic behaviour, they tend to appear as if they are shifting from their original languages. That is how the urban contact vernaculars are linked to language shift. That is essentially how the urban contact vernaculars come to be perceived as new contact languages.

Therefore, Chibrazi is a manifestation of language maintenance by virtue of using the traditional Malaŵian ethnic languages as its grammatical structures. Apart from that, Chibrazi is a manifestation of language shift by virtue of the diglossic relationship that exists between it on the one hand, and the traditional Malaŵian ethnic languages on the other hand. However, Chibrazi is essentially an emerging new urban contact vernacular language by



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virtue of being a unique way of encoding meaning using a body of vocabulary that is created using different language manipulation process, which is different from the lexicons of the traditional Malaŵian ethnic languages.

## 2.5. The term *urban contact vernacular*

Divergence abounds in the literature on African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages in terms of terminology. Different scholars refer to the mixed languages using different terms based on the attributes of the mixed languages that they emphasise on in their studies of the mixed languages. Some of the prevailing terminology is provided in chapter nine in the course of presenting examples of the mixed languages. The terminology that is commonly used includes the following: hybrid language, mixed language, youth language, urban language, code switching, code mixing, slang, jargon, argot, street language, anti-language and pidgin.

However, it is important to note that African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages are so agile, dynamic and versatile in nature that none of the terms provided here suffices to explicate the mixed languages succinctly in isolation. For this reason, the present research does not confine the mixed languages to any one of these interpretations in particular. The study presents the mixed languages as linguistic entities that cut across the various interpretations provided. The present research considers the different terms that are used to denote the mixed languages as representing integral and closely interrelated elements or components of the mixed languages.

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In order to harmonise this diversity and to ensure that as many attributes of the African urban languages that are associated with slang and youth languages as possible are catered for, the present research refers to these languages as *urban contact vernaculars*. The term *urban contact vernacular* is adapted from Mark Sebba's typology of pidgins and Creoles (Sebba, 1997)<sup>2</sup>. According to Sebba's discussion, an urban contact vernacular can be defined as a type of language that seems to evolve in a particular type of urban setting, where large scale migration from the countryside to urban areas creates poor communities that are linguistically and sometimes ethnically diverse from the mainstream communities (Sebba, 1997). The African mixed languages that are highlighted in this research largely fit into Mark Sebba's description, although they are not perceived as pidgins in this research.

This term is chosen because it encompasses a substantial combination of the basic attributes of the mixed languages. Firstly, the word **urban** brings to the fore the fact that the mixed languages emerge in urban settings, although their existence is not restricted to urban settings. As time passes, and as the mixed languages develop, they spread beyond the rural-urban divide. There is general agreement in the literature that urban contact vernaculars of Africa have their origins in language contact within urban centers that have developed as a result of migration, industrialisation and urbanisation.

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<sup>2</sup> Different scholars who study pidgins have come up with typologies of pidgins and other new contact languages. These typologies are based on the social contexts of the languages' origins or use rather than on linguistic factors (see for example, Sebba, 1997; and Arends, Muysken and Smith, 1995). That is to say that the languages are classified according to the circumstances in which they first came into being. In some cases, the pidgins are classified according to how they came to be widely spoken. According to Sebba's typology, there are seven types of pidgin: military and police pidgins; seafaring and trade pidgins; plantation pidgins; mine and construction pidgins; immigrant pidgins; tourist pidgins; and urban contact vernaculars. It is important to note that there are a lot of overlaps among the different types of pidgin. Hence, one pidgin may be classified in more than one way depending on the nuances that are present in it.

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Secondly, the word **contact** captures the fact that the mixed languages are born in what are referred to as language contact situations. The literature on the mixed languages explains how the various speech communities of the countries where the mixed languages have developed come together in urban settings thereby creating an environment that is conducive for the development of the urban contact vernaculars.

Finally, the word **vernacular** shows that these mixed languages are local or indigenous. Therefore, in adapting Sebba's (1997) definition of the term *urban contact vernacular*, African urban contact vernaculars can be defined as new contact languages that have evolved in African urban settings among communities that are linguistically and sometimes ethnically diverse as a result of large scale migration from the countryside to the urban areas.

There are a lot of mixed languages or language varieties that are spoken within Africa, which fit this definition of the term urban contact vernacular. On the basis of that, this research refers to the mixed languages as African urban contact vernaculars, although they represent different kinds of social, political, economic and other language contact dynamics. That is to say that these mixed languages are very similar to one another in terms of certain features. However, it is important to reiterate the fact that individual scholars who have studied these mixed languages use different terminology to refer to the different mixed languages as it can be seen below. In chapter eight, this study highlights a number of such mixed languages as they appear in such studies. In so doing, this research demonstrates that there are certain characteristics that Chibrazi shares with other African urban contact vernaculars. That is to say that this research presents some of the common features of the mixed languages.

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The nature of African urban contact vernaculars is summed up by Kiessling and Mous (2004) who provide a general analysis of the mixed languages in a paper entitled Urban youth languages in Africa wherein they are referred to as African urban youth languages. The paper notes in particular the following African urban centers: Abidjan, Nairobi, Johannesburg, Kinshasa-Brazzaville and Yaoundé. The paper analyses a number of mixed languages including Sheng, Tsotsitaal, Camfranglais and Dakar Wolof. It opens by observing that in several urban centers of Africa, the youth are continually creating their own language in order to set themselves apart from the older generation. Kiessling and Mous, 2004 posit that these urban youth languages have much in common, both in function and in the linguistic strategies that their speakers employ to create them and in the process of communication.

## **2.6. Language change in Malaŵi**

There are some studies that have been conducted on language change in Malaŵi and that are thus related to the present research. Most of these studies appear in dissertations of students of the Chancellor College constituency of the University of Malaŵi. The present research categorises these studies into three. The first category includes studies on language change in Chicheŵa. Manyungwa (2009) and Mwanyatimu (1997) are chosen to represent this category of studies. These studies are focused on the nature of the lexical and semantic change that has taken place in Chicheŵa as a result of linguistic borrowing. The studies are premised on the general proposition in sociolinguistics that in any contact situation one language tends to have sociopolitical dominance over the other and that linguistic borrowing tends to flow from the more dominant language to the less dominant one.

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In these studies, it is demonstrated that in the course of this change, Chicheŵa, which is the recipient language, is not a passive participant in the process of borrowing. The borrowing language makes various modifications to the loan words to make them fit the grammatical structure as well as the cultural requirements of the recipient language. Such modifications result in a number of changes. For example, some words assume new grammatical categories, others new meanings and yet others new usage. The changes that are highlighted in these studies have also taken place in other Malaŵian languages including Chitonga and Chitumbuka.

To further exemplify this category of studies, Manyungwa (2009) looks at semantic changes in Chicheŵa focusing on the influence of social and political developments of the country. The study examines lexical expansion and semantic change that have occurred mainly through borrowing in Chicheŵa with special reference to the influence of social and political developments in the country. The study notes that Chicheŵa has borrowed extensively from foreign languages in order to incorporate concepts pertaining to particular social or political developments and that through the same process; the language has lost or extended the conceptual meanings of certain words. Thus, Chicheŵa has changed in order to meet the needs of the society. The study identifies one of the most outstanding changes that have taken place in Malaŵi; the change from a one party dictatorship to a multiparty democracy. Along with this major change came a lot of changes in the general landscape of the country. Language is one avenue through which the change has been embraced; and because Chicheŵa is the national language it is a good embodiment of that change.

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The second category of studies on language change in Malaŵi is labeled as studies on language change in the Chicheŵa of Chancellor College. Studies in this category include Chapita (2009), Tchesa (2009), Nawata (2000), Jalasi (1999) Kamowa (1994) and Lekera (1994). These studies look at the Chicheŵa of Chancellor College as one dialect or variety of Chicheŵa in the sense of language variation. Some of these studies focus on the sociolinguistics of the language variety (for example, Lekera, 1994), while others focus on the lexical and semantic change of the variety (for example, Jalasi, 1999). The focus of Jalasi's study is on the changes that have taken place in the meanings of some words in Chicheŵa among Chancellor College students as applicable at the time of the research.

Other studies explore the linguistic processes through which the change in the Chicheŵa of Chancellor College manifests. For example, Kamowa (1994) looks at the lexical changes that have taken place in the Chicheŵa of the Chancellor College speech community thereby making it different from the original dialects of the language. The study observes that most of the lexical changes in Chancellor College Chicheŵa have resulted from cultural, phonological, semantic and morphological borrowing, especially from English. However, most of these borrowed lexemes have been vernacularised. The study notes that as a result of the lexical changes that have taken place in Chicheŵa, the 'new dialect' is incomprehensible to speakers of other dialects of Chicheŵa, including former students of the college.

Tchesa (2009) investigates semantic and lexical changes in Chancellor College Chicheŵa by elaborating the processes through which the language is actually produced. Some of the processes that Tchesa explores are metaphoric extension, semantic broadening, semantic narrowing, semantic shift, vernacularisation, and pejoration. Tchesa points out that these

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changes have resulted from cultural, phonological, semantic and morphological borrowing, especially from English. Further than that, Tchesa (2009) identifies age, sex, social position or social rank, and social networks to which members belong as some of the factors that steer the change in Chancellor College Chicheŵa.

Nawata (2000) focuses on some of the sources of the words that constitute Chancellor College Chicheŵa holding that borrowing from Chicheŵa and English are the major sources of new words for the Chancellor College student vocabulary. Apart from borrowing, Nawata identifies the following processes as sources of the vocabulary: clipping, de-initialisation and de-acronyming, blending, compounding, reduplication, semantic extension, semantic broadening and conversion. The study also includes bicodal expressions, idiomatic expressions, words with historical or political significance, words originating from Malaŵian traditional practices and rituals, and onomatopoeic words as other sources of the vocabulary.

The third category of studies on language change in Malaŵi comprises one paper entitled “Language and societal attitudes: A study of Malawi’s ‘new language’”, which was written by Moto (2001). This study asserts that there is a ‘new language’ that has emerged in the country. In making this assertion, Moto makes reference to three of the studies cited above; that is Jalasi (1999), Kamowa (1994) and Lekera (1994). The paper describes the ‘new language’ in terms of a number of aspects. For instance, it briefly explores the origins of the ‘new language’, its spread and its survival. It also presents a discussion of some samples of the ‘new language’. The paper describes the ‘new language’ as being “made up of words that are newly coined from Malaŵian indigenous languages and a vernacularisation of the words of some foreign languages” (Moto, 2001: 320). In terms of function, Moto says that the ‘new

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language’ is used as an instrument for establishing a social bond and identity. He regards the ‘new language’ as a mirror of contemporary societal activities and attitudes, and as a manifestation of language change.

Moto’s paper demonstrates that this ‘new language’ has spread widely across the Malaŵian society. To illustrate that point, Moto (2001: 320) observes that, “Listening to Malawian popular music and listening to the speeches of boys and girls, young men and women and sometimes older men and women in Malawi today, one is soon struck by the fact that the speeches contain words, phrases and sometimes whole sentences which sound like a foreign language.” Moto further observes that, “Even going through the columns of some newspapers and magazines, one soon discovers that there is a ‘new language’ that has gained currency. The ‘new language’ has even broken into the creative arts.” Moto (2001: 340) even suggests that this ‘new language’ may not die like other similar languages that have sprung up in the country among different groups over time.

It is what Chapita (2009), Tchesa (2009), Nawata (2000), Jalasi (1999), Kamowa (1994) and Lekera (1994) refer to as the Chicheŵa of Chancellor College that the present research refers to as Chibrazi, the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi. By extension of that, what Moto (2001) refers to as Malaŵi’s ‘new language’ is what the present research refers to as Chibrazi, the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi. In fact, some of the changes that are cited by Manyungwa (2009) also form part of the urban contact vernacular.



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The studies cited in this sub section indirectly suggest that education is perhaps one of the most important factors that have influenced (and continue to do so) language change in general, and the development of the mixed language under study, in particular. It is important to note however, that although the studies focus on Chancellor College language change, on the one hand, and the mixed language under study, on the other, the changes described in these studies are not restricted to educational institutions or Chancellor College per se. Rather, Chancellor College is only one case that these studies have isolated.

As already pointed out in the opening chapter, this mixed language is also present in all other constituent colleges of the University of Malaŵi as well as other universities of the country and other institutions of higher learning in the country. The mixed language is also rampant at so many primary and secondary schools across the country. Moto (2001) acknowledges the widespread nature of the ‘new language’ in educational institutions of Zomba. It is thus safe to conclude that the ‘new language’ is not restricted to Chancellor College. Similarly, the case study that was conducted as part of the present research is located in one educational institution in Northern Malaŵi. It is also for the same reason that the origins of the mixed language under study are mostly explored from the point of view of education among the many other factors that are important in its development.

There are two very important points that can be drawn from the studies on language change in Malaŵi with regard to the mixed language under study in the present research. The studies highlight the two schools of thought that exist in as far as the mixed language under study is concerned. Firstly, the mixed language can be considered to be the manifestation of language change in Chicheŵa as is the case in the studies that are categorised as dealing with the

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change in the Chicheŵa of Chancellor College. This might be so because Chicheŵa is the main language through which the mixed language has manifested by virtue of the language being the most widely spoken in the country. On the basis of that, for a long time, Chicheŵa has been the main grammatical base of the mixed language. However, Chicheŵa is not the only language through which Chibrazi has manifested and it is not the only grammatical base that is used in this mixed language. Chibrazi has manifested through other Malaŵian languages as well, and other Malaŵian languages are also used as its grammatical bases.

Two examples of languages that are used as grammatical bases for Chibrazi other than Chicheŵa are presented in this research. These are Chitonga and Chitumbuka. Considering that Chibrazi uses any of the Malaŵian languages as its grammatical structure, it is plausible to suggest that if Chibrazi is to be considered as a variety, it should rather be considered as a variety of Malaŵian languages in general rather than a variety of Chicheŵa alone. In this regard, Chibrazi might, to some extent, be considered to be a convergence of Malaŵian languages in as far as language change in the country is concerned. However, this idea is not explored any further as it is outside of the scope of the present study.

Secondly, the mixed language can be considered to be a new language that has emerged over the years of contact among people of different ethnic groups in Malaŵi and between the people of Malaŵi and the people from outside the country. This has also influenced contact among the languages involved. The present research subscribes to this school of thought. In light of this subscription, the present research considers what Moto calls Malawi's 'new language' and what Chapita, Jalasi, Kamowa, Lekera, Nawata and Tchesa refer to as the Chicheŵa of Chancellor College to be essentially the same as the mixed language under

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study in the present research; that is, Chibrazi, the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi.

The present study is distinguished from the studies that are cited in this section in two main ways. Firstly, it differs from the studies of Chapita, Kamowa, Jalasi, Lekera, Nawata and Tchesa. In the present study, just as in Moto's study, Chibrazi is treated not as a phenomenon exclusive to an isolated place or institution (for example, Chancellor College, like in the other studies), but as a mixed language that is spoken in the whole country. The second difference lies in the focus of study. While these previous studies explore specific aspects of the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi, the present study analyses the mixed language in a broader sense. The present study investigates Chibrazi in a more holistic manner as it explores more aspects of the mixed language than the previous studies.

Moto's study is fairly broad, but the present study adds detail to what has been explored and it investigates more aspects of the mixed language than in Moto's study. In addition to that, while the case study part of this research is based on one institution, like those of Chapita, Kamowa, Lekera, Jalasi, Nawata and Tchesa, it targets not only learners, but all members of the institution: learners as well as staff of the various sections of the chosen institution. Therefore, the present research adds to the studies that have been conducted on the language profile of Malaŵi in this regard in terms of both scope and depth.

## 2.7. Definition of terms used in the description of language manipulation processes

It has been pointed out in the introduction to this chapter that while mixed languages like the one under study in the present research fall within the broad realm of historical and comparative linguistics or genetic linguistics, they do not neatly fit into any specific theory of language change. Further to that, it has been mentioned that in the absence of a ‘universally accepted’ theory, this research draws on a number of approaches within the broad realm of historical and comparative linguistics or genetic linguistics in order to establish a theoretical framework in which to describe the language phenomenon under study. In other words, this research adapts its theoretical framework from a number of approaches that are briefly explained in sections 2.2 to 2.4 above. This section provides the working definitions of terms that are used in the present research in order to describe different language manipulation processes that are used in the creation of the lexicon of Chibrazi.

Some of the terms that are applied in describing the strategies that are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi in the present research are similar to the terms that are applied by scholars that are cited in the literature that was reviewed in this study. However, there are some instances where the descriptions of the processes in the literature cited and the descriptions that were employed in the present research coincide. There are also other cases where the terms that are used in the literature do not neatly fit the processes that are used in the creation of the lexicon of Chibrazi. All in all, the terms that were adopted from the literature were not adequate to describe all the processes that are employed in the creation of the lexicon of Chibrazi.

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In cases where there were differences between the terminology in the literature and the processes used in the creation of Chibrazi, the terminology that is used in the literature was adapted to suit the descriptions employed in the creation of the lexicon of Chibrazi. In cases where the terminology in the literature was inadequate to capture the descriptions employed in the creation of the lexicon of Chibrazi, additional terms were coined in this research to describe the other processes through which the lexicon of Chibrazi is created. This was done in order to ensure that there is clarity in the descriptions of the strategies in line with the examples provided. In some cases, the application of the terminology that is used in the literature in the context of the Chibrazi examples that are presented in this research proved to be problematic. This is another justification for the adjustments that were made in this research.

The first term to be explained in terms of its application in the present research is *lexical borrowing*. Lexical borrowing is probably the most common strategy through which the vocabulary of Chibrazi is created. In as far as Chibrazi is concerned; lexical borrowing refers to the process of taking words or parts thereof from other existing languages into Chibrazi. Some of the most common foreign languages from which Chibrazi derives its vocabulary are English, French, German, Portuguese, and the languages of neighbouring countries like Chibemba from Zambia, Chishona from Zimbabwe, Portuguese from Mozambique, Kiswahili from Tanzania and the languages of South Africa that include isiZulu, isiXhosa, Sesotho and Setswana.

The languages from which Chibrazi draws its lexical items are collectively referred to as *source languages* or *donor languages*. The languages that Chibrazi depends on for its

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grammatical structure are referred to as its *grammatical bases*. Generally, aspects of the mixed language like morphology, phonology and syntax are taken from the grammatical bases. Therefore, Chibrazi can be said to have different dialects on the basis of grammatical structure. Three of the dialects that are exemplified in this research are *Chicheŵa Chibrazi*, *Chitonga Chibrazi*, and *Chitumbuka Chibrazi*. These can also be called *Chibrazi cha Chicheŵa*, *Chibrazi cha Chitonga*, and *Chibrazi cha Chitumbuka* respectively. By virtue of using these Malaŵian languages as its grammatical bases, Chibrazi adopts the Bantu syntactic structure, which the Malaŵian languages use. As Miti (2006) points out, in Bantu languages, all the six logically possible types of word order patterns of the Subject (S), the Object (O) and the Verb (V) are found. The six word order patterns are SVO, SOV, VSO, VOS, OVS and OSV.

English and French enter Chibrazi mainly because they are taught in school. The other donor languages are brought into the mixed language mainly through travel of other people into the country and of Malaŵians themselves into the countries of the respective languages. As such, the array of the foreign donor languages of Chibrazi has come to represent the languages that Malaŵians have been in contact with through the years and continue to do so.

There are two points about the use of the term *borrowing* that need to be raised in respect to Chibrazi. The first point is raised by Msimang (1987) in his description of Tsotsitaal, but it also has a bearing on Chibrazi. The point is that while Chibrazi contains a lot of elements that are imported or transferred from other languages, it is not all of them that ordinarily qualify as instances of borrowing in the strict sense of the word as it is used in the literature. This observation is relevant on the basis of two issues.

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Firstly, the use of the word borrowing presupposes the preexistence of Chibrazi since “in borrowing, words are transferred from a foreign language to a pre-existing native language” (Msimang, 1987: 83, citing Hudson, 1980: 65). However, Chibrazi is not a pre-existing language; rather, it is a fairly new mixed language, although it is local to Malaŵi. “Secondly, in borrowing, the meaning of items and concepts borrowed from a foreign language is usually kept” (Msimang, 1987: 83). This is unlike the common practice in Chibrazi whereby words undergo different processes of semantic change when they are transferred from other languages. This is demonstrated in a lot of the examples that are provided in this thesis. The majority of the examples demonstrate that at the heart of lexical borrowing in Chibrazi, there is the borrowing of semantic or pragmatic features from other languages.

The second point to be raised about the use of the term *borrowing* has to do with the categorisation of the various words that the process produces. The present research endeavoured to undertake the kind of classification of borrowed items that is found in the literature (for example, Appel and Muysken, 1987, who categorise borrowing into loanwords, loan blends and loan shifts) for Chibrazi borrowed vocabulary. However, the enterprise proved to be problematic. This enterprise only succeeded in introducing more confusion.

In order to minimise the confusion that is brought about by the employment of the concept of borrowing, in the present research, borrowing is looked at from the point of view of *semantic change*, which is also called *semantic manipulation*. Semantic change or semantic manipulation refers to a process whereby the relationships between concepts and their referents are manipulated such that the meanings of words or expressions are either maintained or changed. That is to say that Chibrazi utilises a number of semantic

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manipulation processes wherein the relationships between words that represent concepts and their referents in one language are manipulated in order to produce new lexical items in the mixed language. These processes are generally referred to as semantic change, a process through which words with fixed meanings evolve to other meanings.

Therefore, borrowed items are categorised into four types in this study. *Semantic maintenance* is a category that comprises borrowed items whose meanings are maintained in Chibrazi. This category is different from all other categories because it does not involve any change in meaning. *Semantic shift* is a category of borrowed items whose meanings show a shift of a referent from one referent to another. *Semantic extension* or *semantic broadening* is a category of borrowed items wherein meaning becomes broader. *Semantic narrowing* is a category of borrowed items whose meanings become narrower.

There are two basic instances of semantic shift. In the first instance, a word that was used to refer to one concept at some point in one language is used to refer to another concept at another point within the language. In the second instance, a word that is or was used to refer to one concept in one language is transferred into another language where it is used to refer to a different concept. While this distinction between the two types of semantic shift sounds simple, it is rather complicated in as far as Chibrazi is concerned because of the proximity between Chibrazi and other languages that serve as its grammatical bases and sources of lexical items. Even though Chibrazi and its grammatical bases are different linguistic entities, there is a lot of commonality between Chibrazi on the one hand and the grammatical bases on



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the other. Such being the case, one might be tempted to interpret the shift to be within the grammatical bases rather than being between a grammatical base and Chibrazi.

In order to make matters less confusing with regard to Chibrazi, there are three types of semantic shift. The first type of semantic shift is the one whereby a word that was used to refer to one concept at some point in Chibrazi is used to refer to another concept at another point within Chibrazi. The second type of semantic shift in Chibrazi happens when a word that is or was used to refer to one concept in one Malaŵian language is transferred into Chibrazi where it is used to refer to another concept. The third type of semantic shift in Chibrazi happens when a word that is or was used to refer to one concept in a non Malaŵian language is transferred into Chibrazi where it is used to refer to another concept.

Ullman, (1951, cited by Shindo, 2009), states that the causes of semantic change lie in a diverse range of factors in cognition, culture and society, although this study considers cognition as encompassing the other two. According to Hock (1991), the basis of semantic change is *metaphor*. In metaphor, a given item can be used "... to refer to some new meaning by implicitly or explicitly claiming a semantic relationship or similarity between its established and its intended new meaning" (Hock, 1991: 285). Therefore, metaphor is one concept that probably most succinctly mirrors the creativity of the human mind when it comes to language change in general, African urban contact vernaculars in particular, and more specifically, Chibrazi.

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The present research contends that the semantic manipulation processes that are used in the creation of Chibrazi fall under one main cognition or conceptualisation processes that can be termed as *metaphoric manipulation*. Following from that, the present research proposes that the products of metaphoric manipulation can be analysed using Lackoff's (1993) *contemporary theory of metaphor*. In other words, Lackoff's (1993) contemporary theory of metaphor, which was developed based on work that was done by Reddy (1997), helps to explain how the said creativity of the human mind works. However, it is important to note that the present study only employs this approach for one example just to illustrate how that kind of analysis works. It does not analyse all the other examples of Chibrazi that are presented in this research in this manner.

In order to get a clear picture of the semantic manipulations that take place in Chibrazi, it is important to look at the notion *concept* before proceeding. According to Jackendoff (1990), a concept is concerned with the resources that make possible human knowledge and experience of the world. The word *concept* is used to refer to a mental representation that can serve as the meaning of an expression; or a mental representation of something that exists in someone's mind or in the real world. A concept can be a representation of an object, a thought or an idea. Due to its creative nature, human language permits the invocation of a large variety of concepts through the production and comprehension of utterances<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> In this light, communication is regarded as the placing of sentences in correspondence with concepts on the basis of the lexical items and the structures of utterances. For that reason, the meanings of utterances depend on the manner in which words are combined in linguistic constructions. The literature on language and meaning (see Partee, 2004; Gauker, 2003; Fromkin, 2000; Kearns, 2000; Jakobson, 1996; Lyons, 1995; Jackendoff, 1990; Levelt, 1989; Baldinger, 1980; and Linsky, 1972 for detailed discussions of how meaning is constructed in language).

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Lackoff's contemporary theory of metaphor makes two broad assertions about metaphor. Firstly, the theory states that metaphor is a major and indispensable part of people's ordinary, conventional way of contemplating the world. Secondly, the theory states that people's everyday behaviour reflects their metaphorical understanding of experience. In support of these assertions, Ortony (1979) emphasises that knowledge of reality is a result of going beyond the information that is given no matter how it comes about.

In the contemporary theory of metaphor, metaphor is viewed as a cross domain mapping in the conceptual system; that is, the mapping of one domain onto another. In other words, metaphor is about thinking of one entity in terms of another entity. Thus, Barcelona (2000:4, cited by Riener, 2001) defines metaphor as "the cognitive mechanism whereby one experiential domain is partially "mapped", i.e. projected onto a different experiential domain so that the second domain is partially understood in terms of the first one". Semantic change, like the semantic change that manifests in Chibrazi, thrives on such cross domain mapping.

Lackoff (1989, 1983) gives the example of the mental domain of LOVE, which can be conceptualised in terms of the mental domain of A JOURNEY or TRAVELING. In other words, properties of the concept JOURNEY or TRAVELING are used to understand the concept LOVE. To put this differently, at the conceptual level, LOVE is likened to A JOURNEY or TRAVELING. "It is this likening of LOVE to A JOURNEY or TRAVELING that makes it possible for people to talk about different experiences in love using statements like "Let's go our separate ways", "Look how far we have come", and "We are at the crossroads"" (Kamanga, 2008, citing Lakoff, 1989, 1983), just to mention a few.

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These are examples of linguistic metaphor, which are motivated by conceptual metaphors and are the realisations that appear in everyday written and spoken forms (Kamanga, 2008, citing Bailey, 2003). The examples demonstrate the fact that human beings are able to create linguistic metaphor using conceptual metaphor. *Linguistic metaphor* refers to cross domain mapping at the level of speech, while *conceptual metaphor* refers to cross domain mapping at the level of the thought process or thinking. Conceptual metaphors are super-ordinate, epistemic and semantic mappings that take the form of TARGET DOMAIN IS/AS SOURCE DOMAIN (Kamanga, 2008, citing Bailey, 2003). The conceptual metaphor behind the linguistic metaphors cited above is LOVE (target) IS/AS A JOURNEY (source).

According to the literature on metaphor (see for example, Gibbs Junior, 1999; Chandler, 1995; Lakoff, 1993, 1991; Lakoff and Turner, 1989; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Ortony, 1979; Reddy, 1979; and Richards, 1936, cited by Condon, 1999), there are four components of metaphor. The first component is referred to as *tenor* or the *source domain*. This is the original concept, or the conceptual domain from which metaphorical expressions are drawn. The second component is referred to as *vehicle*: the second concept 'transported' to modify or transform the tenor. This is also known as the *target domain*. It is the conceptual domain that we try to understand using the source domain. The third component of metaphor is referred to as *ground*: the set of features common to the tenor and the vehicle. The last component is referred to as *tension*. This is the effort needed to span the gap between the tenor and the vehicle (Kamanga, 2008: 18- 19).

Metaphoric manipulation in Chibrazi can be broken down into different types of metaphor depending on the nature of the relationship between the source domain and the target domain in each of the linguistic metaphors created. For example, we can identify synecdoche, hyperbole, euphemism and dysphemism, which Kiessling and Mous (2004) say are the commonest types of metaphor that are used in urban contact vernaculars. However, due to

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limitation of space, the present research does not undertake that enterprise. Such analysis of metaphoric manipulation in Chibrazi is deferred to other studies.

The assertion that metaphor is at the center of the creation of Chibrazi because all the linguistic strategies that are used in creating the mixed language involve some kind of metaphoric relationship between one entity and another is in line with what Halliday (1976: 78) states about anti-languages of which Chibrazi is one. Halliday states that “An anti-language is a metaphor for an everyday language; and this metaphorical quality appears all the way up and down the system”. Halliday further states that there are phonological metaphors, grammatical metaphors, morphological metaphors, and perhaps syntactic metaphors as well. The examples that are presented in this thesis bear witness to this point, although they are not further broken down in the fashion that Halliday proposes. It should be remembered however, that the analysis of the examples of Chibrazi in this research is restricted to semantic manipulation.

As already pointed out above, semantic manipulation is only one type of language change that Chibrazi exhibits. In the course of the analysis of the lexicon of Chibrazi in terms of semantic manipulation, there are other language manipulation processes that are included in the discussion because they are unavoidable. These other processes are generally referred to as morphophonotactic manipulation and they are briefly explained in the remaining part of this section.

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The first morphophonotactic manipulation process that is included in the analysis of the examples of Chibrazi that are presented in this research is *vernacularisation*. Vernacularisation can be defined as a linguistic manipulation; in fact, a morphophonological or morphophonotactic manipulation process in which words that are transferred from a donor language are made to assimilate the form of the borrowing language; that is, Chibrazi in this case. However, as already indicated above, Chibrazi utilises the grammatical structures of other languages. Therefore, generally, vernacularisation implies making the lexical items that are borrowed from foreign languages to assimilate the forms of the Malawian languages that are used to provide Chibrazi with grammatical structure. Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka have been isolated as reference points in this study in this regard. That means that words that have foreign linguistic make up are given Chicheŵa, Chitonga or Chitumbuka linguistic make up.

There are different strategies that are used in vernacularisation. More details in this regard are given in the course of discussing specific examples. Suffice it to mention at this stage that many of the examples that are presented in this thesis involve vernacularisation. One morphological manipulation process that is employed in Chibrazi as part of vernacularisation is *affixation*. In affixation, vowel sounds are added, mostly word finally, to words that are imported from other languages. Almost all the Chibrazi examples cited in this thesis that originate from English words undergo this process.

The first good example of affixation is found in the word *widi*, which in Chibrazi means “Indian hemp”. The word is a manipulation of the English word **weed** that is used to mean

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“Indian hemp” in Jamaican English or Patois. In this Chibrazi word, the vowel sound /i/ is added at the end of the word **weed**. Affixation is also utilised in words like *painti* or its variant *paintsi* and *shetsi*. The vowel sound /i/ is added to the English words **pint**, **pints** and **shirts** respectively. *Painti* and *paintsi* mean **beer**, while *shetsi* means “shirt”. The vowel sound /i/ is also used in the vernacularisation of the Afrikaans word *water* into *vadi*. But, before the vowel is added, the /t/ sound is changed into a /d/ sound. There are several other examples of affixation that are found in words that are presented in this thesis as examples of other linguistic processes through which Chibrazi creates its vocabulary. Affixation is one of the commonest ways through which foreign words are vernacularised. However, it should be pointed out that while some words undergo affixation in the course of vernacularisation, other words do not.

The second morphophonotactic manipulation process that is included in the analysis of the examples of Chibrazi that are presented in this research is *foreignisation*. Foreignisation is a process whereby words are given a foreign morphophonological or morphophonotactic make up in order to create new words. The process can be said to be the opposite of vernacularisation because it involves the changing of a word from an indigenous make up into a foreign make up. One common instance of foreignisation manifests in a Chibrazi morphophonological or morphophonotactic manipulation process that can be labeled as *Frenchalisation*. This is a process in which words in Chibrazi are made to sound like words in French or other languages akin to French. Another form of foreignisation that is utilised in the creation of Chibrazi lexicon is *scientification*. This is a morphophonological or morphophonotactic process whereby new words are created by blending foreign morphemes or phonemes with either Chibrazi words or donor language words in order to make the new words sound as if they were scientific terms.

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The third morphophonotactic manipulation process that is included in the analysis of the examples of Chibrazi that are presented in this research is *recycling*. Recycling is a process whereby vocabulary or other forms from the Chibrazi that was spoken in the past and which was replaced by other vocabulary or other forms are brought back into Chibrazi at a later stage. The process can also be referred to as *rejuvenation*. This process persuades this research to employ the two concepts *Old School Chibrazi* and *Contemporary Chibrazi* to denote these two types of Chibrazi respectively. There are two types of recycled words. Some of the words are recycled with the same meaning and usage, while others are recycled with a change in meaning or usage or they are recycled with a change in both meaning and usage.

However, simply stating that the term *Old School Chibrazi* is used to represent old Chibrazi, while the term *Contemporary Chibrazi* is used to represent newer Chibrazi is not straight forward because the words “old” and “contemporary” are relative. In an attempt to simplify this complication, the present research proposes that there are two basic ‘varieties’ of Chibrazi on the basis of the ages of individual members of the speech community of Chibrazi. The one ‘variety’ is the Chibrazi that members of the speech community speak in their youth. This is what is referred to as the Contemporary Chibrazi. The other ‘variety’ is the Chibrazi that members of the speech community speak in their mature days. This becomes Old School Chibrazi. This implies that Chibrazi is either contemporary or old on the basis of individual speakers of the mixed language. It is important to note that just as Chibrazi is dynamic at the collective level; it is also dynamic at the individual level. As such, the two labels are also dynamic. What is contemporary at one point becomes old school at another; and what is contemporary to one individual may be old school for another.



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Another form of recycling comprises what can be referred to as the use of ‘archaic words’, for want of a better expression. This is a process through which words and expressions that can be perceived to be ‘archaic’ in donor languages are transferred into Chibrazi. The words either maintain their original meanings and usage or they undergo some change in their meaning and usage. This research distinguishes this form of recycling from the one presented above in the following way: the former type of recycling takes place within Chibrazi, while archaic words involve Chibrazi and another language. Thus, the former can be referred to as intralanguage recycling (or intraChibrazi recycling), while the latter can be referred to as interlanguage recycling. Five other morphophonological manipulation processes, which are explained when they appear, are included in the discussion of the examples of Chibrazi. These are compounding, pluralisation, duplication, truncation and metathesis.

In closing this discussion on the definition of the terms used in the description of the semantic manipulation processes in this research, it should also be noted that most of the examples that are produced through semantic manipulation can be labelled as *ideophones*. Doke (1930: 255, cited by Miti, 2006: 392) defines *the ideophone* as “a word, often onomatopoeic, which describes a predicate in respect to manner, colour, sound or action”. In discussing the ideophone, Miti quotes two other scholars’ definitions of the concept; Cole (1955: 370) and Carter (2002: 71), thereby adding two things to Doke’s definition. Firstly, the list of qualities that are described by ideophones is added to to include smell, appearance, state, action, intensity, and silence. Secondly, the clarification that ideophones do not just describe such qualities, but that they describe them very vividly is also added to the definition. The present research does not analyse the examples of ideophones in Chibrazi in the manner that Miti analyses the words falling under this category. The present research stays within the confines of semantic manipulation.

## 2.8. Conclusion

The literature that has been highlighted in this chapter suggests that contact induced language change is a wide field within the general field of historical and comparative linguistics or historical and genetic linguistics. The literature cited in this chapter reveals that African urban contact vernaculars are one important example of the genesis of languages on the African continent. Apart from that, the literature cited in this chapter shows that African urban contact vernaculars do not neatly fit into traditional theories of language change. The theoretical framework that is used in the analysis of Chibrazi in the present research is only one possible adaptation of the traditional theories of language change.

The present study will therefore fill an existing gap in the literature on African urban contact vernaculars in general and the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi in particular. The present research will open up more engagement with Chibrazi by different sections of the Malaŵian population, especially those that are or should be passionate about language matters. It will open up a ‘new avenue’ for social, political as well as scholarly engagement on a number of issues regarding the urban contact vernacular language. The study will open discussion on many other similar questions relevant to the topic of the urban contact vernacular language. The findings in the study might even be applied to other urban contact vernaculars of the world in their respective countries.

## 2.9. Points to note

It is also important to note that there are three important differences in orthographic representation between this study and other scholarly works on the language situation in Malaŵi. Firstly, the study recognises the proposition that is opposed to the existence of the

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approximant /w̃/ in Chicheŵa. This study does not subscribe to that ‘school of thought’; hence, throughout this thesis, words such as Malaŵi and Chicheŵa are presented with /w̃/ and not with /w/. Secondly, the present study does not subscribe to the ‘school of thought’ that proposes that /chi/ should orthographically be represented as /ci/. For that reason, the former rather than the latter is used in this thesis. For instance, the thesis bears the orthographic representation Chicheŵa rather than Cicheŵa or Ciceŵa. Thirdly, the names of Malaŵian languages and other languages that are ‘Malaŵianised’ in as far as this research is concerned are capitalised at the head of the name marker rather than at the name of the tribe. For example, the name of the national language is orthographically represented as Chicheŵa; and not as chiCheŵa.

In this study, I do not present any further justification for adopting these stances because of the following reasons. Firstly, I consider the variation between the juxtaposed forms to be politically motivated rather than linguistically so. This applies to all juxtapositions. Secondly, I consider the discussion on the juxtaposition between /w/ and /w̃/ to be not inclusive of all the languages of Malaŵi. For example, while it is argued that /w̃/ was never part of Chicheŵa, the same is not true of other Malaŵian languages; especially Chitonga and Chitumbuka. Chitonga and Chitumbuka literature bears such representations as /b/ and /v/ in words like *bana* and *badada* or *vana* and *vadada*; rather than *wana* and *wadada*, which sound odd. See Chitonga and Chitumbuka translations of the Holy Bible for example.

In this regard, it should be noted that /b/ and /v/ are taken as varied orthographic representations of the approximant /w̃/. Should anyone have a problem accepting the approach that is taken in the present research regarding this item of orthography, they should

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consider the study to be written from a general and inclusive Malaŵian perspective or a Chitonga and Chitumbuka perspective rather than an exclusive Chicheŵa perspective. Thirdly, I choose to use /w/ rather than /b/ or /v/ to avoid confusion. Finally, the juxtapositions in that variation of the sounds and phonological and orthographic representation are outside of the scope of the present research. It is also worth pointing out the fact that standardisation of Malaŵian languages is yet to be achieved.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Introduction

The research strategy that was employed in this study was selected very carefully because in any kind of research, the nature of the subject of enquiry has a bearing on the research design and the research methodology that is employed. As already indicated in the first chapter, the aim of this study was to provide a descriptive analysis of Chibrazi. This chapter explains in detail the research design and the research methodology that was used in the process of gathering and analysing the information that was used in addressing the specific objectives and answering the questions in this research. The chapter starts by providing the overall research strategy that was used in the research and then it provides further details of the methodology used.

According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005), to describe something is to say or write what it is like, and something descriptive is something that describes something especially in a detailed, interesting way. The same dictionary states that to analyse is to study or examine something in detail, in order to discover more about it, while it defines an analysis as an examination and judgement about something. In providing the descriptive analysis of the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi, this study provides details about the speakers of Chibrazi; some examples of Chibrazi; the basic grammatical structure of Chibrazi; some of the strategies that are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi; and what makes Chibrazi unique.

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In studies of language, in order to gain sufficient insight into and knowledge of people's behaviour, a researcher needs to employ a multiplicity of research methods. This is important for two reasons. Firstly, it is done so that as much linguistic as well as contextual information can be gathered. Secondly, it is done so that the conclusions that are reached are comprehensive. Therefore, in order to achieve a description such as the one outlined above, this research was designed as a mixed method study that was both theoretical and empirical in nature and which employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of enquiry.

The theoretical aspect of this research comprised some of the basic and most important theoretical concepts that were employed to explain Chibrazi in this research. This information was collected through a review of literature on contact induced language change, what this study labels as African urban contact vernaculars and studies on the language situation of Malaŵi in general. In other words, the information that was gathered through this method was used to provide a theoretical interpretation of Chibrazi. The empirical component of the research comprised linguistic data and information on the opinions of a selected group of people about different aspects of Chibrazi and their exposure to Chibrazi. Some of the linguistic data was drawn from naturally occurring speech, while other linguistic data came from people's personal intuitions of the mixed language

According to Lincoln (1942: 2, cited by Biggam, 2008: 86), quantitative methods of enquiry are concerned with quantities and measurements, while qualitative methods of enquiry involve "studying things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them". In other words, quantitative methods answer the HOW questions, while qualitative methods answer the WHY questions

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(Biggam, 2008). In this study, there are close links between the quantitative aspects and the qualitative aspects of the research. For example, while the question of who speaks Chibrazi was investigated in terms of how many, the question was intertwined with aspects of why and in what contexts, just to mention two. Therefore, the study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of enquiry so that the results obtained through one method could be used to inform and develop the results obtained through the other method (Creswell, 2003, citing Green, Caracelli and Graham, 1989).

The strategy of using different methods of collecting data is referred to as triangulation, a means of seeking convergence across qualitative and quantitative sources of data (see Yin, 2009; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007; Leedy and Ormrod, 2005; Denzin, 2003; Patton, 2002; Cohen and Manion, 1994; Brannen, 1992; Mouton and Marais, 1992; and Jack, 1979). Essentially, this is to say that each of the methods that were used in this research was seen to have its own limitations. Therefore, triangulation or qual-quant, as it is referred to by Morse (1991, in Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007), was used in order that the limitations of one method could be neutralised by the strengths of another method. Patton (2002) refers to the kind of triangulation used in this research as triangulation of data sources; that is, the employment of multiple data collection methods with the aim of corroborating the information obtained in the study.

The triangulation of data in the present research provided the research the opportunity "... to identify what is central and typical in the (mixed) language ..." (Stubbs, 1996: 174, citing Sinclair, 1991a: 17) under study in as far as its speakers, its vocabulary, and its grammatical structure are concerned. In other words, it was seen to be important to use different research

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methods so that all the aspects of Chibrazi that this study sought to examine could be catered for, and so that the information gathered through these different methods could be corroborated. Both qualitative and quantitative information needed to be solicited. The study employed the mixed method approach because each of these methods provided information on a specific aspect or specific aspects of Chibrazi. Putting all the information gathered through this approach together enhanced the achievement of a comprehensive descriptive analysis of Chibrazi.

The literature on language research shows that many scholars use a combination of methods in order to corroborate the information coming from those different methods. Some examples of studies wherein triangulation is used are listed here. Kayambazinthu (1994) used the survey method and interviews to yield both quantitative and qualitative data that was used to establish the patterns of language use in Malaŵi. Jwan and Ogechi (2004) used video-recording, a questionnaire and non-participant observation. Kamanga (2007) used literature review, questionnaire and interview. Other studies that have included a combination of methods are Groß (2007), Samper (2002) and Ntshangase (1993), just to mention some.

### **3.2. Collecting the corpus of Chibrazi**

The empirical data that was used in this research was collected in two stages. The first stage produced a sample of Chibrazi that is made up of pieces of vocabulary, chunks of Chibrazi, and common sayings in Chibrazi. This is the first type of empirical data that was used in this research. This data was extracted from authentic conversation. The data is collected into what this research terms *a corpus of Chibrazi vocabulary and other expressions*. In the literature on corpus linguistics (see for example, Kennedy, 1998 and Stubbs, 1996), the term *corpus* is



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used to refer to a collection or databank of naturally occurring or authentic spoken or written language that is stored electronically. It should be pointed out that while the present research generally uses the term *corpus* in the same way as it is used in the literature on corpus linguistics, the data in the present research is not stored electronically. However, the fact that the data in question is not stored electronically does not mean that it is not a corpus. It is also important to note that I used my personal knowledge of Chibrazi to determine whether or not the sample that was collected was Chibrazi.

This corpus comes from years of collecting different pieces of information through both participant and non-participant observation. I have personally collected information on Chibrazi since the early 1990s from the different places I have been. As already indicated in the opening chapter of this research, I have personally encountered and used Chibrazi in various places. I have encountered and used Chibrazi both in the household domain and outside the household domain. I have encountered and used Chibrazi in both rural areas and urban areas of Malaŵi. I have encountered and used Chibrazi even outside of Malaŵi; especially in South Africa; in Cape Town, in Durban, in Johannesburg, in Rustenburg, in Pretoria, and in Queenstown. I have encountered and used Chibrazi at several institutions that I have studied and worked, both in informal and formal set up. I have encountered and used Chibrazi for a period of more than thirty years. I have also encountered and used Chibrazi on the social media; for example, Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. In 2007, I embarked on a more rigorous effort of adding information to the corpus mainly for the purpose of creating a multilingual dictionary of Chibrazi, Chicheŵa and English, which is still in the pipeline. For this purpose, I was joined by colleagues at Mzuzu University, Harguy Kadzkalowa and Atikonda Mtenje.

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The following are the categories of some of the people that I recorded in this regard: friends, family members, vendors, soldiers, minibus drivers and call boys. I also recorded popular personalities such as footballers, actors and musicians. I made the recordings in different places such as at school, at work, at my home, at other people's homes, in bus depots, in beer drinking places, in market places, in towns in general, and in buses, minibuses or taxis while travelling. I made other recordings from the media such as newspapers, the radio and television. The corpus is in the form of words, phrases, sentences and sayings that are written down in a notebook. This corpus was mainly used to provide information on the speakers of Chibrazi, examples of Chibrazi, the linguistic strategies that are used in the creation of the Chibrazi lexicon, and the linguistic structure of Chibrazi.

The main data collection method that was used to collect this corpus is observation. The present research employed observation because other methods of data collection are not "appropriate substitute for the observation of the actual behaviour" (Hestage, 1984: 236, cited by Gobo, 2011). Apart from providing the sample of Chibrazi, observation also provided this study with some very important information regarding the use of Chibrazi that could not be solicited through the other methods that were used in the case study. As Buscatto (2011, citing Gilbert and Mulkay, 1983) observes, there is often a gap between what people say and what they do. Observation was thus used to minimise the gap between the two.

Both participant and non-participant observation were used in the study. According to Gobo (2011), in non-participant observation, the researcher observes the subjects 'from a distance' without interacting with them so as not to influence their behaviour. On the other hand, in participant observation, the researcher establishes a direct relationship with the social actors;

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staying in their natural environment; with the purpose of observing and describing their social actions; by interacting with them and participating in their everyday ceremonials and rituals; and learning their code (or at least parts of it) in order to understand the meaning of their actions.

Through the use of observation, this study was able to capture the social meanings and ordinary activities of the subjects (Brewer, 2000). As Valle, King and Halling (1989:7, cited by Huysamen, 1994: 167) say, “in the truest sense, the person is viewed as having no existence apart from the world and the world as having no existence apart from persons. Each person and his or her world are said to co-constitute one another”. However, it should be noted that Huysamen (1994: 167) makes this statement in relation to ethnography. This study is not ethnographic because ethnography is, by definition, a qualitative research design (on its own) that is aimed at exploring cultural phenomena which reflect the knowledge and system of meanings guiding the lives of a cultural group. See, for example, Phillipsen (1992) and Geertz (1973) for further discussion of ethnography.

Caution was taken to ensure that the observation was as neutral as possible knowing that observation is not bias-free because “in trying to make sense of what we are looking at we are influenced by own prejudices, experiences, and personal baggage” (Biggam, 2008: 100). Or, as Phillips and Pugh (2001: 50) put it, “there is no such thing as unbiased observation”. A lot of what is referred to as reflexivity in the literature (see for example, Nightingale and Crombie, 1999) was done in this regard. In relation to the observations that I conducted in the course of this study, I explored ways in which my involvement in the study would influence,

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act upon and inform the research because as Canon (1996: 159, cited by Biggam, 2008: 100) observes, “awareness of the problem plus constant self-control can help”. Because of being aware of the problem, I was able to exercise self-control throughout the time of observation and thus I ensured that it should be the data collected in the research that should speak rather than me much as I am a speaker of Chibrazi myself.

Efforts were made to systematise the employment of observation as a data collection method. For example, some of the mixed language produced in the course of observation alongside the circumstances of its use was tape recorded. Additional notes on the mixed language were recorded through writing. That means that the data that was obtained from observation was in the form of Chibrazi lexemes and other expressions together with descriptions of the contexts in which the lexemes and expressions were produced. The data collection instruments that were used are pen and paper, tape recorder and observation guidelines. I observed participants from a distance and recorded information or I participated in conversation with the participants and recorded information. The subjects went about their own different businesses as I observed them. For example, those who were observed in drinking places went about their drinking, talking and playing games as I recorded them. In short, observations took place in people’s natural environments and the people were doing whatever they do whenever they are in those natural environments.

In addition to that, an observation checklist was drawn up in order to guide both participant and no-participant observation. The checklist is included in the appendix of this thesis. The checklist included the type of observation; the date and time of observation; a description of interlocutors; the context of conversation; and a sample of the conversation.

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It has been hinted above that some of the recordings that are included in this research were made in South Africa among Malaŵians living in the country. This requires a bit of explanation as it may raise the question of legitimacy of such data in some people's minds. It is interesting to note that there are some Malaŵians who use the mixed language even outside of Malaŵi. South Africa is one of those places. I have personally interacted and continue to interact with many fellow Malaŵian speakers of the mixed language quite extensively in South Africa both in face to face interaction and on the social media. In order for one to satisfy their curiosity in this regard, one could simply read through people's communication on the social media like Facebook. It can be argued that the 'diaspora' serves as one of the links between Chibrazi and its source languages in other countries. The likenesses between Chibrazi vocabulary and the vocabulary of its source languages in other countries is the basis of this argument.

South Africa is used as an example in this case. Three Chibrazi words *akse*, which means 'my friend'; *husha*, which means 'prostitute'; and *nje*, which means 'no'; illustrate this point. All of these words are present in South African languages and they must have been transported into Chibrazi through Chibrazi speakers who used the mixed language in South Africa. The first word is taken from Tsotsitaal where it means the same as it does in Chibrazi. The second word is taken from the word *mahosha*, which is used in the same way in a number of South African languages including Tsotsitaal, isiZulu, Setswana, Sesotho and isiXhosa. The last word is taken from isiZulu and isiXhosa where it is used to encode meanings such as 'like this', 'like that' and 'now'. It is important to note however, that there are some differences between the Chibrazi that is spoken in South Africa and that which is spoken in Malaŵi. A good example in this case is the name of the country itself. While in 'Malaŵian Chibrazi'

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Malaŵi is referred to as *Flames*, in ‘South African Chibrazi’ Malaŵi is referred to as *Mpanje*.

The question of South African Chibrazi is however, not among the subjects under investigation in this research.

### 3.3. Conducting a case study

The second stage of the collection of empirical data comprised a case study. The case study produced additional pieces of Chibrazi vocabulary. These additional examples of Chibrazi were provided by participants in the case study in response to a questionnaire and in live recordings that were made during interviews. Other examples were extracted from conversations that I recorded through both participant observation and non-participant observation. I made these recordings in different domains where different people interacted depending on the opportunity that presented.

The case study also produced information on people’s exposure to Chibrazi and their opinions about different aspects on Chibrazi that were explored in this research. This is the third type of empirical data that was used in this research. This information was solicited through the questionnaire and follow up interviews that were administered during the case study. Participants in the case study were asked different questions about their exposure to Chibrazi and their thoughts about Chibrazi, which provided indications about their attitude towards Chibrazi.

The literature on research design and methodology provides a lot of definitions for the term *case study*. However, as Yin (2009) observes, most of these definitions simply provide examples of the types of topics that case study research covers rather than what it entails in

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the general sense. One such definition is given here to illustrate the point. Thomas (2011) defines a case study as an analysis of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods. With regard to this definition, the case study in the present research falls within the topic *institutions*. A case study is a study of a singularity involving the systematic description of a unique situation so as to bring out its characteristic features (Bassegy, 1995). The singularity in the present research is the educational institution, while the unique situation is the existence of the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi. The present research is “bounded in space and time and embodied in a particular physical and sociocultural context” (Gobo, 2011: 17).

In refining the traditional definitions, Yin (2009:17) starts by quoting Platt (1992: 46) who observes that the case study strategy begins with “a logic of design ... a strategy to be preferred when circumstances and research problems are appropriate rather than an ideological commitment to be followed whatever the circumstances”. Yin explicates this logic of design by positing a twofold technical definition for the term case study. According to Yin (2009: 18), the first part of the technical definition begins with the scope of a case study. Thus, Yin says that the case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. Further to that, Yin observes that the case study method is used when one wants to understand a real-life phenomenon in depth; yet such understanding encompasses important contextual conditions, which makes the conditions highly pertinent to the phenomenon of study.

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The second part of the technical definition covers the technical characteristics of case study research including data collection and data analysis strategies. In this regard, Yin says that phenomenon and context are not always distinguishable in real-life situations. Further to this point, Yin states that the case study method has three attributes (Yin, 2009: 18): Firstly, the case study “copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points”. Secondly, as one result of coping with that, the case study method “relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in triangulation fashion, and as another result”. Thirdly, the case study method “benefits the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis”.

Bent (2006) argues that although the case study has been extensively used and produced canonical works, it is generally held in low esteem or ignored in academic circles (what he calls the case study paradox). Bent attributes this to the fact that the case study has been widely misunderstood as a research method. Bent thus identifies five such misunderstandings, which are listed below:

- General, theoretical knowledge is more valuable than concrete, practical knowledge;
- One cannot generalise on the basis of an individual case and therefore, the case study cannot contribute to scientific development;
- The case study is most useful for generating hypotheses, whereas other methods are more suitable for hypothesis testing and theory building;
- The case study contains a bias towards verification, i.e. tendency to confirm the researcher’s preconceived notions; and
- It is often difficult to summarise and develop general propositions and theories on the basis of specific case studies.



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However, there are a number of advantages that the case study method offered the present research. Firstly, the case study method was particularly appropriate for me as an individual researcher because it created an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth within a limited time. Bell (1999) emphasises this advantage of the case study. Secondly, the case study method enabled me to gain a sharpened understanding of the subject under study and what might become important to look at more extensively in future research. This advantage is also highlighted by Bent (2006). Thirdly, this case study was well-designed and carefully described in order to allow readers to relate the study to situations that they know. This point is emphasised by Vinjevoold and Taylor (1999).

I included the case study method in this study because it was impossible for me as one researcher to carry out an extensive study that could cover all the geographical, socioeconomic and other contexts in which Chibrazi exists through other methods within the period of a doctorate degree. Even if the study had been reduced to educational institutions, it was not going to be possible to study all the educational institutions of the country. As already indicated, I have encountered and used Chibrazi in too many contexts and places in the country where it exists and for me to attempt to reach all of these in the course of this study was going to be untenable. In addition to that, including the case study method provided me an opportunity to gain in-depth understanding of Chibrazi.

### **3.3.1. The location of the case study**

The location of the case study in this research is Viphya Schools, one of the educational institutions in Mzuzu City in Northern Malaŵi. Viphya Schools is a private educational institution that comprises a pre-school, a primary school, and a secondary school. The

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institution is located about two kilometers from the central business district of the city. Mzuzu is the third largest city in Malaŵi with a population of 128 432 residents and about 1.7 million people living around the outskirts of the city (Commonwealth Network). The city is also referred to as the Northern Capital of Malaŵi (<http://www.mzuzu.org/>) because it is the largest business center in the region. A big part of the city is located in Mzimba District, while a smaller part is located in Nkhata-Bay District.

The majority language that is spoken in the city is Chitumbuka, the regional lingua franca of Northern Malaŵi; as described in the literature (see for example, Kayambazinthu, 2003, 1995, 1994; Matiki, 2003, 2002, 2001; Kamwendo, 2000, Kamwendo, Mtenje and Sandhaas, 1999). But, Chichewa is very popular because the city is populated by people from different parts of the country who possess different linguistic repertoires. Kayambazinthu (1994) puts Chitumbuka at 54% as the majority language of Northern Malaŵi. While the other languages of Northern Malaŵi are also present, Chicheŵa is arguably the second most popular language in the city. It is not surprising that this is the case. Chicheŵa remains popular in Mzuzu City partly because it is the national language of the country. Being such, the language has been afforded the opportunity to penetrate areas where it is not the majority language.

In addition to that, as the largest business center after Blantyre and Lilongwe, and as the hub of government administration, business and industry, commerce and services for the Northern Region (United Nations Settlement Programme, 2011), the city is inhabited by people who come from different parts of the country and who speak different languages. That being the case, the city serves as a convergence point for the different languages of the country thereby

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rendering it a fertile place for the creation and existence of Chibrazi. The city can also be argued as probably the biggest entry point for new innovations that come into the region from the other parts of the country. Thus, the city can be seen as a microcosm of the country just like the other cities of the country. Chapter four provides more details about the urbanisation of and the language situation in Mzuzu City.

There are many institutions both across the country and within Mzuzu City that could have been used as the location of the case study on the basis of factors such as linguistic diversity. In Mzuzu City alone, these include Moyale Barracks, Mzuzu Police, Mzuzu Prison, Mzuzu Market, Mzuzu Bus Depot, different government institutions in the City, and other education institutions. However, not all such institutions provided the same level of accessibility to me and I do not have the same familiarity with the dynamics of the institutions as I do for Viphya Schools. For example, some of the institutions; like the market and the bus depot, were inaccessible in terms of ethical clearance.

I had initially planned to conduct the research at Mzuzu University, which has similar linguistic diversity among its populace like Viphya Schools and whose dynamics I am familiar with. However, the authorities of the day at the university denied me the opportunity to conduct the research at the university. Viphya Schools provided me a better opportunity than other institutions in terms of linguistic diversity, geographical diversity, generational diversity, physical accessibility, ethical clearance, familiarity, flexibility of time and many other advantages over the other possible locations.

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Viphya Schools was seen as one ideal place to locate this case study because it was seen to have the potential to provide the additional empirical data that would be used to provide answers to the questions in this research. For example, it was seen to encompass a wide range of potential speakers of Chibrazi due to its location in the city. In addition to that, the institution was seen as ideal for the study because it has a cross section of people ranging from the young to the old since it has a preschool, a primary school and a secondary school. This would be used in determining the spread of the mixed language in terms of generation. Because of its location in the city, Viphya Schools draws its community, both student and staff, from all parts of the country. Some of the members of the Viphya Schools community permanently reside in and around the city, while others only do so temporarily during term time. Some students stay in boarding facilities or with relatives or friends during term time and go back to their permanent places of residence in other parts of the country during school holidays.

In terms of language policy, English is used as the medium of instruction for all subjects from preschool up to Form 4. Viphya Schools can be regarded as one of the ‘English schools’ in the city. Chicheŵa is the indigenous language that is taught as a subject from preschool up to Form 4. The school also offers French as an optional foreign language in the senior classes of primary school and in all classes of secondary school. The Viphya Schools community is therefore a community of linguistic diversity. Details of the linguistic diversity of the participants in the case study are presented in the next sub section, which contains the demographic information of the participants in the case study. This gives a hint of the nature and extent of linguistic diversity of the education institution.

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As a means of providing the learners with as much opportunity as possible for them to practise using English, learners are discouraged from using any vernacular languages in formal contexts. That largely means when interacting with teachers or other members of staff. In that regard, the administration blocks of the schools are understood to be ‘English only zones’. However, the learners are free to use vernacular languages in other contexts where interaction is more at a social level than at a formal level, even with their teachers and other members of staff. Good examples of such contexts include after classes, during breaks, in the hostels, during extra mural activities, during school outings, and during interactions with members of other school communities and the outside community. In such contexts, a whole plethora of languages is used depending on individual linguistic repertoires.

Viphya Schools was also chosen as the location for the case study for this research because I have in-depth local knowledge (Bent, 2011) of the institution in terms of its setting and circumstances. I studied at the institution between 1993 and 1994 and I lived there up to 1999 and visited the place beyond 1999. My father, Mister Absalom Kamanga, was one of the teachers at the institution. Even after leaving the institution, I have remained in touch with the institution as an active member of the alumni. I have also had formal interaction with the institution as a lecturer at Mzuzu University, which uses Viphya Secondary School as one of the schools where students from the education faculty of the university are placed during teaching practicum.

In Coupland’s words, the research was conducted within a “familiar ecosystem” (Coupland, 2007: 27). This helped me to gain the confidence of the institution as well as the individuals

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involved to allow for the study to be carried out. It also helped me in terms of knowing the everyday dynamics of the institution. This played an important part in terms of determining the times when and the places where the different activities of the case study were carried out without disrupting the school programme and without the research being disrupted by them thereby maximising on the time available for the research.

The case study spanned a period of three months; from January to March in 2010. This period was chosen because it is part of the first term for the schools. It is a period during which the schools are relatively relaxed to accommodate such an activity unlike in the other terms when the school schedules are much tighter. Both teachers and learners are freer during this period.

The choice of the case study method and that of Viphya Schools as its location is significant for this study. First of all, as already pointed out in the first chapter, I have encountered Chibrazi in different parts of Malaŵi that I have visited and stayed in. Viphya Schools and Mzuzu are two of the places. This suggests that Chibrazi is not restricted to a certain geographical location of the country. Secondly, Chibrazi is held to be a phenomenon that is only restricted to Chicheŵa in some quarters; thus, it is held as a dialect of Chicheŵa, which this research argues against. Thirdly, as an extension of the second point, while Chicheŵa is the national language of Malaŵi and the lingua franca in Central Malaŵi and Southern Malaŵi, Chitumbuka is the regional lingua franca in Northern Malaŵi, even though Chicheŵa is also spoken there. Fourthly, there are several implications for any approach that is chosen for a research, one of which is cost in terms of money and time.

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Therefore, considering that this research was carried out by one individual scholar in pursuit of a doctoral qualification rather than any other reason, employing the case study method made the study not only affordable, but also manageable within the confines of such an enterprise. And, locating the study in the chosen location afforded the study the opportunity to investigate whether or not Chibrazi is restricted in terms of both geographical spread and linguistic spread, among others; notwithstanding other factors that are relevant to the mixed language. In addition to that, certain aspects of the study are not restricted to the location of the case study.

In selecting the location of this case study, I took into account the fact that there are basically two kinds of empirical research in terms of purpose as purported by Bassey (1995). While some empirical researches can be used in formulating valid generalisations, other empirical researches cannot. The former requires the investigation of large populations through carefully selected samples, while the latter requires a systematic description of singular cases. The present research falls within the latter category of research. I took particular care to design a research method that would ensure that the ensuing discussion would allow for relating the results of this case study to other cases that are similar to the one studied. The kind of generalisation that can be made from this case study would be formulated as follows: if the findings of this case study are valid for the case under study, then the findings are valid for other cases of similar nature (see Yin, 2009 for details on generalising from case study research).

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### 3.3.2. The sample of the case study

This study recognised the fact that one case could not provide as rich information about Chibrazi as an extensive study would. That being the case, the study employed information-oriented sampling as opposed to random sampling (Bent, 2011) in order to make sure that the information that was needed to answer the questions in the research was obtained. This means that the research made a deliberate effort to choose a sample population that was seen to have the potential to provide the relevant information. The paragraphs that follow describe the sample for the case study and more detail is provided in the next sub section.

The sample population of the case study is of four categories: preschool learners, primary school learners, secondary school learners, teachers of all these schools and administrative and support staff of all the schools<sup>4</sup>. At the time of the present research, there was a total population of 818 people at Viphya Schools. This included both learners and staff of the school, but it excluded the school's overall management; that is, the board of trustees of the schools. Two issues may arise about the inclusion of preschool and primary school learners in this research. The first issue is the question of the linguistic diversity among these children. It has to be noted that attempts were made to obtain this information through the school's records. However, the information was ultimately not made available due to complications in procedure as the information was deemed to be privileged. However, it was reported by the school's administration that the majority of the learners spoke at least two languages. The two include English, which is, as indicated above, the medium of instruction in the school. Therefore, almost all the learners at the school are bilingual. The only learners that would be monolingual would be those that speak English as a home language.

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<sup>4</sup> While some of the members of support staff are allocated to specific schools within the institution, the majority of them serve all the three schools.



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The second issue is that of how these subjects would deal with a questionnaire and whether or not a questionnaire is appropriate in soliciting information from such subjects. It should be noted that some changes were made to the employment of the questionnaire as a research instrument in order to suit the level of these learners. Further details in this regard are provided under the discussion of the pilot studies below. The inclusion of these learners was strategic. It was envisaged that the inclusion of these learners would provide an indication of the generational spread of Chibrazi. This would in turn provide indications of whether or not the mixed language was spreading and even whether or not it would continue to do so for generations to come. As Fromkin and Rodman (1993: 322) observe, “changes in language ... are perpetrated when new generations of children learn the language by acquiring the new grammar”. It was therefore important to include in the research sample, subjects who are perceived to have the potential of carrying the mixed language beyond the current generation of speakers.

A total of 200 people had been earmarked for inclusion in the case study. This figure is 24% of the total population of the schools. Thus, it was decided that twenty four per cent of each category was to be selected to represent each of the categories of the participants in the case study. A plan had been put in place to ensure that there would be a 50% representation of each gender in the case study. This means that there would have been 100 females and 100 males included in this case study. However, none of these envisaged figures materialised because the situation on the ground presented a totally different scenario.

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In reality, only a total of 166 subjects, that represent 20% of the total population of the schools, are recorded as having participated in the case study of the present research. Precisely that is, the questionnaire and the follow-up interviews. The sample of the case study of the research was selected by means of convenient sampling. The subjects were included in the study by virtue of their being available and accepting to be part of the research. Subjects were taken through the nature of the research and the activities involved. Thereafter, they were asked whether or not they were willing to be part of the study.

As for the interviews that were conducted as part of the case study, the study had earmarked to select a total of 50 participants (25 females and 25 males) from the participants in the questionnaire. This figure had been chosen mainly based on manageability. The interviewees were also to be (in fact, they were) selected by means of convenient sampling. However, just as in the questionnaire, the reality that was found on the ground was totally different from what had been planned. Only 20 subjects took part in the interviews; 12 males and 8 females. Thirteen of these were secondary school learners, 6 were teachers, and the last 1 was a member of support staff.

It is important to note that the exact number of all the people that were involved in the case study of the present research is more than that presented above because of observation, about which no attempts can be made to estimate the number, considering the nature of this method. This method covered both subjects of the case study and non-subjects within the location of the case study. No systematic method of selection was used in as far as the sample of the subjects from whom the linguistic data was derived is concerned. As such, it is not

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possible to make any generalisations regarding this sample. Data was simply gathered as it became available. Suffice it to say that the data was drawn from a sample with a wide variation in terms of different factors that come into play in as far as Chibrazi is concerned. However, deliberate efforts were made to include as wide a range of Chibrazi speakers as possible in as many and varying domains as possible.

### **3.3.3. Dimensions of variation**

As it can be seen from the foregoing paragraphs, the overall research sample was diverse in terms of a number of characteristics. The sample was diverse in terms of the following characteristics among others: age, sex, linguistic background, occupation, geographical background, and educational background. In addition to these differences, the overall research sample was also diverse in terms of socioeconomic background. The reason for allowing for such a diversity was to enable the gathering of information from as wide a sample as possible. This is in line with one of the presuppositions of this research: that Chibrazi is an urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi as a whole, which extends to various parts, and not a linguistic phenomenon of one part or some parts of the country, or one group of people in the country. In other words, there were a number of variables in this research.

The literature on research design and research methodology (for example, Leedy and Ormrod, 2005) generally distinguishes between two types of research variables; independent and dependent variables. Independent variables are the factors that the researcher studies as possible causes of something, while dependent variables are the factors that are affected by the independent variables. The factors that were identified as the areas in which the data

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collected in this research would be varied; that is, the independent variables, are: gender, occupation, age, home district, first language, additional language, and area of residence.

These factors were related to factors that formed categories; that is, the dependent variables. The first category is the kind of Chibrazi that was known. The second category is exposure to Chibrazi. The third category is perceptions about Chibrazi. People's perceptions about Chibrazi were looked at in terms of eight specifications. These are description of Chibrazi; the impact of Chibrazi; legislation around Chibrazi; functions of Chibrazi; people's liking of Chibrazi; the popularity of Chibrazi; appropriateness of Chibrazi; and socioeconomic importance of Chibrazi.

It is important to point out that while participation in the case study was voluntary, deliberate efforts were made in order to include in the research sample people of characteristics that were going to enable the research to answer specific questions of the present research in as far as the dimension of variation are concerned. The research sample was chosen in such a way that it brought out differences and/or similarities between males and females; speakers and non-speakers; learners and staff; and the young and the old; for instance.

The sub sections that follow present the demographic information of the participants that took part in the written questionnaire in this research<sup>5</sup>. The information was generated through the first part of the questionnaire. This part of the questionnaire asked the participants to provide personal information with regard to seven items. These are gender, occupation, age, home

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<sup>5</sup> Two types of questionnaire were administered in this research; a written questionnaire and an oral questionnaire. More details about this is given in the sub section that discusses the questionnaire.

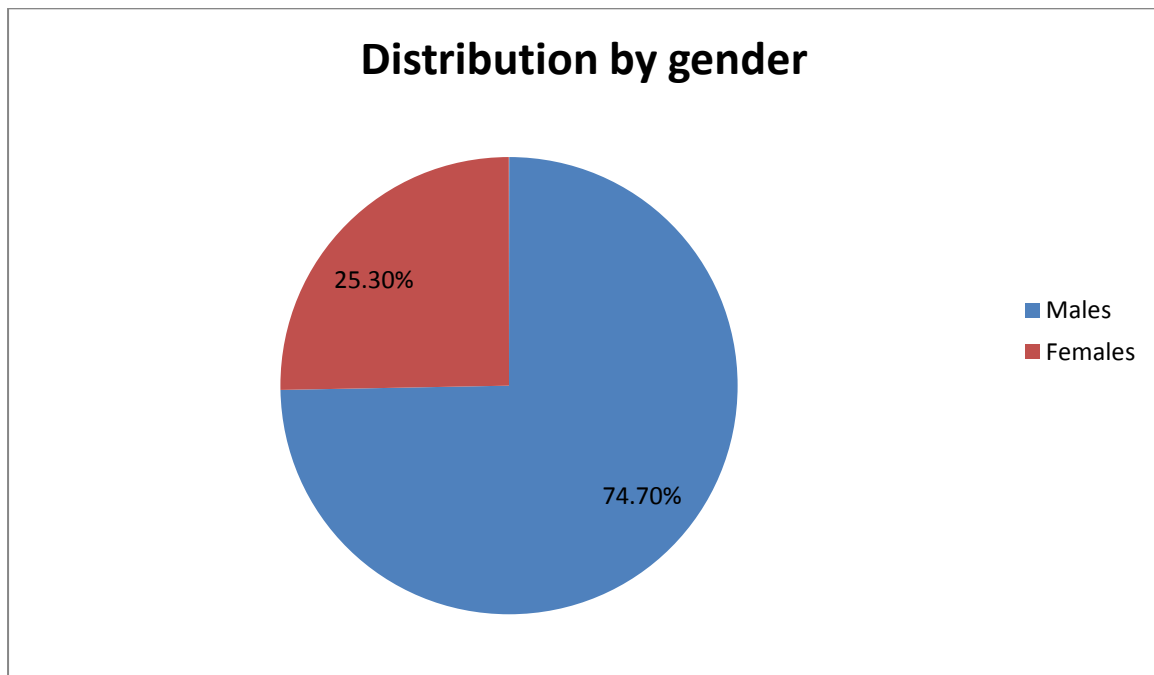
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district, first language, additional language and area of residence. The demographic data was analysed statistically and it is presented in sub sections 3.3.3.1 to 3.3.3.7 below. The information was obtained from a total of 91 participants that represent 11% of the total population of Viphya Schools as at the time of the study.

### 3.3.3.1. Gender

The distribution of the sample population in terms of gender is illustrated in the pie chart below.

*Figure 1: Distribution by gender of participants*



As it can be seen from the pie chart above, the participants in the written questionnaire were diverse in terms of gender. Out of the 91 participants that took part in the written questionnaire, there were 68 males (74.7%). Twenty three participants (25.3%) were females.

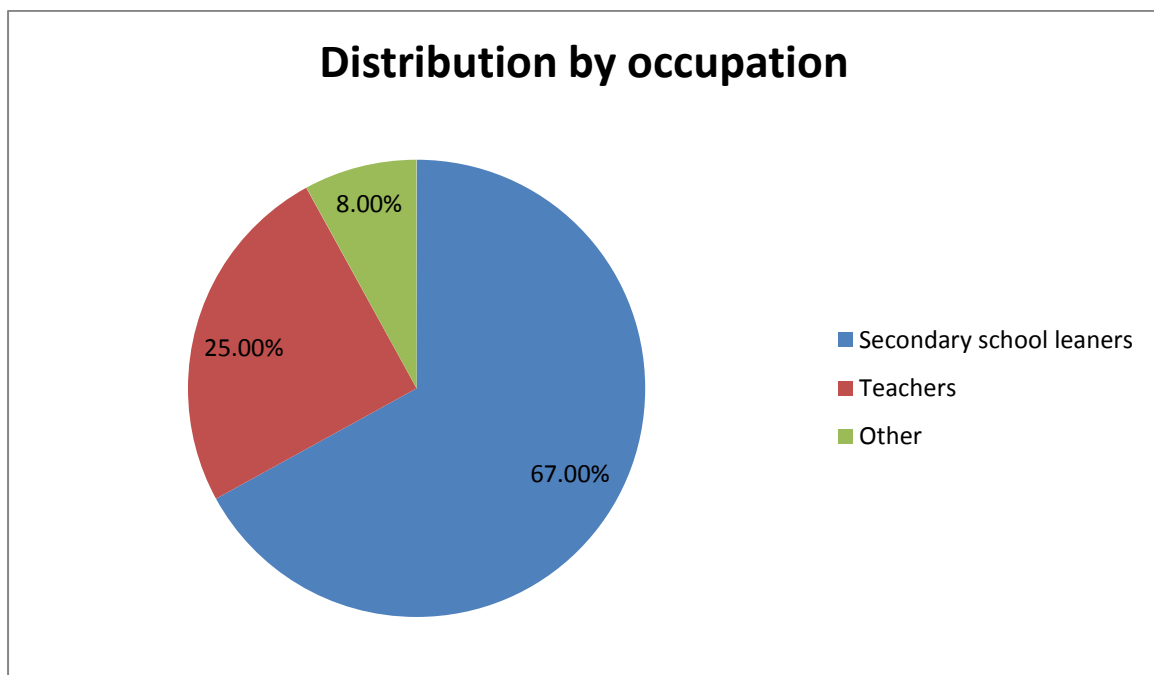
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It is clear from this data that the number of males that took part in the written questionnaire was much higher than that of females. While this research had planned to have a fifty-fifty representation of males and females in the sample, it was not possible to attain this target because few females opted to be part of the study. Unfortunately, nothing could have been done to change the fact that males appeared to be more willing to participate in the study than females did.

### 3.3.3.2. Occupation

The pie chart below illustrates the distribution of the participant population in terms of occupation.

*Figure 2: Distribution by occupation of participants*



The pie chart above shows that there were four categories of participants in the written questionnaire in terms of occupation. Sixty one participants (67%) were learners in secondary

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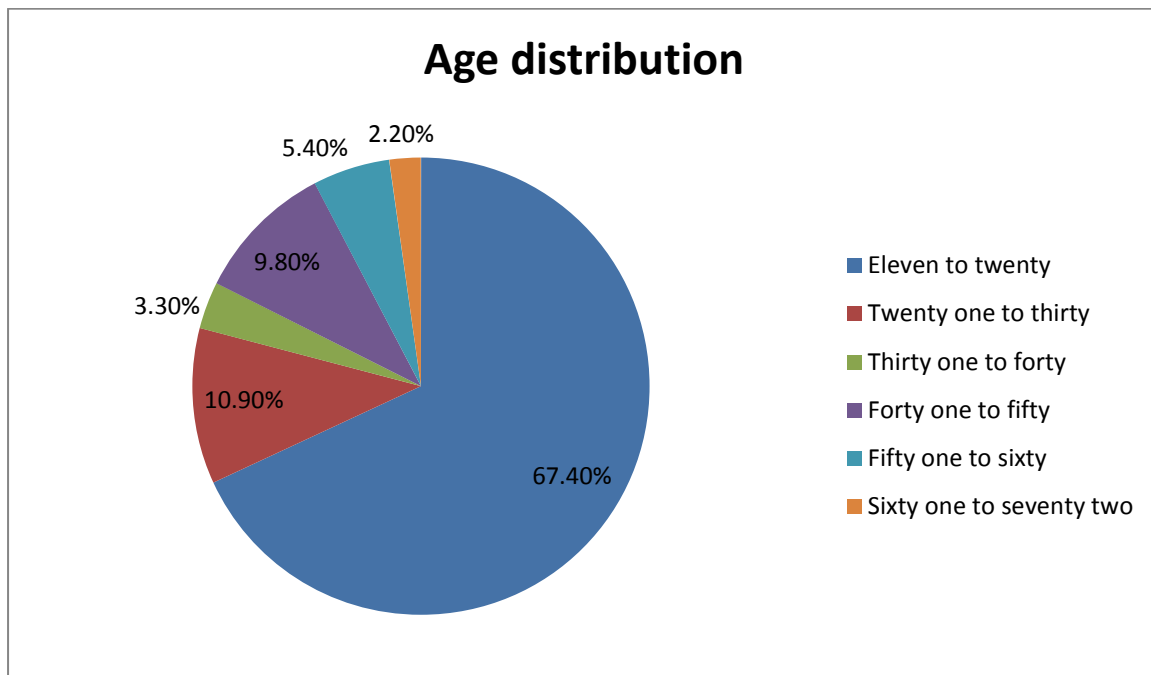
school. There were 24 teachers in total (25%). Among the teachers were two university students doing their teaching practicum as part of their training towards the teaching profession. Seven participants (8%) belonged to the category labeled as *other*. This category included members of support staff of the three schools: the kindergarten, the primary and the secondary school. These were secretaries, the schools' bursar, clerks, cleaners, and cooks. Among these, there were those members of staff who served all the three schools and those that served only one of the schools.

### **3.3.3.3. Age**

The age of the participants in the written questionnaire ranged from 11 years to 72 years. The majority of the participants, that is 61 (67%) of them, were between the ages of 11 and 19. These formed the secondary school student population of the participants in the questionnaire. All the 30 members of staff (33%) were above 20 years of age, and they were fairly evenly spread across the years. The highest number of participants sharing the same age was two.

To give a much better picture of the spread, there were 10 participants in the region of 21 to 30 years of age. Between 31 and 40 years of age, there were three participants. Nine participants were between 41 and 50 years of age. Between 51 and 60 years of age, there were five participants. Only one participant was 62 years old and another one participant was 72. The pie chart in figure 6 below illustrates the age distribution of the sample population that took part in the written questionnaire.

**Figure 3: Distribution by age of participants**



The data presented above clearly shows that the sample population was biased in terms of age. There were, by far, more young participants than older ones. However, this is not peculiar because in a school, you expect to find more of the younger people than the older ones. In other words, it is normal for a school like Viphya Schools to have more of the younger people, the learners, than the older ones, the members of the teaching and support staff as it is demonstrated here. This distribution also tends to fall in line with the assertion that African urban contact vernacular languages are more common among the youth than they are among the older population. This is also supported by the literature as demonstrated in this thesis.

**3.3.3.4. Home district**

The majority of the participants in the written questionnaire originated from Mzimba District in Northern Malaŵi. There were 41 of them (41.0%). These were seconded by 11 participants



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(12.1%) from Rumphi, a neighbouring district to Mzimba. In third position was another neighbouring district to Mzimba, Nkhata-Bay District, with a total of eight participants (8.8%). Five participants (5.5%) came from Karonga District, while 4 (4.4%) each came from Chitipa, Kasungu and the Capital, Lilongwe. Chikwawa District followed with 3 participants (3.3%). This was followed by Blantyre District with 2 participants, (2.2%). The rest of the districts represented in the questionnaire are Chiradzulu, Dowa, Mchinji, Mulanje, Nkhota-Kota, Ntcheu, Ntchisi and Thyolo. Each one of these districts had a single participant, giving a 1.1% representation. Also alone was a participant from Uganda who has grown up in Malawi.

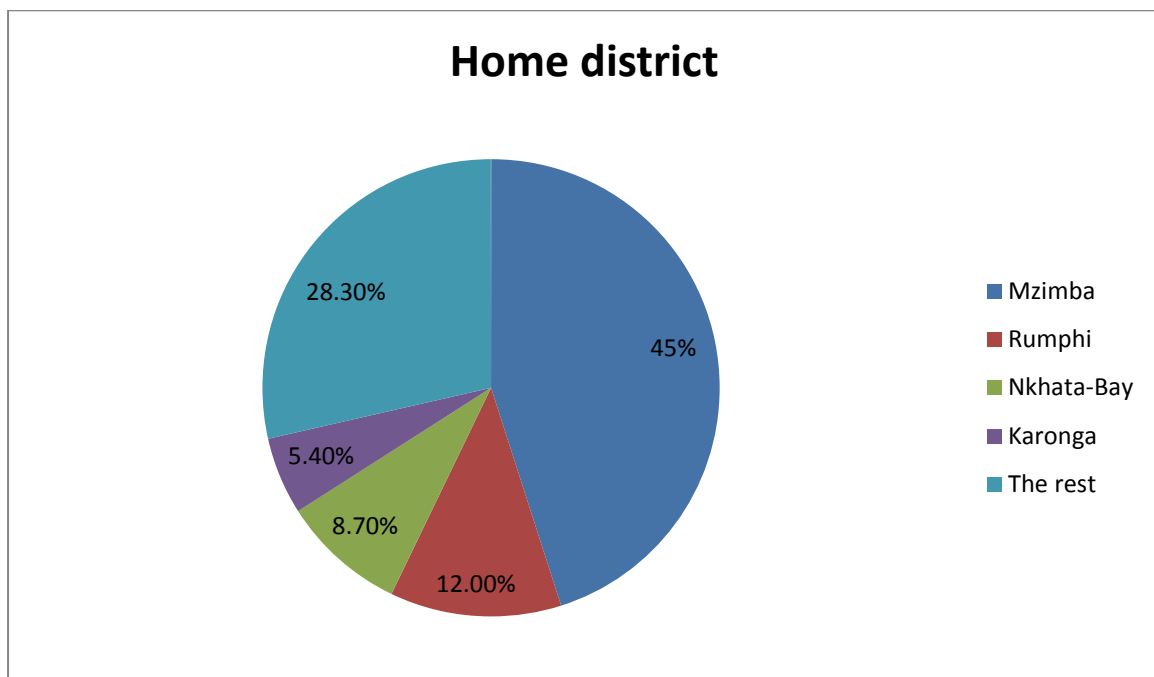
It can be seen that the participants in the case study were drawn from a wide diversity in terms of district of origin. The participants came from 17 out of the 28 districts of Malaŵi. As already shown, there was even one participant who came from outside Malaŵi, although they have grown up in the country. The inclusion of such diversity of the sample population in terms of district of origin was essential for this research. For instance, it was meant to help in determining whether or not Chibrazi was spoken by people who originated from different parts of Malaŵi and even outside the country. This diversity implies that the sample population in this study was also diverse in terms of a number of other aspects, for example language (as shown in the next sub section) and culture, that are to a large extent determined by place of origin, although there are some nuances in this regard.

However, it is important to note that the participants' districts of origin did not necessarily correspond with other aspects; for example, first language. There were some people who

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were identified by one district in terms of origin, yet they were linguistically not identified by the default first language of their representative district. It would have been more revealing if the questionnaire had included additional information such as places where participants were born and where they grew up. In the absence of that information, it is difficult to make strong conclusions on the basis of home district, even though the information is used as an indication that the research covered people of different districts of origin. See the figure below for an illustration of the statistics presented above.

*Figure 4: Distribution by home district*



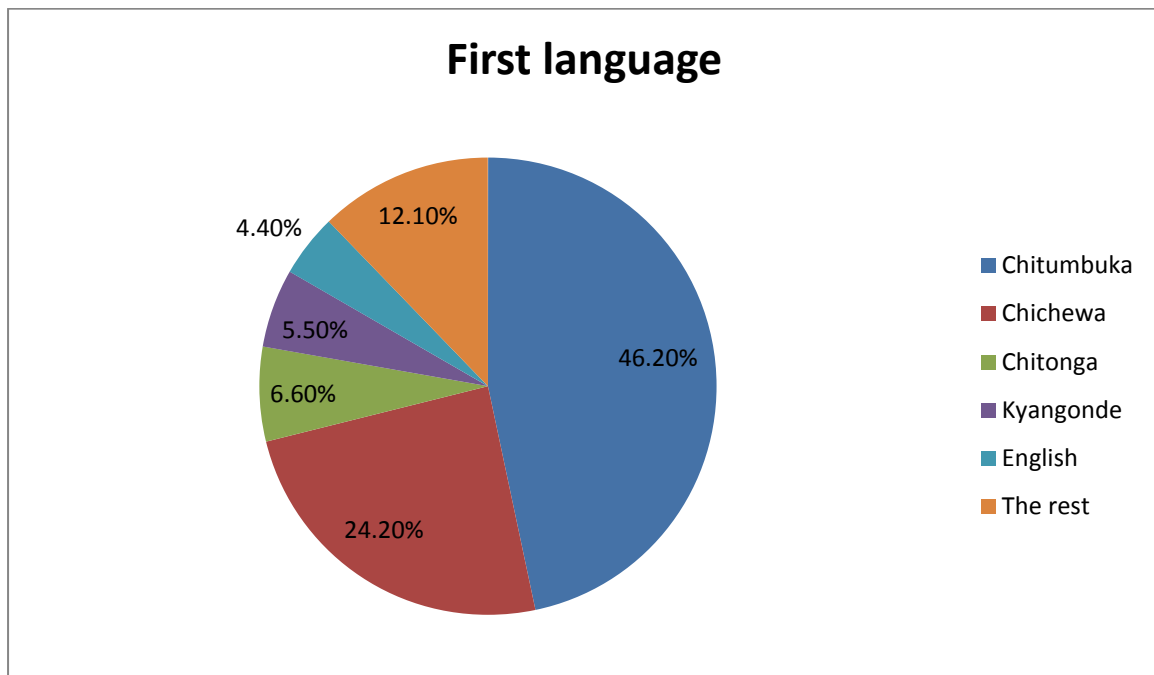
### ***3.3.3.5. First language***

On the part of linguistic background, the participants were diverse because they originated from different parts of Malaŵi. There is an important correlation between one's place (that is, district) of origin and one's mother tongue. Roughly speaking, one's mother tongue is

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determined by their place of origin. However, there are some instances where this does not apply. Therefore, it is important to bear in mind this ‘discrepancy’ between people’s home districts, which tend to presuppose their tribes and their languages as explained in the opening chapter of the thesis in this regard. The pie chart below shows the distribution of mother tongues among the sample population of the written questionnaire that was used in this case study.

*Figure 5: Distribution by first language*



The majority of the sample participant population in the written questionnaire, that is 42 of them (46.2%), claimed to speak Chitumbuka as their first language. The second majority mother tongue in the questionnaire sample was Chicheŵa, which had a representation of 22 participants (24.2%). Chitonga came as the third majority language in the questionnaire sample with 6 participants (6.6%). Chitonga was followed by Kyangonde, which was claimed

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as a mother tongue by five people (5.5%). English followed with a total population of 4 participants (4.4%). Following English were three languages, Chingoni or IsiZulu, Chindali and Chishona, each one of which was spoken as a mother tongue by 2 participants in the questionnaire (2.2%). On last position, there were five languages, Chiyawo, Chilomwe, Chisena, Chilambya and Chinyika. Each one of these languages was spoken as a mother tongue by one participant (1.1%). One participant did not indicate her or his mother tongue.

### ***3.3.3.6. Additional languages***

The discussion in this sub section also covers the data that is presented in the previous sub section because the two items are closely related. None of the participants in the written questionnaire was monolingual. In fact, many participants possessed more than two languages. All the languages that had been identified as mother tongues of participants in the written questionnaire as presented above were spoken as additional languages by other participants. Apart from these languages, there were several other languages that were spoken as additional languages by different participants. The other languages are Arabic, Bama, Chibemba, Chibrazi, Chindebele, Chinyakyusa, Chisenga, Chisukwa, French, Greek, Kiswahili, Pakistani, Latin, and Spanish. The data on additional languages is not presented statistically and graphically because there was so much variation among the participants that it was cumbersome to capture all the small details.

In terms of mother tongue and additional language, it can be seen that there was indeed a lot of linguistic diversity among the participants in the written questionnaire of the case study. There are three interesting points that emerged in respect to the question of language. First of all, it is surprising that not all learners included English as one of their languages. Even more

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interesting is the fact that ten participants did not mention it as one of their additional languages at all. It was expected in the present research that all participants in the case study would speak some level of English considering the fact that it is the official language of Malaŵi and the schools. This expectation was more pronounced with regard to the learners because English was the medium of instruction at the schools under study.

Secondly, although the majority of the participants in the case study claimed to speak Chibrazi also to different extents, only four participants included it as one of the languages in their linguistic repertoires. Hapter seven presents information that might explain this state of affairs. Another interesting point is that a few participants identified English as their mother tongue considering that it is not an indigenous language, although it has been in the country for a very long time.

The diversity in the written questionnaire sample population in terms of language came out very clearly, although some of the figures were very small. From a theoretical perspective, this point is very significant in that it is indicative of the multilingualism that existed within the sample population of the written questionnaire. This suggests that there was a level of contact among the various languages that were represented in the sample population. Hence, the institution can be seen as a ‘breeding ground’ for Chibrazi. In addition to that, the linguistic diversity among the participants in the written questionnaire provides a hint of the nature of the Chibrazi spoken at the schools under study or at least by the speakers of the language at the institution.

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As observed in the opening chapter of this thesis, Chibrazi is a mixed or hybrid language that combines elements from different languages. That being the case, it can be argued that the ‘Viphya Schools variety of Chibrazi’ could roughly be a conglomeration of the languages that were stated by the participants as presented in these two sub sections. As already indicated, the inclusion of such diversity in the linguistic repertoires of the sample population was important for the present research because it helped in determining the variation of the people who spoke Chibrazi in terms of language background.

However, as pointed out in the first chapter, it is important to note that the question of language is very tricky in the Malaŵian context. As linguists (for example, Kayambazinthu, 2003, 1999, 1995; Matiki, 2002; Kamwendo, 2000; Moto, 1994 and Kishindo, 1999, just to mention some) say, it is difficult to determine clear cut facts about this question as people have different understandings of the concepts like *mother tongue* or *first language*, *second language*, *home language*, *additional language* and other such terms that are employed in linguistics. Some of the participants seemed to have been confused by terms such as these, although these were explained to them. For instance, one interviewee referred to Chibrazi as a language in one breath, and in another, they said it was not a language. While some called it a dialect, others called it slang. It was generally obvious that such terms were not clear in people’s minds. This being the case, the data presented in this sub section need to be interpreted cautiously as the reality of matters is more complex than what it appears to be.

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### ***3.3.3.7. Areas of residence***

The participants in the written questionnaire were also asked to name the places where they stayed as they attended school or worked at the institution. It was found that the participants came from different places within the city of Mzuzu. The majority of the participants however, stayed within the schools' campus. This was so because the schools had housing facilities for some of the members of staff, especially teachers. Apart from that, there were also boarding facilities for some of the learners. The data obtained through this question was meant to partly provide an indication of the extent to which Chibrazi is spoken across Mzuzu City. The data was also meant to be used to gauge the extent to which the people of the Viphya Schools community interacted with people of other areas.

Generally, it was seen that the people of the Viphya Schools community interacted freely with people from other parts of the city. That was taken to imply that the language spoken by the members of the Viphya Schools community was influenced by the languages of people from other parts of the city and the country. The conclusion from the data obtained through this question would also have been more revealing if information about how exactly the places that the participants resided in influenced their language patterns in terms of Chibrazi.

### **3.3.4. Ethical clearance for the case study**

Because human beings were the subjects of this case study, ethical clearance was obtained before any data was solicited from the subjects. The literature on research design and methodology (see for example Davies, 2007 and Leedy and Ormrod, 2005) emphasises the need for researchers to make ethical considerations before embarking on any form of research

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involving human beings. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) outline four reasons for which ethical clearance is obtained before conducting research. All of these reasons apply in this research.

Firstly, ethical clearance was important in this case study to ensure that the subjects gave their informed consent to participate in the research. Informed consent was particularly important because participation in the study was voluntary. The participants participated in the study with their full knowledge and approval, something that is emphasised by Huysamen (1994) and they were not obliged to divulge any information that the research required from them. Secondly, ethical clearance was obtained in order to ensure that the subjects were protected from all kinds of harm that may be incurred in the course of research, although there were no particular psychological or physical harms that were anticipated in the present research. Thirdly, ethical clearance was obtained in order to enhance my acknowledgement of the subjects' right to privacy since the case study involved collecting personal information. Fourthly, I obtained ethical clearance as a matter of showing honesty with professional colleagues because this is common practice. In fact, ethical clearance was obtained in order to comply with the research requirements of the University of Pretoria.

The process of obtaining ethical clearance for this case study started with consultation with the administration of Viphya Schools, which included explaining the aim and the nature of the research. The clearance was given in the form of a letter indicating that the case study could be conducted at the schools as per the request submitted. This letter was used as reassurance of some of the subjects of the case study in persuading them to participate in the study. An agreement was made that after the research was complete, Viphya Schools would



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be informed of the results. A copy of this letter was submitted to the University of Pretoria's research committee.

In order to ensure that the participants were aware of what was expected of them, before any engagement with the participants, a short information session was held with them. In this session,

- Participants were informed of the aim and the nature of the case study;
- They were taken through the instruments of the case study;
- They were informed about the duration of their participation in the case study;
- They were informed that because participation was voluntary, it was their choice to be part of the case study and to stay thus; and
- They were guaranteed of anonymity and confidentiality regarding the information that they were going to supply in the case study.

Consent forms were issued to the participants to complete before their participation. There were four ways in which participants' consent was expressed depending on the characteristics of the different groups of participants. Participants of 18 years and over gave consent by themselves; hence they completed the consent forms by themselves. Participants below 18 who were staying with their parents or guardians or those who were staying in the schools' boarding facilities had to sign child assent forms. In addition to the child assent forms, they had to get their parents to sign the parents' consent forms. If their parents were not available, they had to get their guardians to sign the proxy consent forms. The consent forms are

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presented as part of the appendices to this thesis. All the consent forms that were completed were submitted to the University of Pretoria.

### 3.3.5. The pilot studies

Before embarking on the collection of data, three pilot studies were conducted. The questionnaire, the interview schedule, and the observation checklist that were used as data collection instruments, were pre-tested in order to determine their validity and their reliability. Validity refers to how well the instruments measure what they are meant to measure, while reliability refers to how replicable the instruments are. As Huysamen (1994: 197) puts it, “the purpose of such a pilot study is to investigate the feasibility of the proposed project and to detect possible flaws in the measurement procedures ...”. That is, if the instruments would be able to solicit the information required to address the questions for which they were designed.

Firstly, in formulating the items that were included in the data collection instruments, I undertook a rigorous process of designing and testing and redesigning and retesting. This process took place between August 2008 and June 2009. This process fits Huysamen’s description of piloting of a questionnaire (see Huysamen, 1994: 198). The process started with open ended questions on Chibrazi that I asked my friends both in Malaŵi and in South Africa, Pretoria. These are friends who knew and spoke Chibrazi. I communicated with some of these friends in face to face interaction and with others through telephone, email and social media. I used the most common responses that were provided by these friends together with my intuition of Chibrazi as alternative responses in the final multiple choice format that was used in the questionnaire.

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The common responses and my intuition were also used as the basis for drawing up the items in the follow up interviews and the observation guidelines. This ensured that the instruments provided for most, if not all, possible occurrences. At the same time, the instruments provided room for open ended responses. For instance, the option of *other* was included in most of the multiple choice questions in the questionnaire. This approach also ensured that the process of analysing the data that was obtained was simplified.

Secondly, the data collection instruments were piloted to 20 people in Pretoria, South Africa. This was finalised by June 2009. The subjects of this pilot study were of two groups. One group came from a ‘Malaŵian community’ located in Geraldsville in the outskirts of the metropolitan. A friend of mine, Medson Kafera, informed me that Malaŵian languages, including Chibrazi, formed a significant part of the linguistic repertoire of the residents of this community. He also told me that the residents were in touch with Malaŵi because they always visited their home from time to time, and because there were always new members coming in from Malaŵi, either to visit or to stay. I confirmed these two points through participant observation before embarking on the pilot study. I interacted with different members of this community thereby proving that indeed Chibrazi was part of the linguistic repertoire of the community. For these reasons, the chosen group for the pilot study was seen to be suitable in as far as Chibrazi was concerned.

The other group that participated in the pilot study comprised my Malaŵian friends who I knew were aware of the existence of Chibrazi and to speak Chibrazi and with whom I interacted in Chibrazi from time to time. Both groups of subjects were included in the pilot

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study also because, in as far as Chibrazi is concerned, they were deemed to have similar profiles as the profiles of the members of the Mzuzu University community who were the original target of the case study.

The data collection instruments were piloted in South Africa in order to cut on the cost of the research in terms of time and money because I was staying in South Africa at the time of the study. Twenty people were involved in the pilot study and they were all selected by means of convenient sampling. The first 20 people that were available to participate in the study were included. At this stage, I had established a sense of the validity and reliability of the data collection instruments. Unfortunately, I was denied the opportunity to conduct the case study at Mzuzu University. Therefore, I had to find a new location for the case study; that is Viphya Schools.

The change in the location of the case study necessitated that the data collection instruments should also be pretested in a second pilot study. The second pilot study was done in order to determine whether all the instruments would be effective because the profiles of the subjects were different from those of the subjects in the initial target location. The pilot study involved 30 members of the Viphya Schools community. These included teachers, members of support staff, and learners from the secondary and the primary school, who were also selected by means of convenient sampling. The second pilot study, which was conducted in December 2009, was arranged with the assistance of Mister Absalom Kamanga who had just retired from teaching at Viphya Schools. Mister Absalom Kamanga continued to play a significant role in liaising with the school authorities in the rest of the process of the case study.

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The second pre-test indicated that learners at primary school level were not capable of responding to the questionnaire effectively because some questions were beyond their conceptual level. As such, a decision was taken to change the questionnaire approach with regard to the learners at primary and kindergarten level. Thus, for the learners at primary school level, the questionnaire was simplified. The simplification of the questionnaire happened in two ways. Firstly, questions that were deemed to be difficult were removed from the questionnaire. Secondly, some difficult questions were replaced by others that were simpler for the group, but which asked for similar responses as the original ones. From this indication, it was deduced that the questionnaire would also be inappropriate for the learners at kindergarten level. Therefore, for the learners in kindergarten, instead of adapting the questionnaire, the questionnaire was simply scraped off as a method of data collection. In place of the questionnaire, observation was used, both through participating in conversation with them and ‘from a distance’.

After simplifying the questionnaire, attempts were made to interview the learners individually, but they proved futile as most of the learners felt shy to respond. It can be inferred that the reason behind the failure of individual interviews was linked to the schools’ language policy that forbade the use of vernacular languages within the school premises in order to enhance learners’ communication skills in English, which was the medium of instruction at the schools. In fact, the speaking of vernacular languages was punishable. This being the case, participants felt uncomfortable to engage in communication with me in or about vernaculars. So, it was decided that the participants were going to be interviewed as whole classes and during Chicheŵa periods because Chicheŵa is the local language that was

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taught as a subject at Viphya Schools. It was only during Chicheŵa periods that learners were allowed to use the vernacular language.

### **3.3.6. The questionnaire**

It has already been indicated that two versions of the questionnaire were used in this research. The one version was administered in written form to individual secondary school learners, teachers from all the schools, and members of the support staff for all the schools. A simplified version of the questionnaire was administered orally to two groups of primary school learners; one Standard 5 class and one Standard 8 class. The former is referred to as the written questionnaire, while the latter is called the oral questionnaire. The basic difference between the two types of questionnaire is that while participants in the written questionnaire completed the questionnaire individually and by themselves, participants in the oral questionnaire answered the questions in groups and orally. I recorded the oral sessions.

The latter might be seen as a modification of focused group interviews, but it is referred to as the oral questionnaire method because it made use of the questionnaire. I was assisted by the two members of the Statistics Department at the University of Pretoria, Ms. Joyce Jordaan and Ms. Nina Strydom in developing the final version of the written questionnaire. The two assisted in coding the questionnaire items and structuring the questionnaire in order to ease the job of capturing and analysing the responses to the questionnaire. I worked on the simplified questionnaire on my own.

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The questionnaire method was utilised to ensure that a lot of data was gathered from the sample so that the conclusions that would be generated could be reasonably related to other cases similar to the one under study. The method produced data that was summarised through statistical analysis. The sub section on data analysis below provides further details. In particular, the method produced information that was interpreted on the basis of the dimensions of variation that are outlined above.

While the questionnaire method provided information on almost all the specific objectives of this research, it was mainly focused on determining the speakers of Chibrazi; determining the participants' exposure to Chibrazi; providing some examples of Chibrazi; and describing the participants' perceptions of Chibrazi. The questionnaire aimed to solicit information about the participants' perception of Chibrazi in terms of their description of Chibrazi; the impact of Chibrazi; legislation around Chibrazi; functions of Chibrazi; people's liking of Chibrazi; the popularity of Chibrazi; appropriateness of Chibrazi, and the socioeconomic importance of Chibrazi.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts that were labeled Section A, Section B and Section C. The first section of the questionnaire solicited the demographic information of the participants in the case study, which is presented in the sub section on dimensions of variation above. The second section of the questionnaire tackled different questions that are generally classified as asking about people's exposure to Chibrazi. The findings from the questions in this section of the questionnaire are presented in Chapter five of the thesis and they are used to answer the question: who speaks the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi.

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The last section of the questionnaire contained questions about people's perceptions about Chibrazi including their attitude towards the mixed language. The findings from these questions are presented in Chapter Seven of the thesis. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the appendix.

The literature on research design and research methodology (see for example, Yin, 2009; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007; Leedy and Ormrod, 2005; Denzin, 2003; Cohen and Manion, 1994; Brannen, 1992; Mouton and Marais, 1992; and Jack, 1979) presents a number of advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire as a data collection method. Below are some of the advantages that were key in using the questionnaire in this research.

The first advantage is that respondents were free to provide information because they were assured that their identities were going to remain anonymous. Participants were not required to state their names, although they indicated other personal information. In addition to that, the participants did not indicate their exact ages. Rather, they indicated their ages in the form of ranges. In this way, their ages were disguised because age is one of the most sensitive pieces of personal information that might make people uncomfortable to divulge.

The second advantage of using the questionnaire is that the participants had the choice of responding to the questionnaire at the time that suited them most in the places of their choice. If the participants had been pressurised to complete the questionnaires at certain times, the



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response rate might not have been as good as it was because people generally have their own priorities and they do not like being ‘ordered around’.

The third advantage is that because the questionnaire was structured, it was easy for the participants to complete. Most of the questionnaire items required the participants to simply choose the response that applied to them from a list of possible responses. The questionnaire items were formulated as multiple choice questions. The fact that the questionnaire was structured also made the analysis of the data obtained through it easy because there was uniformity in the range of participants’ responses.

The use of the questionnaire in this research was not without disadvantages. The first disadvantage of the questionnaire method is that structured questionnaires are not flexible because they require respondents to respond according to the prescribed structure. Therefore, the responses that were given might be perceived as being shallow because the respondents could not explain themselves. But, the questionnaire in this research provided some room for openness by providing the option of *other* for most of the multiple choice items where the possibility of answers that would be different from the ones provided was envisaged.

The second disadvantage is that questionnaires depend a lot on the communication skills of the researcher and the respondents. That being the case, two things could have happened. Firstly, either the respondents might have misunderstood or misinterpreted the questions. This might have led them to providing the wrong or inappropriate answers. Secondly, I as the researcher might have misunderstood or misinterpreted the respondents’ answers. This might

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have led me to making the wrong or inappropriate interpretations of the data. Either way, the overall quality of the research might have been affected. This is why I took the respondents through the questionnaire before letting them answer it; and I urged them to ask for clarification in cases where they found certain questions to be unclear. The respondents in this research took advantage of this opportunity such that where they encountered difficulties, they sought clarification. That being the case, it can be said that there were no cases of communication breakdown in as far as the questionnaire in this research was concerned.

The other disadvantage is that because participants were given the freedom to respond to the questionnaire at their chosen time and place, I could not guarantee that the participants were going to actually respond. I could also not guarantee the authenticity of the responses of the participants because I did not bear witness as to who actually responded to the questionnaire. I did not have much control over who responded to the questionnaire and if indeed they did. The data that was obtained through this method was taken on the trust that it came from the participants in the case study. The fact that some of the questionnaires were not returned by people who had indicated willingness to participate in the research could be attributed to this disadvantage of the method.

It is because of such disadvantages of the questionnaire method that the present research employed other data collection methods. This way the impact of the shortfalls in the questionnaire method was mitigated by the strengths of other methods. For instance, while it was not possible to guarantee the authenticity of the questionnaire responses, in the follow up interviews, which are discussed below, authenticity was not an issue.

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I personally administered all the questionnaires to the subjects over a period of three months: from January 2010 to March 2010. This was during school session. This time was chosen in order to have easy access to the student group of the sample population because I could only get them in one place during term time. In particular, the questionnaire was distributed to the student population of the research sample during class times.

I was granted permission to go into individual classes to take the learners through the requirements as specified in the ethical clearance. Then the learners who chose to participate in the study were taken through the questionnaire itself in order to clarify issues of understanding. Thereafter, the participating learners were given copies of the questionnaire and the relevant consent and child assent forms. One learner in each class was assigned the responsibility to collect the completed documents on days that were agreed upon by the classes. All this was done in order to maximise the response rate and to ensure that the participants were as comfortable as possible to complete the questionnaire. Teachers played an important part in assisting to facilitate this process.

As for the staff population of the sample, the questionnaire was administered at the convenient times of individual participants, but during office hours in order to cater for easy access. The best times for administering the questionnaire were negotiated with the administrative personnel of the respective Viphya schools (pre-school, primary school and secondary school) at the onset of the data collection exercise. The members of staff were taken through a similar process to that which the learner participants were taken through, but

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individually. While some of them answered and submitted the questionnaires on the days that they received them, others stayed with the questionnaires a bit longer before submission.

A total of 120 questionnaires were handed out. Out of these, 92 were responded to and returned to me. However, 91 questionnaires were analysed because one was nullified due to anomalies on the part of the respondent. Some of the questionnaires were handed back unanswered, while others were not handed back. The reasons why questionnaires were not answered or not returned were not established. It can be inferred that the people who returned the questionnaire unanswered might probably have changed their minds about participation in the study, something which was provided for in the research. All the participants in the written questionnaire, except for two, completed the questionnaire on their own. The two had to be assisted in reading the questions and writing the answers. I did that for them.

As explained above, after the second pilot study, a decision was taken to administer a simplified version of the questionnaire orally rather than in written form to the primary school learners. In addition to that, instead of administering this version of the questionnaire individually, the questionnaire was administered in groups of learners in their classes. Therefore, another 74 participants responded orally to the simplified version of the questionnaire. This group comprised primary school pupils, for whom the written form of the questionnaire was seen to be rather complicated as explained above. Two classes were involved. The participants in these two classes were interviewed as whole classes because that way they felt 'safe' to participate.

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With this group, I first explained the research process to the individual classes and asked them if they were willing to participate in the study. Fortunately, all the members in both classes agreed to participate. Thereafter, each learner was given a copy of the relevant consent and child assent form. I returned to the individual classes when I was given confirmation that all the learners had brought back the consent and child assent forms. Then only did I actually administer the questionnaire. In a way, this approach to the questionnaire method resembles the focused group interview method, which is described in the next subsection. Both sessions were audio recorded to ensure that the participants' responses were captured accurately.

It is important to note that while this modification of the questionnaire method may be seen to have rather compromised the quality of the data collected, there is some important information that was established from the data collected through the method. The compromise emanated from the fact that instead of obtaining information from individual participants, information was obtained collectively. This means that in some cases, some participants were denied the chance to voice out their responses as they were overshadowed by the responses of others.

For example, in some cases, while it was clear that there was both *yes* and *no* in response to a particular question, it was difficult to determine how many participants went with *yes* and how many went with *no*. An attempt was made to establish this through the means of showing hands, but it was later discovered that the participants were not consistent. As such, the results obtained from the modified method are not accurate. However, this approach to

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the questionnaire method still generated a lot of information that was used in this research. The information was mainly used by way of corroborating the data that was obtained in the written questionnaire.

### 3.3.7. Interviews

Other data for the present research was collected through semi-structured interviews. Invitation to participate in the follow up interviews was extended to all the people who had participated in the questionnaire. Different people that were drawn from the sample that responded to the questionnaire were interviewed in order to beef up the information that was collected from the questionnaire. Various follow-up questions, aimed at soliciting finer details about the data collected from the questionnaire, were designed to guide the interviews. Mostly, these questions sought to find out the how and the why part of the questions in the questionnaire. This was necessary because the options that were provided in the questionnaire were closed; hence, there was no opportunity for the participants to explain themselves in detail. In addition to that, the interviews gave the research the opportunity to verify whether or not the participants knew what Chibrazi was and whether or not they possessed some competence and or performance in the mixed language. The guidelines for the interviews are also included in the appendix of this thesis.

It had been envisaged that the interviews would be conducted in Chicheŵa, Chitumbuka or English<sup>6</sup>. However, the interviews were conducted in Chicheŵa, Chibrazi or English, or a combination of all of the three, depending on the choice of the (individual) interviewees.

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<sup>6</sup> The rationale for the initial selection of the three languages is that Chicheŵa is the national language of Malaŵi and it is taught at the schools, English is the official language of the country and it is a medium of instruction at the schools, apart from being taught as a subject, while Chitumbuka is the regional language of Northern Malaŵi.

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Chitumbuka was neither used by the participants nor by me. Chibrazi came up in the course of the interviews, especially those with the learners. In this regard, the interviews provided opportunities for observing the participants in real time use of Chibrazi as well. Deliberate efforts were employed to prompt the participants to use some Chibrazi in the course of the interviews, again; in order to determine whether or not the participants used the mixed language.

Two scenarios presented in as far as the observer's paradox is concerned. In the first scenario, some participants got very excited to showcase their Chibrazi repertoire. In the other scenario, some participants appeared to feel 'ashamed' to use the mixed language. However, the purpose was served either way: the participants demonstrated whether or not they spoke the mixed language. The absence of Chitumbuka from the interviews was not peculiar. It was also absent in other contexts that I carried out observation. This occurrence supports the observation that is made in the opening chapter of this thesis that even though Chitumbuka is the regional lingua franca of Northern Malaŵi, Chicheŵa, as the national language, is very popular.

The interviews were conducted in two ways. One group of respondents was interviewed individually, while another group was interviewed in groups. The former constitute what are referred to as individual interviews, while the latter constitute what are referred to as focused group interviews. All learners were interviewed in groups apart from one learner. The learners preferred to be interviewed in this way than individually. It appeared that learners

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felt freer to express themselves ‘under the protection of their colleagues’ than if they were to be interviewed individually. Boys formed one group and girls formed another.

Members of staff however, did not have any problems being interviewed individually just like the one learner. So, all of them were interviewed individually. Both methods succeeded in gathering the data that was required. All the follow up questions were asked in both cases. Efforts were made to ensure that every member of the groups participated in each question. However, the data would have been more revealing if all the participants had been interviewed individually because there are chances that the members of the groups could have influenced each other somehow. For example, it could be that one participant responded in a particular way because another responded in a particular way. I tape-recorded and later transcribed all the interviews myself. As mentioned already, a total of twenty participants were interviewed in this research. All in all, the method was a success because it provided the additional information that was required.

### **3.3.8. Observation in the case study**

The subjects who participated in the questionnaire and the follow up interviews were mainly observed in the course of administering the questionnaire and conducting the interview. Non-subjects were included in the observation because naturally, there were times when they were in conversation with the subjects of the case study. It was not possible to separate the subjects who participated in the questionnaire and interviews from those who did not outside of the administration of the questionnaire and the interviews. Every available opportunity to access Chibrazi in use was utilised.



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The most important times during which observations of members of the Viphya Schools' community were made was break time, after classes, during extra mural activities, and weekend. People were observed as they naturally interacted within the school set up as well as outside the school set up. Observations were also done during times when students were having training in various sports disciplines such as volleyball, netball and football. There were also two occasions during weekends when the secondary school's teams had games with teams from other secondary schools, and two occasions on which other entertainment activities were held. The latter two were a disco and a variety show. Observation was done on both of the inter school sports occasions as well as the disco and the variety show. The students in boarding school were also observed during meal times.

The information that was collected from observation can be categorised into two in terms of ethical procedure. The first category is that of information that was collected with permission from the people involved. The other category is that of information that was obtained without the permission of the people involved. This was mainly done to allow for diversity in the contexts from which Chibrazi was recorded. Generally, the ethical clearance for the information that was collected outside of the case study was not formal, while that of the information gathered within the case study was formal.

One other important point to raise regarding observation is that even when permission of the people involved was granted, it was difficult to make tape recordings of some of the conversations for a number of reasons. For instance, attempts to tape record conversations tended to interfere with people's freedom to participate in conversation. The other challenge

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was the interference of noise in public places and during events. The best opportunities to properly record Chibrazi in use were during the follow up interviews and the oral version of the questionnaire.

One point needs to be clarified in relation to the use of observation as a data collection technique in the case study. The observation method included both people participating in the case study and people that were not involved in the case study of the present research. This was done in order to include as much general information about Chibrazi as possible because other specific objectives of the research are not restricted to the case study. One good example in this case is the description of the linguistic strategies that are used in the creation of the lexicon of Chibrazi. In addition to that, while the Viphya Schools community might to a certain extent be representative of the greater part of the Malaŵian society at large in terms of factors such as linguistic, geographical and generational diversity, it does not necessarily represent the whole fine gradation of the country. For instance, it does not include soldiers, vendors, minibus drivers, conductors and ‘call boys’ (just to mention some), who are all significant players in Chibrazi. That being the case, the research had to cast the net beyond the Viphya Schools community in order to gather more information.

### **3.4. Data analysis**

The data that was obtained from the questionnaire was analysed using the computer programme Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). In this regard, I was assisted by two members of the Statistics Department at the University of Pretoria, Ms. Joyce Jordaan and Ms. Nina Strydom. Considering that this research is descriptive by nature, SPSS provided the opportunity for employing cross tabulation that was used in the analysis. The programme

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includes descriptive statistics. The data that was obtained in the case study, which belongs to various categories as per the questions that were asked, was summarised into contingency tables. The tables provided a picture of the interrelationships and interactions among the key variables in the case study. It is these interrelationships and interactions among the variables that are discussed in the present research.

I personally analysed the data obtained from the other data collection instruments manually. This included transcribing the data from the follow up interviews and summarizing the main points from the follow up interviews, the observations, copying the examples provided in the questionnaire, and analysing the Chibrazi linguistic items. The data on the Chibrazi linguistic items was analysed thematically in line with the specific objectives of the research. For example, the Chibrazi linguistic items were analysed in terms of the processes through which they are created. The analysis also included making links between and among the different pieces of information obtained through this research mainly for purposes of corroboration.

In interpreting this data, I used the contextual information that was captured alongside the specified data. Details of the contexts in which the data was recorded are provided in the course of the discussion of the data. In addition to that, I used my personal knowledge of Chibrazi and other Malaŵian languages. It should be noted in this regard, that I possess mother tongue competence and performance in Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka. Hence, I know Chicheŵa Chibrazi, Chitonga Chibrazi and Chitumbuka Chibrazi, which are explained later in the thesis. I also know other Malaŵian languages to varying degrees. These languages include Chiyawo, Chilomwe, Chingoni, Chisena, Chisenga, Chilambya, and

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Chinkhonde. I also have varied competencies in the following languages from outside Malaŵi: Chibemba, Chishona, isiNdebele, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Setswana, Sesotho, Sepedi, Kiswahili, French, Esperanto, Chinese, Tshivenda and Xitsonga.

One important point to note is that the statistical analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire was restricted to the participants who took part in the written questionnaire. The analysis of the data from the participants who answered the simplified version of the questionnaire orally and as groups did not include figures since they responded in groups, which rendered it impossible for precise data to be obtained. The only accurate information about these participants that is included in the analysis is on gender and occupation.

As already indicated, attempts were made to obtain other information through the schools' records. However, this was not possible because this was reported to be privileged information. As such, while in some cases intelligent guesses were made about this information, in other cases, such information was simply ignored, even though it is recognised that that may be said to have compromised the quality of the data obtained. In some cases, data obtained from this group was included in the analysis because it added more information to the data obtained from the written questionnaire. Nevertheless, because the bulk of the data used in this research came from the written questionnaire, the overall quality of this research was not compromised.

### **3.5. Challenges encountered in the research**

The following are some of the challenges that were encountered in this research:

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- The change in the location of the case study posed a problem not only because it wasted time, but also because several adjustments needed to be made to the research methods in general and the data collection instruments in particular.
- It appears that a good number of the participants in the questionnaire had problems answering certain questions, especially in Section C. Some respondents left out certain questions in this section. However, this did not adversely affect the quality of the data that was gathered, although the results would have been more comprehensive if this section of the questionnaire had been answered by all participants.
- The fact that some of the observations that were included in the research were not tape recorded cost the research vital information that could have added a lot of value to the research.

However, the challenges encountered in this research did not adversely affect the quality of this research overall.

### 3.6. Conclusion

The present research included all the methods presented in this chapter in order to ensure that as much information on Chibrazi as possible was collected. This was done in order to provide a comprehensive description of the mixed language under study as per the aim of the research. Data obtained from one method was corroborated by data obtained from another method. For example, the data that was solicited from the follow-up interviews corroborated the data that was obtained from the questionnaire and through observation. It should be appreciated that while the questionnaire provided information that revealed the general patterns regarding the mixed language under study, the follow-up interviews and observation solicited finer information that was used to thrash out the details underlying those patterns, which added to the information obtained from the theoretical analysis.

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As it can be inferred from the general questions that the research set out to investigate, while some information could be gathered relatively easily and directly, other information could only be solicited when respondents explained themselves, and other information could only be gathered when respondents were observed. Through this corroboration, the data that was obtained was made more meaningful and more informative to the study. This consequently enhanced the validity and reliability of the research. Therefore, the results of the study can be more reasonably generalised within the confines of the research design and research methodology that were employed in this research than would have been the case if only one method was employed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE ORIGINS OF CHIBRAZI

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter explores how Chibrazi can be interpreted in terms of its origins. In doing that, the chapter starts by recapturing the conception that Chibrazi is a product of language contact. Thereafter, the chapter provides a brief history of urbanisation in Malaŵi to show that urbanisation has influenced the contact among the languages. Following from there, the chapter demonstrates that the migration of the people of Malaŵi for employment both within the country and to other parts of the world has also played a part in influencing the contact. Then Chibrazi is discussed in relation to the part that education has played in the development of the mixed language. After that, a more detailed description of the country's language policy and how it has influenced language contact and the development of Chibrazi is presented. Factors that have influenced the spread of the mixed language are discussed after that. The chapter closes with a brief discussion of a sample of the mixed language just to show what Chibrazi is and to show how much the mixed language has penetrated the Malaŵian linguistic landscape.

It should be remembered that the origins of Chibrazi have not been explicated through research. This is not surprising considering that the mixed language is not linked to any tribe in the country and it does not have a written tradition. In addition to that, the mixed language is a fairly recent phenomenon and it has not received much scholarly attention. However, this situation is not peculiar to Chibrazi. The origins of other African urban contact vernaculars

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that have been sampled in this study are also not well known. In many instances, scholars have established the origins of the mixed languages on the basis of different factors that are related to the development of contact induced languages. Some of the factors are migration, urbanisation and industrialisation. This research has cited scholars such as Beck (2010), Bosire (2006), Kiessling and Mous (2004), and Msimang (1987) in discussing factors such as these.

Literature on the two South African urban contact vernaculars, Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho, was used as a good illustration of how urban contact vernaculars develop in as far as urbanisation and industrialisation are concerned. Studies such as Motshega, 2005; Ntshangase, 2004; Molamu, 2003, McComick, 2002; Slabbert, 1994; and Msimang, 1987 presented good cases in this point. Both of these mixed languages developed as a result of urbanisation and industrialisation, which in turn influenced migration of people from different areas to the mine areas mainly for economic reasons. The sub sections that follow explicate the Malaŵian situation further.

Since “the birth of a language ... can be declared only retrospectively, when its separate existence ... is recognised relative to its proto-variety and/or other related ones” (Mufwene, 2006:4), this research proposes that the origins of Chibrazi can also be established in ways similar to how the origins of other African urban contact vernaculars have been established. In this regard, the review of the literature played a significant part in establishing the link between the mixed language and the history of the country. The study also used information that was solicited through other data collection methods that were used in this research. For



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example, the names that are given to the mixed language and the contexts in which Chibrazi was first encountered and in which it is commonly used, as obtained from the questionnaire, were used as hints for determining the possible origins of the mixed language. Apart from that, the discussions that have been advanced on the origins of other African urban contact vernaculars in the literature were also used to establish the origins of Chibrazi. In other words, this study presents a hypothesis that can be used in interpreting Chibrazi in terms of its possible origins. The discussion of the origins of Chibrazi proceeds mainly by establishing links across such factors as urbanisation, industrialisation, migration, education and the country's language policy.

It should be pointed out that the idea behind this chapter is to present a generic approach that can be used to interpret Chibrazi in terms of its origins. Because of unavailability of specific documentations regarding the mixed language, it is difficult to pin down the approach to certain specifics about the exact language contact situation. The etymology of specific linguistic items within Chibrazi would give more insight in terms of the specific languages involved. The next chapter, which discusses some of the common processes through which the vocabulary of the mixed language is created, provides some of that insight.

## **4.2. Chibrazi as a product of language contact**

It has been indicated in this research that in general, Chibrazi is a manifestation of language change. More particularly, it has been indicated that the mixed language is a manifestation of language change that is caused by language contact. Hence, the mixed language is presented as a product of contact induced language change. It has been shown that the literature on language contact presents different outcomes that emanate from language change depending

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on the degree and nature of contact; that is, depending on the influence that languages or speech varieties exert on one another.

Three of the outcomes of language change have been outlined in the theoretical framework. These are language maintenance, language shift and the creation of new contact languages. The mixed language under study has been identified as belonging to the category of language change that involves the creation of new contact languages and that it is a multilingual mixed language. However, it has been pointed out that while Chibrazi is a new contact language, it manifests attributes of the other two types of language change as well.

It has also been stated in this research that there is general agreement in the literature that African urban contact vernaculars have their origins in language contact within urban centers that have developed as a result of industrialisation, urbanisation and migration. Beck (2010), Bosire (2006), Kiessling and Mous (2004), and Msimang (1987) have been cited as some of the examples in this regard. In Malaŵi, migration due to urbanisation and industrialisation has taken place mainly around the cities of Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba. These four cities and other urban and industrial centers in Malaŵi are the engine rooms for education, manufacturing, production, innovation, culture, and economic activities that generate wealth and opportunities and contribute to the national gross domestic product (United Nations Human Settlement Programme, 2012). These centers have created environments that are conducive for the development of Chibrazi because of multilingualism and multiculturalism, which have come about because of the influence of urbanisation and industrialisation both of which influence migration. These two phenomena are ‘preliquisites’ to the development of new contact languages.

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A lot of people have migrated from their original (rural) areas into these urban areas in search of better livelihoods because there are more economic activities in urban areas than there are in rural areas. As Beck (2010: 12) observes “... cities magnetically attract people ...” because “... they are places that give emergence to a new, autonomous modernity. It should be noted however, that apart from the four major cities of Malaŵi, industrialisation and urbanisation have taken place in several other locations across the country and these have created similar effects in as far as Chibrazi is concerned.

Depending on their geographical locations and social backgrounds, people within these industrial centers have been exposed to both colonial and indigenous languages as well as cosmopolitan urban cultures that have necessitated the creation of Chibrazi. Different people in different such locations have been exposed to the colonial and indigenous languages as well as cosmopolitan urban cultures to different degrees and in different manners. As a result of that, there are variations across the urban and industrial centers. The creation of Chibrazi implies that there is a transition from the original indigenous set up to the cosmopolitan set up. This imposes a different kind of ethnicity in the areas where urbanisation and industrialisation have taken place. In this regard, Beck observes that the new modernity “... enters into competition with the old colonial and postcolonial patterns” (Beck, 2010: 12).

With regard to this transition, this study has made reference to Bosire’s (2006) observation that the youth, who are the master crafters of urban contact vernaculars, are caught up in this transition whereby they find themselves belonging to two worlds. Therefore, Chibrazi can be said to be a means of expressing this duality, which in a way is a new ethnicity; just like other African urban contact vernaculars that have been cited in this research. As it has been

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explained further in the theoretical framework, whenever people of different origins come together, they seek means of breaking any communication barriers that may exist among them. In the communities where the African urban contact vernaculars cited in this research have evolved, some of the barriers to communication are created by colonialism and post colonialism. People in the centers of urbanisation and industrialisation in Malaŵi can also be said to have experienced barriers to communication such as these. Thus, the development of Chibrazi can partly be attributed to the need for breaking communication barriers among the people in these centers.

In Malaŵi, the communication barriers arose mainly because of lack of mutual intelligibility among the languages that were spoken not only in the urban centers, but in other parts of the country as well. Lack of mutual intelligibility between Chicheŵa and Chitumbuka is a good example. The radio programme *Bwalo la alimi*, which is aired on the Malaŵi Broadcasting Corporation, is probably archetypal in terms of lack of mutual intelligibility between Chicheŵa and Chitumbuka. In one instance of the programme, a Chitumbuka speaking farmer was asked the question, “*Kodi ng’ombe zanu zi mumazisamala bwanji?*” In English, this question means “How do you take care of your cattle?” However, because the interviewee did not understand Chicheŵa well, he went on and explained how fast his cattle could run, even providing specific examples thereby causing a total breakdown in communication. The breakdown in communication here was caused by the fact that the word *samala*, which means “take care” in Chicheŵa, means “run” in Chitumbuka. Moyo (2001: 142) provides two other good examples of such breakdown in communication between a speaker of Chicheŵa and a speaker of Chitumbuka. A lot of other examples can be cited in this regard, but space will not allow for that. After all, the question of mutual intelligibility among Malaŵian languages is not among the objectives of this research.

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It is also important to point out that in Malaŵi, it is very common that when two or more people who speak different languages communicate, they tend to choose one of their languages rather than speaking their respective languages. Because Chicheŵa was made the national language and thus spoken across the country, it tends to be the default language that many people fall back on in such instances. That implies that there are a lot of chances of contact between Chicheŵa and other languages. This study cannot, however, answer the question of whether or not Chibrazi developed as a pidgin because that is beyond the objective of the study. Suffice it to mention that Chibrazi has developed as a result of the sustained contact among the different languages of the country.

### **4.3. Urbanisation in Malaŵi**

As already indicated, the history of the development of Chibrazi is linked to the history of migration that was caused by urbanisation and industrialisation in Malaŵi. This sub section presents a brief history of the four cities of Malaŵi in order to show that urbanisation and industrialisation have influenced contact among different groups of people thereby inducing contact among their languages. The information that is presented in this section is largely taken from reports on Malaŵi's urban profiling that were prepared by the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (2012 and 2011) and which were collected by the National Statistics Office through the national population censuses of 1966, 1977, 1987, 1998 and 2008. The reports that were published by the office in 2009 and 2003 were particularly important in this regard.

Malaŵi is said to be experiencing one of the highest urbanisation rates in Africa, at about 4.7% per annum. The urban centers are said to be hosting 15% to 20% of the national

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population. Over 60% of the urban dwellers are reported to live in unplanned settlements and slums. The country has a very youthful population. Almost three quarters of the population are less than 30 years of age and 52% of the total population is below 18 years of age. It is further said that this population presents opportunities for development because of its youthfulness. The population of the country has grown from 4 039 583 in 1966 to 13 077 160 in 2008. The population is projected to reach 16 310 431 in 2015; 19 104 275 in 2020; and 26 090 975 in 2030. The population in urban areas has grown from 209 327 in 1966 to 2 003 309 in 2008. It is expected to reach 4 048 000 in 2015; 5 240 000 in 2020; and 8 395 000 in 2030. The proportion of national population in urban areas has grown from 5.21% in 1966 to 15.30% in 2008. It is projected to grow up to 22.50% in 2015; 25.30% in 2020; and 32.40% in 2030.

Blantyre City is the oldest urban center in Malaŵi. It was established by the Scottish Missionaries in the 1870s and it was declared a planning area in 1897. The city has experienced high population growth over the years. The city's population has increased from 109 461 in 1966 to 661 258 in 2008. The population of the city is projected to be 813 457 in 2015 and 1 068 681 in 2020. The city's population has been growing at the annual rate of 2.8%. The population density was estimated at 2 280 people per square kilometer in 1998 and 3 006 in 2008.

As the hub for communication, commercial activities and cooperation in Malaŵi, the main economic activities of the city fall within the categories of finance, retail trade, construction, transport, food, textile manufacturing, motor vehicle sales, maintenance, and the informal sector. The industrial sites are located in Chirimba, South Lunzu, Makata, Maone, Limbe,

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Maselema, and Ginnery Corner. The influence of Blantyre declined when Lilongwe became the capital city in 1975, but it still remains the commercial capital of the country. Over 70% of the city's population (476 197) lives in informal settlements, which occupy about 23% of the land in the city. There are 22 unplanned residential areas in the city. Poverty stands at 24%, while unemployment stands at 8%. The population of Ndirande for example, has grown from 109 461 in 1966 to 661 256 in 2008. It is estimated to reach 1 068 681 in 2015.

Lilongwe, which is divided into four sectors; Old Town, Capital Hill, Kanengo and Lumbadzi, is the largest city in the country. It became the administrative capital of Malaŵi in 1975 after relocating from Zomba. Lilongwe was mainly an administrative center until 2005 when many head offices of institutions that were located in Blantyre moved to the city. This movement attracted economic activities to the city, which resulted in increased employment opportunities and population growth. Ever since then, the city has witnessed a high rate of urbanisation and industrialisation. The population of Lilongwe City has grown from 19 425 in 1966 to 669 021 in 2008, with an annual growth rate of 4.3% between 1998 and 2008. It was projected that the population would be at 1 077 116 in 2015 and 1 324 314 in 2020. The population of Lilongwe represents a 5.2% share of the national population. The average population density of the city is 1 479. In 2008, Area 25 had the highest population in the city at 64 650, followed by Areas 7, 21, 23 and 36, all of which had more than 40 000 residents each. Poverty stands at about 25% and unemployment stands at 16%. Over 76% of Lilongwe City's residents live in informal settlements. The population in the informal settlements has grown from 82 180 in 1987 to 277 762 in 2005.

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The main economic activities of Lilongwe are finance, banking, retail trade, construction, transport, public administration, tourism, and tobacco manufacturing. In terms of employment, the majority of the residents of Lilongwe are in the informal sector, although there is no sufficient data on this. The private sector employs 40% of the city's population. About 27% of the city's population is employed by the civil service, while 24% are self-employed.

The third city of Malaŵi is Mzuzu. The city is described as one of the fastest growing cities in Malaŵi and it is the third largest urban center after Lilongwe and Blantyre. The city originated as a Tung oil estate in 1947 covering 23 square kilometers. Over the years, the city has grown considerably. In 2008, the city covered 143.8 square kilometers. Mzuzu became a municipality in 1980 and a city in 1985. It is the hub of government administration, business, industry, commerce, and services for the Northern Region of Malaŵi and it serves a hinterland with a population of 1 708 930.

The city's population has grown from 16 108 in 1977 to a population of 133 968 in 2008, with a growth rate of 4.2% per annum, and a population density of 2 791 people per square kilometer. The population is estimated to be at 220 346 in 2015 and to reach 270 423 in 2020. Over 60% of the population in Mzuzu City lives in unplanned settlements. The poverty levels of the city are at 34% and the economy is growing at the rate of 5.8% per annum. The timber industry is growing very fast and it is a major source of employment and livelihood for many residents of Mzuzu. The main economic activities in Mzuzu include trade, manufacturing, agriculture, and informal business.



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The fourth city of Malaŵi is Zomba. Zomba was the first capital city of Malaŵi. It was established as the capital city by the British colonial rule and it remained the capital until 1975 when the capital was moved to Lilongwe. From 1975, Zomba was a municipality until 2008 when it was declared a city. The city was thus predominantly an administrative center when it was a capital. The city is reported to have experiencing rapid population growth at 3% per annum with a population density of 2 264 per square kilometer. The city's population has grown from 70 134 people in 1999 to 88 314 people in 2008. The population is projected to reach 164 898 by 2015 and 202 076 by 2020.

The local economy of Zomba comprises of trade and distribution, community and social services, agriculture, and some light industries. Poverty stands at 29% and more than 60% of the population lives in informal settlement. Having emerged from a predominantly administrative background, Zomba is dominated by financial services at 29%, agriculture and mining at 26%, marketing at 25%, manufacturing at 9%, and construction at 4%. The economy is dominated by small scale enterprises at 93%, medium enterprises at 6% and large scale enterprises at 1%. The majority of the small scale and medium scale enterprises are informal businesses operated by vendors and petty traders. The agro processing sector plays a significant role in the local economy.

A few things need to be pointed out in light of the brief history that has been presented here. The growth of the population in these cities shows that a lot of people have migrated from their original rural areas into these urban centers. That presupposes that the language situation in the cities has been changing as new people came into the areas with their own languages, hence language contact was inevitable. Contact has also been influenced by the fact that there

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is high population density in most of the residential areas in the cities, which is influenced by factors such as unemployment and poverty. Unplanned settlement is another factor that influences contact as it leads to cramming. The sub section on the language policy clarifies further on the language situation across the country, which has a bearing on the language situations in the cities. Suffice it to mention at this stage that the cities are microcosms of Malaŵi in terms of ethnic and linguistic composition. It is also important to note that the fact that the majority of the population of the country is youthful counts as a big favour for the development of Chibrazi. As already explained, youths in urban centers across the world are developing their own languages.

#### **4.4. Chibrazi and migration for employment**

Migration is defined as the movement of people that leads to permanent change in place of usual residence (Palamuleni and Palamunleni, 2013). Migration is one of the two factors that lead to population growth; the other one being natural increase. Palamuleni and Palamunleni, (2013) distinguish between internal migration, which is the movement of people across internal administrative boundaries, and international migration, which is movement of people across national boundaries. The people of Malaŵi have engaged in both internal migration and international migration and they continue to do so partly because of economic reasons. Two important points on migration, which are made by Palamuleni and Palamunleni (2013), need to be raised about how migration relates to the development of Chibrazi from the onset.

The first point is that migration is an important process of urbanisation and industrialisation, as already stated above. The other point is that migrants bring into the new residential areas new ideas, skills and a host of cultural practices related to attributes such as food, dance,

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music and other life styles, just as they take back the same to their original areas of residence upon their return. Although Palamuleni and Palamunleni do not include language on this list, it cannot be ignored and it is perhaps the most important attribute in this regard. This shows that migrants are an important source of change both in the areas where they migrate from and the areas that they migrate to.

On the international scene, the people of Malaŵi have migrated into neighbouring countries such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Tanzania and South Africa. As already stated above, this migration has mainly been for economic purposes. The people have migrated into these countries in search of job opportunities, especially in the mining and farming industries of these countries. Due to this migration, Malaŵians came into contact with the different peoples of these countries. Consequently, they also came into contact with the languages of these peoples. The languages include Chinyanja and Chibemba in Zambia; Chinyanja, Chishona and isiNdebele in Zimbabwe; Chinyanja and Portuguese in Mozambique; Kiswahili in Tanzania; and the many languages of South Africa. These include Afrikaans, isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, Setswana, and Sesotho. The lexical make up of Chibrazi provides hints on the languages that were involved in the contact. It is important to note that the federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland also made a contribution to the migration of Malaŵians into Zambia and Zimbabwe.

To use South Africa as an example, Malaŵian international labour migration can be traced to as far as 1900 when the Witwatersrand Labour Organisation (WNLA, popularly known as Wenela), which later amalgamated with the Native Recruitment Corporation (NRC) to form The Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA), was given powers to recruit people into the

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labour force for the gold mines (Harington and McGlashan, 2004). The South African Department of Labour (2007) provides different statistical details about Malaŵian labour migrants in the country between 1920 and 1990.

The number of documented Malaŵian labour migrants has fluctuated over these years mainly because of the different laws that obtained over the period. In 1920, the number was at 354, while it was at 72 in 1990. However, the number rose up to 78 492 in 1970, which was the highest in this record. Other notable high numbers are 38 580 in 1965; 27 904 in 1975; 21 934 in 1960; 16 849 in 1985; and 13 569 in 1980. The total number of recorded Malaŵians in South Africa, including both labour migrants and other types of migrants, has also fluctuated over the years. The department's records show that the lowest number was in 1911 with a total of 4 573 people, while the highest number, 110 777, was recorded in 1970. This shows that a high number of Malaŵians came into contact with South African languages over the years. This situation contributed to bringing about linguistic change in the country.

Locally, Palamuleni and Palamunleni (2013) summarise the general pattern of internal migration between 1966 and 2008 using data that was obtained from the population censuses of 1966, 1977, 1987, 1998 and 2008 because there has not been any recent study that has examined in internal migration in the country. Their study finds that

*... in both 1966-77 and 1977-87 inter-censal intervals, the Northern and Southern Regions had net out-migration whereas Central Region had net in-migration. The situation has changed in 1987-89 intercensal period in that the Southern Region shows net out-migration whereas both Northern and Central Regions show net in-migration. The same pattern is observed during the 1998-2008 intercensal period.*

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Palamuleni and Palamunleni's study shows that while Central Region has remained an in-migration area, the Southern Region has remained an out-migration area. However, the Northern Region has changed from being an out-migration area to an in-migration area. Palamuleni and Palamunleni (2013) state that this pattern is not surprising considering the nature of social and economic development in the country. The Southern Region attracted a lot of people because of the establishment of agricultural estates, especially in the Shire Highlands; the colonial administration in Zomba; and the early missionary education. The Central Region started attracting people when tobacco farming was introduced in the region in the 1920s and its attraction increased with the relocation of the capital from Zomba in 1975. The highest potential of attraction for the Northern Region has been realised with the advent of democracy, which has seen the establishment of the Mzuzu Auction Floors, Mzuzu University, and Mzuzu Central Hospital in Mzuzu City among other major developments.

This pattern of migration has created a situation whereby the different peoples of Malaŵi have interacted freely thereby influencing their respective languages to intermingle freely as well. As (Kayambazinthu, 1998: 376- 377) points out, "the migration patterns also touch on the possibility of genetic relationships between languages such as Chewa, Tumbuka and Tonga on the one hand, and those of the Ngonde, Nyakyusa, Ndali, Lambya and Nyiha on the other". This situation created an environment that was conducive for the development of the urban contact vernacular of the country.

More specifically, a lot of Malaŵians have migrated from rural areas into urban areas in search of better livelihoods because there are more economic activities in Malaŵian urban areas than there are in rural areas of the country. This situation is not peculiar to Malaŵi. As

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Anglewicz (2012, citing Preston, 1979 and Oucho and Gould, 1993) points out, throughout Sub Saharan Africa, urban centers have experienced rapid population growth starting from the 1950s, which has partly been caused by increasing rural-urban labour migration. A lot of Malaŵians have migrated from different parts of the country into urban areas of Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba in search of employment be it by self, in government, nongovernmental organisations, government statutory companies, or in private companies. Two factors have necessitated the migration. Firstly, there is unequal distribution of resources in the country. Resources are concentrated in the urban centers. Secondly, people have not been restricted by geographical location in terms of where to settle or conduct their business.

In order to provide a vivid picture of the nature of language contact that was induced by migration for employment purposes, the public service is isolated as a case in point. In this regard, the Malaŵi Defense Force, the Malaŵi Police Service and the Malaŵi Correctional Services serve as good examples. These institutions recruit people from all over the country. They train and post the people all over the country regardless of their ethnic affiliation. Apart from that, there is presence of at least one institution under these arms of the public service in each of the cities of the country as well as other parts of the country. These institutions thus become ‘areas of convergence’ for Malaŵian languages because they are populated by people of different linguistic and ethnic backgrounds.

The convergence of the languages takes place at two levels. The first level is the work place, while the second level is the household level. It is important to note however, that while the former mostly applies to the people that are actually employed, the latter includes the employees and their families. The environment in public service institutions such as the ones

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used as best exemplars here is made even more conducive for the intermingling of different languages, and therefore, for the development of Chibrazi, because they are set up as multicultural and multilingual villages. For instance, an army barracks comprises offices for employees of the army as well as housing for the employees and their families. These include houses, blocks of houses and blocks of hostels.

That being the case, people from different backgrounds come together in one space wherein their backgrounds, including languages, intermingle freely. Hence, urban areas are rendered as environments that are conducive for the development of Chibrazi. It should be noted that these are only three isolations within the public service, but the entire public service is a good representation of the amount of language contact that takes place not only in the urban centers of the country, but across the country. This is particularly applicable in cases of those institutions that are set up as villages. It should also be noted that the employees of these institutions, together with their families, also interact with the outside world within as well as beyond the urban centers.

The linguistic structure of Chibrazi, which is partly explained in the next chapter, also contains manifestations that suggest that Malaŵian languages have also intermingled with languages from other countries, especially those close to the country. In fact, these manifestations are part of the evidence that Malaŵians have also immigrated to neighboring countries just as citizens of other countries have immigrated to Malaŵi. This kind of immigration has mainly been driven by economic activities. Some of the most notable countries in Africa are Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Mozambique and Tanzania. As a result of such interaction, Chibrazi shares some of its vocabulary with urban contact

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vernaculars from these other countries. For instance, the term *vaya*, which means “go”, exists both in Chibrazi and in Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho of South Africa, and in Chiharare and Sncamtho of Zimbabwe.

#### 4.5. Chibrazi and education

Moto (2001: 336) demonstrates that Chibrazi is popular in education institutions in Zomba, one of the cities of Malaŵi. Moto states that, “A casual walk about around the more than a dozen educational institutions in Zomba reveals that teachers as well as pupils and students know and use the ‘new language’”. This sub section aims at showing how education has influenced migration thereby influencing language contact and creating an environment that is conducive for the development of Chibrazi. Before venturing into how that has happened, it is important to briefly explain how Malaŵi’s education system is set up. The system currently comprises primary, secondary and tertiary education, but it has undergone some significant changes over time. The next sub section clarifies more on the transformation of the education system. Initially, that is as far back as during the colonial era, education services were mainly provided by the missionaries that were working to Christianise the country. After the colonial era, education services have mainly been provided by government, but there are also several private and religious education institutions in the country.

As already introduced, the people of Malaŵi have also migrated from different parts of the country into other areas, especially urban areas, because of education. From the education statistics provided by the National Statistics Office (2009 and 2003 in particular), it is clear that education institutions in urban areas have experienced increases in population over the years. For instance, in 2008, the total enrollment in primary school in Blantyre City stood at



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130 601. Lilongwe had a population of 103 602 pupils in 2007 and 135 029 pupils in 2008 in primary schools, while secondary schools had a population of 30 795 learners in 2008. The total enrolment in 43 public primary schools in Mzuzu City was at 39 837 in 2008. Generally, there are more public and private colleges, universities and technical institutions in the cities than there are in the rural areas, even though there is shortage of primary and secondary schools. That means that there are more people attending education in urban areas than in rural areas. In addition to that, that means that there is a lot more interaction of people who speak different languages within relatively smaller geographical locations in urban areas than in the large geographical areas of the rural areas.

One of the major turning points in education in Malaŵi's public education has been the declaration of primary education as free in 1994. This has seen enrollment in primary schools soaring from 1.9 million to 2.9 million by 1997 and to 3.6 million by 2008. The primary education enrollment rate was expected to reach 92% by 2015. In tertiary education, a major change has been the establishment of Mzuzu University, the sole public university in Mzuzu City, after 1994. This has contributed to the increase in the production of university graduates, which until then was restricted to the University of Malaŵi. In 2008, the recognised tertiary education institutions produced 8 388 graduates. The advent of democracy also marked the proliferation of private university education institutions. Almost every major religious denomination has its own university now.

The migration of Malaŵians due to education can be looked at using four different but related points. The first point is that in general, urban schools are held to be better than rural schools because of availability of both human and other resources. For this reason, a lot of people

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have migrated into urban areas in search of better quality education. This means that people of different linguistic backgrounds have come together in certain institutions of education. This situation has brought about interaction of the various languages of the country. As already noted, such a situation is a recipe for the development of a mixed language; hence, such institutions have been rendered as niches for the development of Chibrazi.

The second point is that until 1994, university education institutions in Malaŵi were concentrated in the urban areas of the three cities of Blantyre, Lilongwe and Zomba; that is, the Southern Region and the Central Region of the country. There was no university education institution in the Northern Region until 1994. The following extract, taken from the University of Malaŵi's website provides a brief history of the university, which illustrates the point raised here.

*The idea that Malawi should have a University was first conceived soon after the country got its independence in 1964. In October 1964, the University of Malawi was founded under the University of Malawi (Provisional Council) Act which was later replaced by the University of Malawi Act of 1974. The Act was further amended in 1998. Teaching started on 29<sup>th</sup> September at the newly established campus which used to be an Asian Secondary School in Blantyre. Only 90 students had been enrolled. By 1967, the then Institute of Public Administration at Mpemba, the Soche Hill College of Education, the Polytechnic, all these in Blantyre, and Bunda College in Lilongwe were incorporated as constituent colleges of the University of Malawi. Except Bunda College and the Polytechnic, the other colleges moved to Zomba in 1973 to form the now Chancellor College campus. Kamuzu College of Nursing became the fourth constituent college in September 1979 and the College of Medicine in Blantyre became the fifth constituent college when it was established in 1991. At present, 7, 371 students are enrolled in various degree, diploma and certificate programmes.*

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The area in which the university was initially set up is a predominantly Chicheŵa speaking area, while Zomba, where the Chancellor College constituent college was established, is a Chiyawo predominant area. However, both the student and staff populations of the university education institutions were drawn from across the country. In addition to that, the University of Malaŵi was established to educate the entire country rather one or a few selected parts of the country. For that reason, selection to the university was based on merit coupled with a quota system that has ensured that all districts of the country are represented. This means that people of different linguistic backgrounds converged at these institutions of higher learning, which implies that their languages and cultures also intermingled making these institutions breeding grounds for Chibrazi. Chancellor College is particularly intriguing in this regard. The various studies that have been conducted on language change point to the fact that indeed the institution has been influential in the development of Chibrazi.

The third point that is used to illustrate migration and education in Malaŵi is that public boarding secondary schools in Malaŵi have always served as areas of convergence for people from different parts of the country. In particular, those public boarding secondary schools that are designated as national schools rather than regional or district schools have always accommodated learners from different parts of Malaŵi, regardless of their regions of origin. Enrolment at these schools has also been administered systematically to ensure that all districts and therefore all tribes of the country are represented. Again, because both learners and staff at such schools are drawn from a cross section of the country, this situation has created an environment that is conducive for the intermingling of people of different linguistic backgrounds as well as their respective languages and cultures. Such schools have equally been rendered as niches for the development of Chibrazi. It is important to note that

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similar integration has taken place at mission secondary schools and even private secondary schools.

Finally, other tertiary education institutions, especially teacher training colleges, technical colleges and colleges of health, have also recruited people from a cross section of the country, although they were also concentrated in the urban areas of Zomba, Blantyre and Lilongwe. These produced similar results as the other education institutions cited above in as far as language contact is concerned. That is, these tertiary institutions were rendered as institutions of convergence of Malaŵian languages and cultures, which in turn were rendered as environments that were conducive for the development of Chibrazi.

It should be pointed out that all the education institutions that are referred to in this subsection have boarding facilities for the student populations as well as housing facilities for their staff communities. That being the case, the institutions are also set up as multicultural and multilingual villages that are conducive for the intermingling of different languages and cultures thereby rendering them as environments that are conducive for the development of Chibrazi. Therefore, the migration of Malaŵians from various areas to certain education centers of the country has created an environment that is conducive for the evolution of Chibrazi. Education in general and education institutions in particular have played and continue to play the role of ‘convergence zones’ for different languages and cultures. Consequently, education and education institutions play an important role in the development of the urban contact vernacular of the country.

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It is also important to point out that education itself is one of the sources of Chibrazi. Chibrazi contains a lot of words and expressions whose origins can be traced to education. Students across the three tiers of Malaŵi's education system have tended to draw from the new knowledge that they have acquired from the various subjects that they have been exposed to in their education. This is exemplified by the etymology of some of the examples of Chibrazi vocabulary.

#### **4.6. Chibrazi and the language policy**

The national language policy in general and the language in education policy in particular that has guided Malaŵi over the years is another factor that has contributed to the development of the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi. In fact, the language policy is arguably the culmination of all the factors that have influenced the development of Chibrazi. We now look at the history of Malaŵi's language policy briefly in order to establish how the country's top down language policy fuelled the development of the mixed language under the influence of the urbanisation, industrialisation, migration, and the education situation that have been outlined in the above sub sections. The country's language policy can generally be divided into three major phases.

The first phase is from 1891 to 1964, when Malaŵi was still called Nyasaland, and when it was a British Protectorate. During this period, education was mainly run by missionaries whose primary aim was to Christianise the country. There were eight missions that were working in the country by 1902 (Kayambazinthu, 1988). The education system was divided into three categories: the Vernacular, the Lower Middle and the Upper Middle (Moyo, 2001). The language in education policy that guided education then was that vernacular languages

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were used in the vernacular classes, while English was phased in during Lower Middle school and it eventually took over as the medium of instruction for the rest of the education hierarchy. The language in education policy was built around the belief that children learn better when they are taught in their mother tongues during the formative years of their lives, which seems to have remained the case over the years.

On the basis of this policy, two Malaŵian languages, Chicheŵa and Chitumbuka, emerged as the most popular media of instruction in early schooling, while English was the medium of instruction in the rest of the education system. How this came about deserves some special attention as it sheds more light on the nature of the predominant language situation of the country at that time.

As stated in the opening chapter of this thesis, Kayambazinthu (1994) observes that Southern Malaŵi is heterogeneous with 33% speakers of Chicheŵa, 23% speakers of Chiyawo, 23% speakers of Chilomwe and 21% of people who speak Chisena. While Kayambazinthu reports of statistics that were obtained much later than the time of the missionaries, the picture that the statistics paint was more or less similar. It is important to note that the Chicheŵa of the Southern Region was initially called Chimang'anja or Chinyanja. Out of this diverse linguistic composition of the Southern region, Chicheŵa emerged as the preferred language of instruction in schools. Moyo (2001) reports that Chiyawo was abandoned because it was regarded as a language of Islam. As Kishindo (1994: 133) puts it, Chiyawo was seen "as a dangerous menace to their own efforts of Christianising and civilizing Africans along western lines". It is not clear why Chisena was not chosen, but it might be because it was taken as a

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dialect of Chinyanja or Chimang'anja in some quarters (Moyo, 2001), which is essentially understood to be Chinyanja.

As reported in the opening chapter as well, Central Malaŵi is homogeneous with 91% speakers of Chicheŵa (Kayambazinthu, 1994). Before 1968, Chicheŵa was referred to as Chinyanja. The remaining 9% is shared by speakers of Chitumbuka in Kasungu, Chiyawo along the lakeshore in Salima and Chipoka, Chingoni in Dedza and Ntcheu, and Chisenga in Mchinji. With such a linguistic demographic situation, it is not surprising to see that Chinyanja became the preferred language of instruction in the Central Region during missionary education.

The opening chapter has also stated that Kayambazinthu (1994) points out that Northern Malaŵi is also heterogeneous with Chitumbuka as the regional lingua franca with 64% of the population in the Northern Region as its speakers. This means that the other languages that are spoken in Northern Malaŵi including Chitonga, Chinkhonde, Chilambya, Chinyakyusa, Chingoni, Chindali and Chinyika, share the 36% that Kayambazinthu does not elaborate on. Considering this kind of distribution, it is also not surprising that Chitumbuka emerged as the preferred medium of instruction in missionary education in Northern Malaŵi, even though, as reported by Moyo (2001) Chitonga and Chinkhonde were also used sometimes. It is important to point out that relevant literature was produced in Chicheŵa as well as in Chitumbuka. Moyo (2001: 138) provides examples of publications that were made during the time of missionary education.

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Therefore, during the period 1891 to 1964, Chicheŵa, which was known as Chinyanja or Chimang'anja in the Southern Region and Chinyanja in Central Region, was the medium of instruction in formative education and the language of wider communication for the Southern Region and the Central Region. Chitumbuka was the medium of instruction in formative education and the language of wider communication in the Northern Region. English was used as the medium of instruction in both Lower Middle education and Upper Middle education. This situation naturally induced language contact among the languages of the country.

There was contact among the languages of the Central Region, which induced 'movement' of all the languages of the region towards Chicheŵa. The languages of the Southern Region also came into contact and gradually started 'moving' towards Chicheŵa. In the Northern Region, all other languages started 'moving' towards Chitumbuka. At the same time, there was contact between Chicheŵa and English on the one hand, and between Chitumbuka and English on the other. Ultimately, there was general contact among all the languages of the country. In this regard, Chicheŵa, Chitumbuka and English became forces of convergence whose main influence was wielded through education.

The second phase of Malaŵi's language policy is Doctor Hasting Kamuzu Banda's, one party (the Malaŵi Congress Party (MCP)) autocratic rule that started in 1964 and ended in 1994. For the first four years of Doctor Banda's rule, the country continued with the language policy that the missionaries had put in place. That is, Chicheŵa and Chitumbuka were the media of instruction in the formative years of education, while English was used as the medium of instruction in the rest of the education curriculum.



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In 1968, Chicheŵa was declared as the national language of Malaŵi during the MCP's convention. It is widely believed that Chicheŵa was declared as the national language of Malaŵi because it was alleged to be the language that was understood by the largest proportion of the population of the country in comparison to the other languages. However, there is no agreement in the literature on this. According to Matiki (2002), the 1966 population census conducted by the National Statistics Office indicated that Chicheŵa was the language that was understood by the highest proportion of people; that is, 76.6% of the population; hence, the MCP's 1968 convention declared Chicheŵa as the national language of Malaŵi. As Matiki (2002:2) states,

*Although no real official justification for adopting such a policy was articulated, Dr Hasting Kamuzu Banda (1897- 1997), the president at the time, made numerous statements that seemed to indicate that Chichewa was chosen as the national language because it was the most widely spoken language and, more importantly, that it had the power to unite the people in Malawi.*

Matiki (1998: 13) cites four different sources that present divergent statistics in terms of the proportion of the people that speak Chicheŵa in the country. Knappert (1998) reports that 83% of the country's population speaks Chicheŵa. Morrison, et al (1989) puts it at 60% of the population. Katzer, et al (1989) pegs it at 30%. Tadadjeu (1977) indicates that Chicheŵa is spoken by 77% of the country's population. However, it is interesting to see that even during the colonial era; attempts were made to make Chicheŵa the national language. Chilora (2000: 2) cites Mchazime (1996), who points out that

*As far back as 1918, some colonial administrators had already proposed that Chinyanja (Chichewa) be made official language and that it should be taught in all the schools in the country. The then Governor of Nyasaland, Sir George Smith, turned down the proposal. His*

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*action was not, however, based on linguistic ground but on political reasons. Smith was afraid that the introduction of an indigenous language would unite all the tribes of Nyasaland faster than he wanted. He saw that as a dangerous move.*

At the same convention, Chicheŵa and English were declared as official languages of the country. The idea behind the decision was that both languages would have roles in all official domains of national life such as in government and administration, the judicial system, and the legislature. It was also declared that the name Chinyanja be changed to Chicheŵa. The name change is widely understood to have been a ploy by Doctor Banda to boost the status of the Cheŵa tribe thereby boosting his own image (see for example, Moyo 2001).

It is also important to note the fact that other other international languages have been taught and they are still taught in some schools in addition to Chicheŵa and English. These are French, Greek and Latin. French is the main language in this regard as it is taught in most government secondary schools. Apart from Kamuzu Academy, Roman Catholic secondary schools have been particularly instrumental in the teaching of Greek and Latin. Moyo (135) states that Doctor Banda "... showed a strong passion for classical languages." and that "For him, one was not educated without gaining knowledge of Greek, Latin and French." Moyo quotes the Daily Times of May 1990, which states that "His Excellency, Ngwazi Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda was a leading advocate of French as a modern language as well as Greek and Latin, from which French is derived" and he quotes Phillip Sort (1974) who has described Kamuzu as 'a child of two worlds'.

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Another important new development of Banda's regime is the abandoning of Chitumbuka as a medium of instruction in formative education. It should be pointed out that, by this time, Chitumbuka had long been established not only as a medium of instruction in formative education in the Northern Region, but also as a lingua franca of Northern Malaŵi. That means that Doctor Banda's regime embarked on a conscious process of undoing a legacy that had been in place for seventy three years. As Moyo (2001: 135) says, the new language policy "... placed other languages and their cultural values on a path to total extinction, particularly in the print media." Among other things, Chitumbuka literature was not only banned, but a drive was instituted to eliminate the literature from the face of the country. For instance, some of the literature was retrieved and burnt.

The changes that were introduced during this period are reported to have been initiated in a quest to build the Malaŵi nation. However, there is a lot of divergence of opinion in this regard. In as far as the Doctor Banda regime was concerned; Chicheŵa and English were perceived to be central to the creation of the nation and nationality of Malaŵi. Chicheŵa and English were perceived to be central to the integration of different groups of the Malaŵian people into the same communicational networks. This kind of social engineering drives the formation of nations and nationalities (see Deutsch, 1966 for a discussion of the formation of nations and nationalities). It is what Deutsch refers to as 'cultural assimilation and 'social mobilisation'. In this regard, Matiki (2002: 2) observes that

*The promotion of Chichewa was an attempt at cultural assimilation aimed at absorbing all ethnic groups in Malawi into one large group. English on the other hand, was meant to stimulate social mobilization, uprooting people from their traditional and agrarian life into a more industrialised one. Education carried out through the medium of English was a major component of this process of social engineering.*

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Therefore, during the reign of Kamuzu Banda, the nation of Malaŵi continued to be a haven for language contact. However, while the contact situation largely remained unchanged in the Central Region and the Southern Region, the situation changed significantly in the Northern Region. As already indicated, a campaign to ‘drive Chitumbuka out of the picture’ was in force in the latter. The contact among the languages of the Northern Region continued and the ‘movement’ of the other languages of the region towards Chitumbuka continued. However, a new trend emerged because Chicheŵa was thrown into the mix and it as well as its new position had to be ‘accommodated’. That means that all the languages of Northern Malaŵi started to gravitate towards Chicheŵa. Paramount in this new trend of language contact was the gravitation of Chitumbuka towards Chicheŵa.

It is important to restate that since its declaration as a national language, Chicheŵa was used as the only vernacular medium of instruction in formative education (Standard 1 to Standard 4) across the country. In addition to that, Chicheŵa was taught as one of the subjects in primary, secondary, as well as in tertiary education. As a result of that, since the declaration of Chicheŵa as Malaŵi’s national language in 1968, the language has made big inroads into areas that are traditionally non-Chicheŵa speaking (Kamwendo, 2000). Not only did this development increase the speakers of Chicheŵa to proportions higher than suggested by the statistics of the 1966 population census, but it also increased the amount of contact that Chicheŵa had with the other languages of the country even more. Subsequently, the contact situation increased the likelihood of the emergence of the urban contact vernacular.

This was the predominant state of affairs until 1996 when the Bakili Eleson Muluzi led government changed the language policy. This has always made the country an environment

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that is conducive for the development of the urban contact vernacular. It can thus be argued that having Chicheŵa as the national language has helped in the development of Chibrazi because it has naturally induced convergence of the Malaŵian populace at different levels including mainly language and ethnicity.

The third phase of Malaŵi's language policy came in during the 1994 to 2004 United Democratic Front (UDF) rule of Bakili Eleson Muluzi, which marked the dawn of a democratic system of government in the country. In 1996, Chitumbuka was reinstated as an official language. In addition to that, three other languages: Chilomwe, Chisena, Chiyawo and Chitonga were elevated to the status of official languages. That brought the total number of official languages to seven: Chicheŵa, Chilomwe, Chisena, Chiyawo, Chitonga, Chitumbuka and English. Further to this directive government instructed that mother tongues should be used as media of instruction in the first four classes of primary school (Standard 1 to Standard 4) (Ministry of Education, 1996). These languages were selected as being the dominant languages in their respective areas. English retained the status of a language subject at this stage of schooling and a medium of instruction in the rest of the Malaŵian education system. Interestingly, another change to the national language policy in education was announced in March 2014. According to that announcement, English will be used as the medium of instruction from Standard 1.

However, the UDF's language policy has remained unimplemented (Kamwendo, 2000). Several reasons are advanced as being behind the lack of implementation of this policy. Generally, Malaŵi's language policy has been marred by the top bottom approach to language planning. This type of language planning is commonplace in the Southern African

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countries (Bauldauf and Kaplan, 2004). Often, such an approach to language policy meets with opposition from those who are excluded from the process of developing the policy and its outcome. (Moyo 2001: 7) blames the lack of implementation on the impromptu nature of the directive: the directive "... preceded the training of teachers, preparation of materials and resources and general research into the current language situation and attitudes in Malawi". Moyo (2001: 6) states that "it is quite clear that the elevation of these indigenous languages to the official status, much as some of them may well be viable languages regionally or nationally such as Chiyao, was not based on sociolinguistic surveys to determine the status they attained."

Although the intermingling of the people and their respective languages in the language contact zones identified above provided the necessary conditions for the evolution of Chibrazi, they might not have been enough to bring about Chibrazi. Another factor that has influenced the development of Chibrazi is reaction to the language policies that have been advanced in the country, which have been discussed above. The present study proposes that Chibrazi emerged as part of a rebellion or resistance against the elevation of Chicheŵa to the status of the national language of the country and its use as a medium of instruction at the expense of all other indigenous languages and the use of English as an official language and medium of instruction in education.

Several studies have hinted at the resentment that the Malaŵian language policy has caused among some pockets of the Malaŵian people; notwithstanding the fact that commentary on Malaŵi's language policy is muddled with what might be called sentimentalism and sensationism. Scholars such as Moyo (2001); Chilora (2000); Kamwendo (2010, 2000,

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1998, 1997); Matiki (2002, 1998); Kishindo (1999, 1994); and Kayambazinthu (2003, 1988) are some of the good examples in this regard. In addition to that, Moyo cites Mchombo (1998); Chirwa (1994); Africa Watch (1990); Vail and White (1989); Ntaba (1984) all of whom also carry similar sentiments about the language policy. The Ministry of Education, (1996, cited by Chilora, 2000) states that the problem with this policy is that some of the teachers who were expected to implement it could not speak Chicheŵa fluently because it was not their mother tongue. The ministry further indicates that as a result of that, many teachers continued using their own vernacular languages and some of them only switched to Chicheŵa when officials entered their classrooms.

In a way, the continued use of other vernacular languages was an expression of resentment against the language policy. Moyo (2001: 141) states that "... it bears noting that while there was no overt challenge to the established policies, this did not mean that covert resistance was absent". In explicating this point, Moyo quotes Chirwa (1994: 106) who states that "... it was not uncommon for non Chewa speakers to speak the language deliberately badly, trivialize its cultural traditions, or downplay its importance in schools". "This reaction could have only been intended to reflect dissenting views of exclusive linguistic policies which allowed the use of only one language for official purposes" (Moyo, 2001: 141). This was especially the case in the Northern Region and among the people of Northern Region who were living and or working in the other parts of Malaŵi. As explained above, at least five languages of the Northern Region were sidelined by the language policy. In 1988, teachers from the Northern Region who were working in the other parts of Malaŵi were relocated to their home region based on allegations of engaging in rebellious practices such as the ones expressed by Chirwa (1994: 106 as quoted by Moyo, 2001: 141) above.

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This study proposes that as a reaction to this language policy, the youth of the country, who for one mainly converged in school, started to create their own language in rebellion to the prevalent language policy. As people became more and more aware of their plight, they started to develop conscious as well as subconscious and unconscious ways of countering their situation. It is not uncommon for people to speak their own languages when required to speak other languages as a sign of asserting that they too have their own languages, which in essence is a sign of revolting against the use of other people's languages instead of their own. This kind of thinking about the origins of Chibrazi is in line with the prevalent thinking about the origins of African urban contact vernaculars in the literature: for instance, Bosire (2006: 192). On the basis of linking Chibrazi to rebellion against what was advanced as the norm, the mixed language might be interpreted as an anti-language.

The term *antilanguage* is used to denote a sociolect that expresses conscious social and linguistic opposition, putting emphasis on the interpersonal function at the expense of the referential function of language (Halliday, 1978: 164). The term emanates from the concept of antisociety, which is used to denote a society within a society. The antisociety expresses rebellion against existing societal norms, language being one of the norms. That implies that an antilanguage is a language that is used to express the antisociety's rebellion against the linguistic norms of the mainstream society. Following from this explanation, for the rebels, the development of Chibrazi as an antilanguage was a way of asserting the fact that while government was forcing them to speak Chicheŵa thereby embracing the Cheŵa tribal identity, which was purported as if it was the only linguistic identity in Malaŵi; they had their own linguistic identities. In other words, Chibrazi is an antilanguage that is used to



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express rebellion against Malaŵian linguistic norms, which are represented by the country's 'discriminatory' language policy.

#### 4.7. Efforts to diffuse Chibrazi

Language purist tendencies towards or against Chibrazi can be seen as another indication of the existence of the mixed language. Generally, there have been many instances where Chibrazi and/or its speech community have been ridiculed for nonconformity to standards. Such ridicule has come through the school, the radio, television, music, drama and even political, religious and traditional gatherings. There are forces (among them the media, the school, parents and other authorities and institutions; that can generally be referred to as language purists), that have been and are still 'working against' the use and the spread of Chibrazi. There have been complaints from these so-called language purists of society about the language that the youth of today speak or do not speak. Among the language purist quarters, it is generally claimed that the language that the youth speak is not 'pure language'. In some instances, Chibrazi is part and parcel of the so called impure language. It is important to note in this case that Chibrazi may be perceived as an aberration of standards if it is seen as a variety of other indigenous languages.

A few instances of such tendencies are presented here to illustrate this point. To begin with, one illustration of the purist attitude against Chibrazi manifests in the names or descriptions that are used by the language purists and other people to refer to Chibrazi. Such names are embodiments of the negative attitude with which Chibrazi is viewed. Three names are described here. The first name that is used by language purists to refer to Chibrazi is *Chilankhulo chachilendo*. The expression means "the strange language". The second name is

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*Chilankhulo cha achinyamata*, which means “the language of the youth”. In this instance, the term *youth* is used in a derogatory manner. The last name that is used to refer to Chibrazi is *Chilankhulo cha anthu achamba*. This expression directly translates into “the language of smokers of marijuana”, but it means “the language of ‘mad’ people”. These are just some of the names that are used to refer to Chibrazi, which show purist tendencies against the mixed language, but there are several other ways in which the tendencies manifest in terms of how language purists generally refer to the mixed language.

The education system in general and schools in particular have probably been the most instrumental in driving the language purist agenda in as far as Chibrazi is concerned. General, Chibrazi has been confronted with a lot of opposition within the education and school environment. Teachers, especially those of Chicheŵa have always fought against the use of bad Chicheŵa of which Chibrazi is part. However, the best illustration of language purism against Chibrazi with the education system and the school is found in Chicheŵa examination papers that are set by the Malaŵi National Examinations Board (MANEB) especially for the Malaŵi Senior Certificate of Education (MSCE) and the Junior Certificate Examinations (JCE). In these papers, some question items require candidates to correct ‘impure’ Chicheŵa. In some of such cases, the language that is labelled as ‘impure’ Chicheŵa is actually Chibrazi. That is to say that elements of Chibrazi are presented as being ‘impure’ elements in Chicheŵa. Such questions are meant to assist learners to unlearn Chibrazi practices, which are perceived as aberrations of Chicheŵa.

Apart from the two instances of language purism above, there have been deliberate efforts by some quarters in the country to ‘diffuse’ Chibrazi. A good example is the now defunct

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Chicheŵa Board. This board worked to popularise and preserve one dialect of Chicheŵa that was selected as the standard of the language; that is, the Chicheŵa that Doctor Banda had aligned himself with. In its bid to promote the selected dialect of Chicheŵa, one of the things that the board stressed was the inappropriateness of some of the words that had crept into Chicheŵa. Some of such words were typical Chibrazi words. After the dissolution of the board, the University of Malaŵi's Centre for Language Studies took over some of the responsibilities and facilities of the dissolved Chicheŵa board (University of Malawi Website). Thus far, the Centre does not seem to have a different approach to Chibrazi from that of its predecessor. It is important to note that Doctor Banda had taken it upon himself to be part of the process of promoting the chosen variety of Chicheŵa. In this regard, from time to time, he lectured the people on what he considered to be pure Chicheŵa during his public addresses.

Looking at the development of the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi, one may conclude that no matter what efforts that may be employed in order to 'keep down' Chibrazi, it keeps thriving. Actually, the situation is paradoxical in that it seems like the more people and institutions have fought and continue to fight against the mixed language, the wider it has spread and continues to spread. It is equally paradoxical that while some pockets of different sections of the Malaŵian society are 'fighting to control' Chibrazi, other pockets of the same sections are the agents of the spread of Chibrazi. For instance, while some language purists 'fight' Chibrazi through the media, other people perpetuate Chibrazi through the very same media. For example, while some radio personalities 'attack' Chibrazi and its speech community through the radio; other radio personalities use Chibrazi on the very same radio.

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One might even argue that perhaps the kind of attitude perpetuated towards Chibrazi was (or still is), for some people, a ‘deliberate move’ to control its spread and development. The basis for such a move might be that Chibrazi is seen as a degradation of other Malaŵian local language(s) and that on that account; the mixed language needs to be kept ‘under control’. This is the kind of situation that Mazrui (1995) talks about in reference to Kenya’s Sheng. The general treatment of Chibrazi tends to perpetuate the picture that Malaŵi does not stand to benefit anything from the urban contact vernacular that has emerged in the country.

#### **4.8. Agents of the spread of Chibrazi**

Chibrazi has not spread as widely as it has done by accident. There are a number of factors that have played a role in that. Moto (2001) outlines four of these factors that are explained here. In addition to these four, four other factors are presented. The first factor that Moto identifies is improved transport network and other infrastructure. This has led to easy and quicker movement of people between different parts of the country, especially between the cities and the rural areas and between the different cities. In turn, this has led to more intermingling of the people’s languages and cultures and faster circulation of Chibrazi itself.

The second factor is the print and the electronic media. The print media mainly includes newspapers and magazines. Chibrazi has also reached other avenues of the print industry. For example, Moto cites the arts in this regard. The radio and the television are the best examples of the electronic media that Chibrazi has penetrated. These media have contributed significantly to the expansion and reinforcement of Chibrazi as they have both afforded Chibrazi a platform of access to many people. Besides, the print and electronic media has expanded significantly over the years.

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The third factor that has contributed to the spread of Chibrazi is democracy. Perhaps this factor lies at the heart of all the factors that have contributed to the expansion and reinforcement of Chibrazi. The advent of democracy in Malaŵi has seen the transformation of the country from a place where almost everything including language was restricted to one where almost everything especially language is liberalised. Apart from that, political change itself has produced a lot of material that has been used as part of the source of Chibrazi. It should be pointed out that this should not be interpreted as suggesting that Chibrazi is a post dictatorship phenomenon. Rather, what is being said is that Chibrazi, which had been developing throughout the years before democracy, became more popular with the advent of democracy because with democracy came linguistic liberalisation.

The last factor that Moto identifies as having contributed to the proliferation of Chibrazi is the gravitation of the cultural and social values of the country as a result of different factors. In this regard, Chibrazi has tended to create new innovations to capture the new developments in the country. However, most of such developments have been negative. The common trend in this regard has been that every time something bad has happened, Chibrazi speakers have coined a new word or expression to capture it. But, Chibrazi does not always and only create new terminology for negative things; it captures all possible new happenings.

In addition to the factors that are presented above, there are four other factors that have played and continue to play the role of agents for the spread of Chibrazi. These are education, music, cellular phones, and the social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. The role of education in the development of Chibrazi has already been explained above and it cannot be overemphasised. Education is one of the key factors on which the mixed language

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has thrived and continues to thrive. Many speakers of Chibrazi are exposed to the mixed language through education and the new knowledge that people gain through education also serves as a source of Chibrazi as explained above under the sub section on Chibrazi and education.

The music industry plays a very significant role in as far as the spread of Chibrazi is concerned. Chapter seven provides an illustration of the importance of music in this regard. Because there is a considerable amount of Chibrazi that is used in music, such music has become a source of people's knowledge of Chibrazi. The musicians who use the mixed language themselves use music as an avenue to display their sophistry in the mixed language.

The proliferation of cellular phones has facilitated easier and faster circulation of both spoken and written Chibrazi. Some of the written communication that speakers of the mixed language engage in by means of short message service (SMS) includes Chibrazi. This kind of language is generally referred to as SMS language. In an attempt to simplify their messages, many speakers employ Chibrazi. The speakers employ Chibrazi because it is perceived to be a simplification of communication. The information presented in chapters five, seven and eight provides further details on that. The same is true of the communication that speakers of Chibrazi engage in through the social media of Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and other such media. One simply needs to browse through people's messages on these social media in order for them to appreciate how much of Chibrazi circulates through these three social platforms. Groups on Facebook and WhatsApp, for instance those of alumni of different education institutions, are good examples in this regard.

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It can be seen that Chibrazi has spread throughout the country because of a number of factors. These factors can also be related to the origins of the mixed language. The factors can also be used to make projections about the possible future of the mixed language. Considering these factors, it can be suggested that Chibrazi will not die, but it will continue to grow both in terms of the number of speakers and its linguistic structure. This assertion is in line with what Moto (2001: 340) says about the mixed language,

*“I am aware, as stated earlier, that various generations of youths have used their own linguistic codes in order to communicate among themselves or simply play language or linguistic games. Such languages have tended ‘to die’ with the coming of age of its users. I wish to suggest here that the contemporary ‘new language’ may be here to stay”.*

#### 4.9. A sample of Chibrazi

Before going any further, some examples of Chibrazi are provided here in order to illustrate the presence of and what is meant by the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi. The illustration will commence with the names of the country and the national language that have changed over the past years. Malaŵi is now also known as Chilawidzi, Flames, or Mpanje; while Chicheŵa is also called Tchewazi or Chewaroz in Chibrazi. Expressions like *pa Flames pali bo* meaning “Malaŵi is fine” (taken from my Facebook page), *tikulowa ku Mpanje mani* meaning “I am going to Malaŵi my friend” (Vincent Jumbe, personal communication) are no strange occurrences. Chilawidzi emanates from a number of processes. First Malaŵi is depluralised to become *laŵi*. Then *chi* and *dzi* are added to the changed form. The other change that has taken place in this name is /ŵ/ becoming /w/. The name Flames comes from the nickname of the national soccer team of Malaŵi. The nickname comes from the English translation of the meaning of the word Malaŵi; that is, “flames”.

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The name Mpanje appears to have been taken from the Chicheŵa word *mphanje*, which roughly translated means “new ground” or “virgin land”. The name suggests that ‘Malaŵi is the place where the roots of the people’s success can be traced back to’. This term is popularly used by Malaŵian speakers of Chibrazi who stay in South Africa. It is interesting that for the speakers of Chibrazi who reside outside of Malaŵi, especially those in South Africa, Malaŵi is called Mpanje apart from Flames. I perceive this name to be a Chibrazi term simply because I mainly hear it used in the context of Chibrazi. I have heard a lot of my Malaŵian friends who reside in South Africa use this term. More examples of Chibrazi names of places are presented in Appendix 4.

Once in 2004, as I was interacting with my three year old niece, Winnie Mhango, we got into an ‘argument’ about who was the cleverer between the two of us. When I said, “... *shasha ndine ...*”, meaning “I am the cleverer one”, she responded by saying, “*Ngati inuyo muli shasha, ineyo ndi shashton*”, meaning “If you are clever, then I am cleverer”. In this exchange, two Chibrazi words were used: *shasha* and *shashton*. In the context of the exchange, both of these words mean “clever person”. I suspect that the word *shasha* comes from the word, *shashalika*. Wambali Mkandawire who is probably Malaŵi’s greatest Jazz artist of all times, uses the word *kushashalika* in one of his songs. The other word, *shashton*, is a mere extension of the word *shasha* by way of foreignisation.

Another example of Chibrazi comes from the post-match interviews of the famous Kinna Phiri and company Malaŵi National Football Team’s 1979 East and Central African Challenge Cup victory. This was recorded on the Malaŵi Broadcasting Corporation Radio. If one listens to these interviews, one cannot miss the words *nyatwa ada* amid the noise of that



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ecstasy. *Nyatwa* is a Chibrazi word that is borrowed from Chisena, one of the languages of Southern Malaŵi. In Chisena, this word means “problems”, but in Chibrazi, the word was previously used as part of greetings as is the case in this example. The word has since evolved to other usages. Presently, the word is mostly used to express meanings such as “good” or “nice” or as an adverb expressing degree. *Ada* originates from the Chitonga word *ada*, which means “man”, “mister” or “father”. In Chibrazi, the word is mostly used to mean “friend” or “man”. In the case of this example, either interpretation is applicable.

Contemporary Malaŵian popular music is also full of Chibrazi. A good example is the word *mandede* that is used in the song *Mandede* by Ian Lizi. This word was very popular among Malaŵians, especially children, for a long time after the release of this song. *Mandede* is a Chibrazi vernacularisation of the English word **hundreds**. The word comprises the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka prefix for pluralisation *ma* and *ndede*, which is a vernacularisation of the English word **hundred**. The song talks about hundreds in the sense of “money”: *mandede* (K 100 notes); *ma 2 handede* (K 200 notes); and *ma 5 handede* (K 500 notes). Interestingly, with the coming in of the K 1 000 note came the word *zande* and its plural *mazande*. The word *zande* is a truncation of the word *sauzande*, which itself is a vernacularisation of the English word **thousand**. There are other Chibrazi words that are used to denote numerical values. For example, *nuwa* is “one”, *thwego* is “two”, *thrego* is “three”, *mili* and *mita* are used to denote “million”; and another word for “thousand” in Chibrazi is *grand*. The word *hanzi* is also used to denote “hundred”; hence, there are other such terms as *two hanzi*, *three hanzi*, *four hanzi*, *five hanzi*, and so on. This is just to give a few examples of words denoting numerical values.

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This mixed language has even penetrated into religion. For instance, there are various names that are used to refer to God in Chibrazi. A few examples are presented here. The first example is GOD, pronounced in spelling fashion. This is also popular in rap music across the world and it can be said to originate from American rap music. The second example is Adigo and its variant Digo both of which are transpositions of a vernacularised version of the word **God, Godi**. The former is honorific, while the latter is not. The third example is Olenga Dzuwa. This expression literally means “the creator of the sun”. This term was popularised through the song *Olenga dzuwa*, which was done by Malaŵi’s reggae king, Evison Matafale. The last term to be sampled here is Mwini filimu. Literally translated, this term means “the main actor” as in the creative arts, especially films. The term is created around the notion of the omniscience and omnipotence of God and it is related to the resilience and potency of a main actor in a film. Chibrazi is also present in some of the music that is labeled as Malaŵian Gospel Music. Recently, someone posted a copy of a cheque that a congregant issues to his church with the amount written as *twenty grand*, which is Chibrazi for twenty thousand. An interesting debate ensued following this post.

The mixed language is also present in the print and electronic media, especially in advertisements. For example, the cartoon *Amtchona* in *The Weekend Nation Newspaper* has always been full of Chibrazi expressions. In fact, even the name of the cartoon itself, *Amtchona*, is a popular word in Chibrazi. The word has its origins in the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka word *tchona* which means “stay outside one’s home for ‘too long’”. In this instance, the word denotes “one who has stayed outside one’s home for ‘too long’”. In Chibrazi, in addition to the original source language meaning, the expression has other connotations. For example, when a person’s trousers, dress or any other type of clothing goes

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in between their buttocks, the person is referred to as *Amtchona* by virtue of the fact that their clothing stays in between their buttocks for some time.

Advertisements in both the print and electronic media are also full of Chibrazi. A good example of Chibrazi in advertisement in the print and electronic media is one that talks about one brand of cooking oil as being *jenuwini twatswatswa orijino* (Moto, 2001: 336). The advertisement promotes one type of cooking oil as being the best. In this Chibrazi expression, *jenuwini* is a loan word from the English word genuine, which is used to mean “of high quality” instead of the Chicheŵa word *apamwamba* or *opambana*. It should be noted here that the Chicheŵa word for genuine is actually *enieni*. *Tswatswatswa* is an idiophone that captures the sputtering sound of cooking oil. The idiophone is used in this advert to mean “cooking oil”. In Chicheŵa, cooking oil is referred to as *mafuta ophikira*. The word *orijino* is another loan from English. It is taken from the English word original. In this Chibrazi expression, the word is also used to mean “of high quality”. The essence of this advertisement is built around the assumption that if something is genuine and original, it is of high quality. In Chicheŵa, the statement would be rendered as *mafuta ophikira apamwamba* or *mafuta ophikira opambana*.

One good example of Chibrazi on the political scene is the term *kayombe*, a term that is used to refer to the Malaŵi Young Pioneers (MYP), the organisation that harboured the defunct military wing of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP). Another example is the *MCP yagwila nseu* slogan, which was popularised by the late Dunduzu Chisiza Junior in the run up to the country’s first ever national referendum. The expression *yagwila nseu*, which literary means

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“it has touched the road”, implies “it is on track”. A lot of other political slogans use Chibrazi.

Another interesting invention on the politics side of Chibrazi is the name *Alidzi* and its variant *Aligo*. This name is a vernacularisation of the English word **leader**. The interesting part of this word is that while the meaning of its origin is generic, in Chibrazi that meaning is made very specific. The word is specifically used to refer to Ngwazi Doctor Hastings Kamuzu Banda, the first president of independent Malaŵi and not any other president of the country. Other presidents are referred to either using their names or other titles. For instance Bakili Muluzi is referred to by his first name, Bakili, or as *Atcheya* “the chairperson”, by virtue of being the chairperson of his party at one point. However, it is also important to note that the name *Atcheya* only specifically applies to Bakili Muluzi. Even though other presidents have been chairpersons of their political parties, they are not referred to by that term in Chibrazi. Doctor Bingu wa Mutharika is referred to as Bingu or using other terms, even though he bestowed upon himself the title of Ngwazi, which Banda used for himself as well. Joyce Banda is referred to as *Amayi*, which means “mother” or “lady” by virtue of being the first female president. Professor Peter wa Mutharika is referred to as APM, which is simply an abbreviation of his name.

There are two recent (2013 and 2014) innovations on the political scene that have spread very widely and very quickly. The first word is *cash gate*. This expression generally means “embezzlement of public funds”. This word came in the wake of the embezzlement of the Malaŵi government’s funds that was unraveled during Joyce Banda’s reign. By virtue of this development, Lilongwe is also referred to as the Cash gate City because that is where several

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incidents were reported in connection with the scandal. As an extension of that, there are several other words to which the suffix *-gate* is added to connote some sort of scandal. *Vote gate* or *election gate* are two good cases in point in this regard. These two words connote the alleged irregularities that took place during Malaŵi's 2014 tripartite general elections. The second word is *kusova*. This word generally means “working the meaning or implication of something out for oneself”. The common practice in the use of this word is that people present only part of a statement and end it with *musova* or *usova* (*musovenge* or *usovenge* are also used), which means “you will work it out for yourself”. The former is honorific, while the latter is unmarked. These two words are particularly very popular on Facebook and other social media.

This mixed language is there in education circles as well. In this regard, I was intrigued by the way one University of Livingstonia<sup>7</sup> student expressed his acknowledgement for his supervisor's contribution in his (the student's) bachelor's dissertation. The student thanked his supervisor for his *igweship* (Doctor. Golden Msilimba, personal communication). The word *igweship* is a combination of the Nigerian word *igwe*, meaning “chief”, which finds its way into Chibrazi through Nigerian films that have recently infiltrated the Malaŵian market, and the English suffix *-ship*. The word is one of the recent inventions in Chibrazi. Some lecturers (I inclusive) at Mzuzu University, one of the national universities in Malaŵi, used to use this term when addressing one another informally. Students of the university also used this term in their own way. In the present times, the word is in popular circulation throughout the country. The word *igwe* is generally used to connote “greatness”.

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<sup>7</sup> University of Livingstonia is one of the universities in Malaŵi, which is run by the Livingstonia Synod of the Church of Central African Presbyteriat (C.C.A.P.).

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Many other changes have taken place and are taking place in Malaŵian languages both collectively and individually. Such changes are even taking place at the level of proverbs and common sayings. Many proverbs are ‘modernised’ and are preferred in Chibrazi against the conventional ones. Over the years, changes such as the ones presented here have become so common and so developed that they sound like a different language altogether. Kamanga (2009: 123) perhaps sums up the predominant situation for many people when he says, “Over time, it has become very difficult for me to sustain a conversation in any one language for any length of time because of the frequency of my code-switching , especially when interacting with people who know my mother tongues and the urban contact vernacular”. Note that while Kamanga is talking about code switching, the phenomenon is one of the important factors in Chibrazi. This research proposes that such changes now even converge and form part of a popular communication system that in this research is referred to as Chibrazi, the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi.

### **4.10. Conclusion**

While the exact origins of Chibrazi remain unknown, this chapter has explored a hypothesis that can be used in explaining the possible origins of the mixed language under study in this research. The hypothesis that has been advanced is that Chibrazi has emerged due to a number of factors. Among the factors is migration into the urbanised and industrialised areas of the country especially the cities of Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba. In doing that, the chapter has looked at two factors that have contributed to the migration of Malaŵians into these urbanised and industrialised areas. It has been proposed that Malaŵians have mainly migrated into the cities in search of employment and better quality education.

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Further to that, it has been proposed that these two factors have created an environment that is conducive for the development of Chibrazi by serving as convergence zones for the various languages and cultures of the country; notwithstanding the languages of other countries that Malaŵians have come into contact with. It has also been proposed that resentment against the language policy has played a significant role in the development of Chibrazi. This chapter has also looked at various factors that have facilitated the spread of the mixed language and. On the basis of that, the chapter has given an indication of what the future might hold for the mixed language. It has been indicated that the mixed language may not die like other language phenomena that have come and gone, but rather it is most likely to continue developing. The chapter has closed with a presentation of a sample of the mixed language to show what the mixed language is like and how much it has spread. The next chapter will provide more examples as it discusses the different processes through which the mixed language is produced.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE CREATION OF THE LEXICON OF CHIBRAZI: A FOCUS ON SEMANTIC MANIPULATION

#### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter fulfills two specific objectives of this research. Firstly, the chapter presents examples of Chibrazi that were collected through different methods. The examples are made up of pieces of vocabulary, chunks extracted from conversations, and common sayings in Chibrazi. Secondly, the chapter presents a more detailed description of some of the strategies that are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi. In fulfilling these two specific objectives, the chapter briefly describes the basic linguistic structure of Chibrazi and demonstrates what makes Chibrazi different from other Malaŵian languages.

Before presenting the examples of Chibrazi and discussing how they are created, it is important to mention that there are three reasons that are advanced as the rationale behind the creation of the Chibrazi lexicon. Firstly, Chibrazi is created as a strategy for simplifying the structure of words and other elements that are transferred into Chibrazi from other languages. For example, the sounds of some words tend to be ‘difficult’ to pronounce for non-mother tongue speakers of the languages that ‘donate’ towards the lexicon of Chibrazi. As such, non-mother tongue speakers of the donor languages simplify them to suit their articulation ability.

Secondly, some of the language manipulation processes are motivated by the need to be discrete and unique. Chibrazi has got a way of concealing meaning to people who are not



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initiated into the mixed language. Even those that are initiated always try to speak in a way that is different from the way others speak. As such, there is a lot of variation in the lexicon of Chibrazi.

Thirdly, some of the processes that are used in the creation of the lexicon of Chibrazi seem to be motivated by the need to make communication more entertaining. For the initiates, Chibrazi sounds much better and it is thus more entertaining than its donor languages. The entertainment comes from the various processes that are used in the creation of the vocabulary. The processes render the mixed language a kind of game that is played by the initiates. Chapter eight presents more details regarding the reasons behind the use of Chibrazi.

Since this chapter is mainly concerned about providing examples of Chibrazi and the processes that are used in the creation of Chibrazi vocabulary, the listing of words followed with brief discussions could have been satisfactory. However, this study chose to provide some of the words in conversation in order to demonstrate that Chibrazi is different from the other Malaŵian languages. That is why the discussion does not provide detailed explanations of the grammatical elements of the mixed language, although in some cases this is done briefly. The scanty explanations are simply meant to illustrate that the grammatical component of the mixed language is supplied by other Malaŵian languages.

A few points are recaptured in order to contextualise the discussion of the examples. It has been stated that most of the vocabulary in Chibrazi is created through borrowing and that in

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the present research borrowing is looked at from the point of view of semantic change or semantic manipulation. It has also been stated that semantic change or semantic manipulation refers to a process whereby the relationships between concepts and their referents are manipulated such that the meanings of words or expressions are changed. That means that Chibrazi utilises a number of semantic manipulation processes wherein the relationships between concepts and their referents are manipulated in order to produce new lexical items.

Further to that, it has been stated that borrowed items are categorised into four types in this study. These are semantic maintenance, semantic shift, semantic extension or semantic broadening, and semantic narrowing. Since the discussion of the examples of Chibrazi in terms of the strategies that are used in their creation focuses on semantic manipulation, the examples that are presented in this chapter are classified into these four categories of semantic manipulation.

However, other morphophonotactic manipulation processes are also included in the discussion. These include compounding, pluralisation, duplication, truncation and metathesis. It is important to remember that this chapter does not go into details in terms of analysing morphophonotactic change in Chibrazi, even though it touches on it through the discussion of some of the processes. As already indicated, discussion of morphophonotactic change is deferred to other studies. It is also important to note that although the present research attempts to describe each one of the language manipulation strategies on its own, it is not easy to separate certain processes from each other because there are a lot of overlaps among

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these processes. As such, the demarcations that are employed in the description ought not to be treated very strictly.

As already indicated, the analysis of Chibrazi is done with reference to three of the traditional ethnic languages; that is, Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka, which are isolated on the basis of my personal linguistic repertoire. The following is the guide in terms of how the analysis is done.

- Words in English words are bolded.
- Words in Chicheŵa, Chitonga, Chitumbuka, and other languages are italicised.
- Words in Chibrazi are italicised and bolded.
- Meaning that is translated from Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka into English is presented in quotation marks.

## **5.2. Explaining metaphoric manipulation using Lakoff's contemporary theory of metaphor**

It has been explained in chapter two that the language manipulation processes that are used in the creation of Chibrazi fall under one main cognition or conceptualisation processes that is termed metaphoric manipulation. Following from that, it has been proposed that the products of metaphoric manipulation can be analysed using Lakoff's (1993) contemporary theory of metaphor. At this stage, the employment of this approach is demonstrated using one example just to illustrate how that kind of analysis works. However, it is important to note that the study does not analyse the rest of the other examples of Chibrazi that are presented in this research in this manner.

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Four Chibrazi expressions are used as examples to explain how Lakoff's theory of conceptual metaphor can be used to explain how metaphoric manipulation is used in the creation of Chibrazi lexical items. These are *MDI*, *MD botolo*, *TB* and *chifuwa chachikulu*. *MD botolo* is a variant of *MDI*, while *chifuwa chachikulu* is a variant of *TB*. All these four expressions are used to refer to "very big breasts" in most cases, derogatorily so. The four expressions are evidence of lexical shift from Chicheŵa expressions such as *mabele akuluakulu*, *mtsikana (msungwana, namwali, or mayi) wa mabele akuluakulu* to *MDI*, *MD botolo*, *TB* and *chifuwa chachikulu* in Chibrazi. These expressions were recorded in two separate conversations.

The first conversation was recorded at Chancellor College, where boys would mock girls with big breasts by calling them *MDI* or *MD botolo*. This usually happened when a girl with big breasts passed nearby boys' hostels. Sometimes the boys did that through a 'conversation' that would proceed as follows:

Speaker A: *Ukuwona chani?* "What do you see?"

Speaker B: *Ndikuwona MDI*. Or *Ndikuwona MD botolo*. "I see a girl with big breasts."

If this conversation were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would proceed as follows:

Speaker A: *Ukuwona chani?*

Speaker B: *Ndikuwona mtsikana wamabele akuluakulu*. Or *Ndikuwona msungwana wamabele akuluakulu*. Or *Ndikuwona namwali wamabele akuluakulu*.

This exchange is made up of words that are all borrowed from Chicheŵa, except for *MDI* and *MD botolo*, which are Chibrazi expressions, and it is the inclusion of these Chibrazi expressions that qualify the conversation as a Chibrazi conversation for purposes of this

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study. The conversation shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there has been a lexical shift among the Chibrazi speech community from the Chicheŵa expression *mtsikana wamabele akuluakulu* and its variants like *msungwana wa mabele akuluakulu* and *namwali wamabele akuluakulu* to the expressions **MDI** and **MD botolo**. It is this that allows for the conversation to go on without featuring that the word *mtsikana*, “girl”. The entire human being is ‘reduced’ to the size of her breasts as it were, which in itself is metaphorical.

**MDI** is an abbreviation for Malawi Dairy Industries, a company that buys, processes and supplies milk and milk products country wide. Chibrazi takes THE COMPANY’S BUSINESS OF PRODUCING MILK and maps it onto HUMAN BEING’S ABILITY TO PRODUCE MILK. But, this is not applied to any human being. Only girls or women with big breasts qualify. The logic behind this is the ‘perception’ that the bigger the breasts, the more milk they can produce, which is metaphorical in itself and a ‘misconception’ at any rate. In other words, it is mockingly assumed that girls or women with big breasts can produce so much milk that the milk can be supplied to as many people as possible (in fact, country wide), just like the company MDI.

The other version, **MD botolo**, comes about because the letter I in the abbreviation MDI is represented by a bottle in order to add to the visual appeal of the abbreviation. The two expressions are used interchangeably and sometimes the full form is used, but the former are more popular. The word *botolo* is a vernacularisation of the English word “bottle”. The expressions are created as a result of mapping the conceptual domain A COMPANY THAT

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PRODUCES A LOT OF MILK onto the conceptual domain A FEMALE WITH BIG BREASTS.

The second conversation where “very big breasts” featured was recorded at Viphya Schools. The conversation took place between two boys who were commenting about the size of a girl’s breasts. The conversation was meant as a way of mocking the girl.

Speaker A: *Tactheka ada!* “Look my friend!”

Speaker B: *Chani?* “What?”

Speaker A: *MD botolo.* “Big breasts.”

Speaker B: *TB aise!* “Big breasts my friend”

Speaker A: *N’Chichewa?* “In Chicheŵa?”

Speaker B: *Chifuwa chachikulu. Matenda oophya badi.* “TB. A very dangerous disease.”

If this conversation were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would probably proceed as follows:

Speaker A: *Tawona mzanga!*

Speaker B: *Chani?*

Speaker A: *Mtsikana wamabele akuluakulu.* Or *Msungwana wamabele akuluakulu.* Or *Namwali wamabele akuluakulu.*

It is difficult to imagine how the rest of the conversation would be rendered in Chicheŵa since it repeats what has already been said. It is merely a paraphrase of what is said.

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Unlike the first conversation, which is dominated by Chicheŵa words, this conversation is dominated by Chibrazi words and combinations of words. The combination *tatcheka* comprises the word **check** that is borrowed from English. The word undergoes semantic manipulation in Chibrazi to make it embrace the meaning “look”. In addition to that, the word undergoes vernacularisation in order to suit the Chicheŵa morphophonological environment. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “look” is encoded as *wona*. This shows that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *wona* to the Chibrazi word *ada*.

In Chibrazi, the word *ada* means “friend”. The word is borrowed from the Chitonga word *ada*, which means “father”, “man” or “mister”. That means that the word is also produced through semantic manipulation; semantic shift, to be more precise. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “friend” is encoded as *mzanga*. Sometimes, the word *bwenzi* is also used, although this is more common in cases of romantic relationship. The word *ada* shows that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *mzanga* to the Chibrazi word *ada*.

*Aise* is another Chibrazi word that is used to mean “friend”. There are two possible origins of the word. The word either comes from the English expression **I say** or from the Afrikaans expression *ek se* which is a direct translation of “I say”. Some speakers of Chibrazi use the actual Afrikaans pronunciation instead of *aise*. In other words, they pronounce *aise* as *ekse*. Both *aise* and *ekse* are indications of lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *mzanga* to Chibrazi.

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The rest of the Chibrazi words in the conversation, except for the last one, are borrowed from Chicheŵa. In Chicheŵa, *chifuwa* means “cough” or “chest”; *chachikulu* means “big one”. The Chicheŵa combination, *chifuwa chachikulu* is borrowed into Chibrazi where it literally mean “big chest”. It is this meaning that undergoes metaphoric manipulation in order for the combination to be used to mean “big breasts”. The resulting metaphoric manipulation carries both semantic maintenance and semantic shift. The word *matenda*, which means “disease”, is used to conceal the reference to breasts. The word *ophya* means “dangerous”. It is a morphophonological simplification of the Chicheŵa word *oopsya*. Chibrazi simplifies /ps/ into /ph/. *Badi* is a Chibrazi word that emanates from the English word **bad**. The word is a borrowing that undergoes vernacularisation and semantic shift to become “very”.

This conversation shows a number of lexical shifts among the Chibrazi speech community. The most notable one is from the Chicheŵa expression *mtsikana wamabele akuluakulu* and its variants like *msungwana wa mabele akuluakulu* and *namwali wamabele akuluakulu* to the expressions **TB** and *chifuwa chachikulu*. The other ones are: from Chicheŵa *wona* to Chibrazi *tcheka*; from Chicheŵa *mzanga* or *bwenzi* to Chibrazi *aise*; from Chicheŵa *opsya* to Chibrazi *ophya*; and from Chicheŵa *kwambili*, *zedi*, or *kwambili zedi* to Chibrazi *badi*.

The expression **TB** is an abbreviation of the English word “tuberculosis”, the disease, as it is known. However, the expression comes to have the meaning that it has in Chibrazi because of the Chicheŵa translation of the name of the disease. The Chicheŵa translation of the disease is *chifuwa chachikulu*, which could be directly translated as “big cough”. Coincidentally, this expression, *chifuwa chachikulu*, also means “big chest” because the word



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*chifuwa* can mean “cough” or “chest”. In other words, the Chicheŵa expression *chifuwa chachikulu* is a homophone. Chibrazi uses the expression figuratively to refer to a girl or a woman with big breasts on the basis that the big breasts make the chest appear big.

However, to make the meaning less obvious, the English translation of one of the meanings of the homophone is used. The translation in question is “tuberculosis”. In fact, to make it even less obvious, the abbreviation of that, TB, is used. The meaning of the expression is concealed even more because of the connotation that the girl’s or the woman’s condition of having big breasts is an ailment of some kind. As is the case in the example above, sometimes the condition is talked of as being *matenda*, the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka word for “a disease”.

In this expression the conceptual domain CHIFUWA CHACHIKULU (THE DISEASE) is mapped onto the conceptual domain CHIFUWA CHACHIKULU (PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF THE CHEST). To state that differently, the conceptual domain TUBERCULOSIS is mapped onto the conceptual domain CHIFUWA CHACHIKULU (PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF THE CHEST). In turn, this conceptual metaphor enables the production of the linguistic metaphor CHIFUWA CHACHIKULU (PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF THE CHEST) as CHIFUWA CHACHIKULU (THE DISEASE). If that is put differently, the linguistic metaphor becomes CHIFUWA CHACHIKULU (PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF THE CHEST) as MTSIKANA WA MABELE AKULUAKULU.

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It has been explained that a lot of the examples of Chibrazi that are cited in this research are borrowings or full of elements that fall within the concept of borrowing. It has also been explained that borrowing is clarified using a categorisation that is based on the type of semantic manipulation that the borrowed items belong to. The sections that follow present more examples of Chibrazi to illustrate the different kinds of semantic manipulation in Chibrazi more specifically. However, as already mentioned, the examples are not explained in the fashion that has been illustrated in this section. One thing that needs to be borne in mind is that in some cases, in the course of discussing words or expressions that belong to one category of semantic manipulation, words or expressions that belong to other categories of semantic manipulation are unavoidable. That being the case, the discussions tend to appear as if they have lost focus, but that is done to ensure that examples are understood clearly.

### 5.3. Examples of semantic maintenance

The first category to be discussed is semantic maintenance. Semantic maintenance is a category that comprises borrowed items whose meanings are maintained in Chibrazi. The first example of semantic maintenance in Chibrazi is the word *frend*, or *frendi* and its more popular variants *frenzo*, *frendo*, and *frenya*. This word is a borrowing whose origin is the English word **friend** and in Chibrazi it is used to mean “friend”. The word *frend* remains fairly unchanged. However, all its variants undergo a good amount of morphophonological change. The Chicheŵa word for *frend* or *frendi* is *mzanga* and its variant is *bwenzi*. Therefore, the word *frend* or *frendi* together with all its variants demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *mzanga* or *bwenzi* to the Chibrazi words *frend* or *frendi*, *frenzo*, *frendo*, and *frenya*. It is interesting to note that among these variants *frend* and *frendi* are probably the most recent innovation. The other three were more popular previously.

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The second example that is used to illustrate semantic maintenance is represented by how women's breasts are described in Chibrazi based on their firmness. This semantic manipulation process simultaneously involves the morphophonological manipulation process that is referred to as foreignisation. Before presenting these descriptions, it must be mentioned that in Chibrazi, breasts are 'scientifically' referred to as *labrista*. The word *labrista* is formed by adding a prefix *la-*, which is probably borrowed from Spanish or French, to the English word **breast**, whose form is in the process, changed into *brista*. This word is then combined with different other words to produce different idiophones that are used to denote the different types of breasts based on their firmness. Although the word **breast** is morphophonologically changed to *brista*, its meaning remains unchanged; hence the classification semantic maintenance. The combinations that are produced are presented below.

*Labrista standaro* is formed by adding the word *standaro* to the word *labrista*. *Standaro* is a morphophonological manipulation of the English word **stand**, which is formed by adding the suffix *-aro* to the word **stand**. This term denotes “standing breasts”; that is, “firm breasts”. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “firm breasts” would be rendered as *mabele oyima* or *mabele oyimilila*. This expression (*labrista standaro*) demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expression *mabele oyima* or *mabele oyimilila* to the Chibrazi expression *labrista standaro*.

*Labrista kungaro* is formed by adding *labrista* to the Chibrazi morphophonological manipulation of the Chicheŵa base *kunga*, which means “make firm” or “tighten”. In the

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process of that, the suffix *-ro*, which is probably borrowed from Spanish, is added to the Chicheŵa base *kunga*. This expression is used to denote “breasts that are artificially made to look firm” or “breasts whose firmness is enhanced artificially”. The firmness may be achieved by means of a bra or something else. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “breasts that are artificially made to look firm” or “breasts whose firmness is enhanced artificially” would be rendered as *mabele okunga* or *mabele okungidwa*. This expression (*labrista kungaro*) demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expression *mabele okunga* or *mabele okungidwa* to the Chibrazi expression *labrista kungaro*.

The third expression that results from semantic maintenance, which is represented by how women’s breasts are described in Chibrazi based on their firmness is the term *labrista khwefaro*. This expression is formed by morphophonologically manipulating another Chicheŵa base *khwefuka*, which means “be sagged” or “become sagged” and adding the product of the Chibrazi manipulation to the word *labrista*. The Chibrazi suffix *-aro* replaces the Chicheŵa suffix *-uka*. This Chibrazi ‘scientific term’ is used to denote “breasts that are sagged”. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “breasts that are sagged” would be rendered as *mabele okhwefuka* or *mabele okugwa*. The latter is different though because it literary means “fallen breasts” or “falling breasts”. This expression (*labrista khwefaro*) demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expression *mabele okhwefuka* or *mabele okugwa* to the Chibrazi expression *labrista khwefaro*.

The fourth product of the semantic maintenance that is represented by how women’s breasts are described in Chibrazi based on their firmness is the term *labrista yambaro*. This term

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means “breasts that are just starting to grow” or “breasts that are just starting to show”. This expression is coined by adding *labrista* to the Chibrazi morphophonological manipulation of the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka stem *yamba*, which means “start”. The suffix *-ro* is then added to the product of that. If the meaning “breasts that are just starting to grow” or “breasts that are just starting to show” were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would be rendered as *mabele ongoyamba kumene* or *mabele ongoyamba kumene kumela*, among other ways. This expression (*labrista yambaro*) demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expression *mabele ongoyamba kumene* or *mabele ongoyamba kumene kumela* to the Chibrazi expression *labrista yambaro*.

Finally, breasts that are very big are described as *labrista varo*. In this expression, the Chibrazi morphophonological manipulation, *labrista*, is added to the word *varo*, which is a manipulation of the English word *very*. The word *very* is changed to *varo* in order to achieve conformity with the suffix *-aro* that is used with the other words. This Chibrazi ‘scientific term’ is used to denote “breasts that are very big”.<sup>8</sup> In Chicheŵa, the meaning “breasts that are very big” would be rendered as *mabele aakulu kwambili*; *mabele aakulu zedi*; *mabele aakuluakulu kwambili* or *mabele aakuluakulu zedi*. This expression (*labrista varo*) demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expression *mabele aakulu kwambili*; *mabele aakulu zedi*; *mabele aakuluakulu kwambili* or *mabele aakuluakulu zedi* to the Chibrazi expression *labrista varo*.

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<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, big breasts are also referred to as *very breasting*, *MDI*, or *TB*. *Very breasting* can be said to be a unique form of borrowing of the expression “very big breasts” from English into Chibrazi. In fact, it can be said to be a corruption of the expression “very big breasts” whereby “very big” is reduced to *very* and “breast” is changed into progressive form. This expression (*very breasting*) demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expression *mabele aakulu kwambili*; *mabele aakulu zedi*; *mabele aakuluakulu kwambili* or *mabele aakuluakulu zedi* to the Chibrazi expression *very breasting*. *MDI* and *TB* are both examples of metaphoric manipulation and they are explained under section 5.2 above.

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The expressions that have been discussed above in line with descriptions of breasts in Chibrazi fit into the category of words called endocentric compounds. Endocentric compounds are words whose whole meaning can be figured out by the analysis of their parts (Miti, 2006, citing Libben, Gibson, Yoom and Sandra, 2003). In order to conceal meaning even further, some speakers of Chibrazi employ metathesis to these expressions; that is, they swap morphophonological segments within the constructions in order to achieve different constructions. For instance, *labrista standaro* would be articulated as *labrista ndastaro*. This appears to be a way of reducing the semantic transparency of the words.

Another example of scientification, which is also a manifestation of semantic maintenance, is the expression *tchudrenata ngangalis*. This expression is usually used to mean “an old lady who tries to look young by using heavy makeup”, although sometimes it is also used to describe men with similar tendencies. The expression is created by manipulating the Chibrazi word *tchudren*, and the Chicheŵa or Chiyawo word *anganga*. The former is a borrowing and vernacularisation of the English word **children** that is used to mean “young” through semantic shift. The latter is a Chicheŵa or Chiyawo borrowing that means “grandparent” and it is an instance of semantic shift. Literally, the expression means something like “a grandmother that looks like a child”. Pragmatically, the expression means “an old lady who looks like a child” or “an old man who looks like a child”. If this expression were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would be *mai wankulu wooneka ngati mwana*; for a female; *bambo wankulu wooneka ngati mwana*; for a male; or *gogo wankulu wooneka ngati mwana*; for neutral gender. This expression (*tchudrenata ngangalis*) demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expression *mai wankulu wooneka ngati mwana*; *bambo*

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*wankulu wooneka ngati mwana*; or *gogo wankulu wooneka ngati mwana* to the Chibrazi expression *tchudrenata ngangalis*.

The word *tchudrenata* is sometimes used on its own to mean “a child” or “a young person”, although the more common word is *tchudren*. In this instance, *tchudi* is also common. This is a truncation of the word *tchudren*. One example utterance in which the word *tchudren* was used is *amboba agwila katchudren ka mperi*. This utterance was produced by a student at Chancellor College. The utterance means “Our friend is dating a young girl from outside of the college campus.” *Amboba* is a metathesis of the Chicheŵa combination *abambo* that means “man” or “father”. In Chibrazi, *mboba* means “friend”, “boy”, “man”, or “old man”. In many instances, the word is used derogatorily. *Agwila* is a Chibrazi semantic manipulation of the Chichewa combination that means “hold”, “handle” or “touch”. In Chibrazi, the combination means “win a member of the opposite sex”. The combination *kamperi* includes a truncation and vernacularisation of the English word **peripheral**. In Chibrazi, *peri* originally means “outside of the university campus”. However, the term is also used to refer to the “outside of the university” in general or “the outside of the campus of an educational institution” in general. The word *peri* is also used to mean “someone from outside campus”.

Another good example of semantic maintenance in Chibrazi is the expression *huzet*. This expression is a vernacularisation of the English utterance **how is it**, which is used as a greeting. In Chibrazi, this expression is usually also used as a greeting, but in other cases, it is used as the question “who is it?”. The English expression is manipulated in this manner in order for it to assimilate the Chicheŵa linguistic make up. The expression is used in different ways depending on the situations that speakers find themselves. The conversation below

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illustrates an instance where the expression is used as a greeting, which is the focus of the discussion here.

Speaker A: *How is it?* “How are you?”

Speaker B: *Shap; huzet?* “Fine; and you?”

Speaker A: *Shap shap.* “Fine.”

The fourth example of semantic maintenance is the word *shap*, whose more vernacularised version is *shapu*. This word is a borrowing from the English word **sharp**. Other manipulations of the word, such as *shapuda*, *shaprado*, and *shapradox*, also exist in Chibrazi. The word *shap* and all its variants listed above are used to mean “fine” as in greetings. If this conversation were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would be as follows.

Speaker A: *Uli bwanji?* (marked) or *Muli bwanji?* (unmarked) “How are you?”

Speaker B: *Ndili bwino; kaya iweyo?* (marked) or *Ndili bwino; kaya inuyo?* (unmarked) or *Tili bwino; kaya inuyo?* (unmarked) “Fine; and you?”

Speaker A: *Ndili bwino.* (marked) or *Tili bwino.* (unmarked) “Fine.”

This conversation shows lexical shift in two instances. In the one instance, the conversation shows that the speakers of Chibrazi have shifted from the Chicheŵa *Uli bwanji?* or *Muli bwanji?* to the Chibrazi *How is it?* or *huzet?* This is semantic maintenance because the meaning of the borrowed expression is not changed. In the other instance, there is a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa *Ndili bwino* or *Tili bwino* to the Chibrazi *shap* or *shap shap*. This is an instance of semantic shift. It is important to note the fact that the word *sharp* also exists in



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other African urban contact vernaculars where it is also used in the context of greetings, among others. This is the case in Tsotsitaal and in ChiHarare.

The fifth example of semantic maintenance is the word *mwado*. Interestingly, the word has since undergone some morphophonological manipulations that have produced three variants: *mwadra*, *mwadreta* and *dramweya*. But, all three words are used interchangeably. This word also serves as a good example of intraChibrazi recycling. This word is taken from a Chicheŵa word, *mwado*, which refers to the traditional piece of clothing that was worn in the past to cover one's genitalia. On the basis of that, this word is considered to be archaic in as far as Chicheŵa is concerned. However, Chibrazi has borrowed this word into its vocabulary wherein it is used to mean "panty" or "underwear". In Chicheŵa, "panty" or "underwear" would be rendered as *kabudula wa mkati* or *panti*, which is actually a borrowing and vernacularisation of the English word **panty**. The word *mwado* demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expression *kabudula wa mkati* or *panti* to the Chibrazi word *mwado*, *mwadra*, *mwadreta* and *dramweya*.

*Mwadra* is created by dropping the /o/ in the word *mwado* and putting in its position the suffix /ra/. This process is an instance of the morphophonological manipulation process whereby some morphemes and or phonemes are added to other words. The word *mwadreta* is a further manipulation of *mwado* wherein after adding the /ra/ sound to the word, the added sound is changed to /re/ and another suffix, /ta/ is added. *Dramweya* is essentially a metathesis of the word *mwadra*. The word is formed by swapping the two syllables *mwa* and *dra* to make it *dramwa*. However, the segment *mwa* is further changed into *mwe* and *ya* is

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added at the end. This process is included as it is a result of trying to disguise the meaning of the word. Words containing this kind of morphophonological manipulation are rampant in Chibrazi. Other examples are *mudra* and its variant *mudreta*, and *kuntra* and its variant *kuntre*. The former is taken from the word *mdala* and it means “friend”, “man” and “father” among others, while the latter is taken from the Chibrazi word *kunte* that is borrowed from the name Kunta Kente and which means “fine” in the sense of greetings.

#### 5.4. Examples of semantic shift

Semantic shift is a category of borrowed items whose meanings show a shift from one referent to another referent. It has been pointed out that in order to make matters about semantic shift less confusing, semantic shift is divided into three types. The first type of semantic shift is the one whereby a word that is used to refer to one concept in one language is used to refer to another concept in Chibrazi. The word *nyanja* is one good example of this type of semantic shift. This word is imported from the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka word *nyanja* (with slight phonological differences across the three languages) where it means “a body of water”; that is, “a lake”, “a sea” or “an ocean”. Upon being imported into Chibrazi, the word underwent a shift in its referent from “a body of water” to “a splash of saliva that usually accidentally flows from one’s mouth”. Below is a conversation that demonstrates how this word is used in Chibrazi. The conversation took place between two Viphya Secondary School learners as they were having a snack during tea break.

Speaker A: *Mmmm ada mukutithila nyanja!* “Mmmm! My friend; you are splashing saliva on me!”

Speaker B: *Sole mani. Sidala.* “I am sorry my friend. It’s not deliberate”

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The literal meaning of the first speaker's utterance is: "Mmmm! My friend; you are splashing a lake on me". However, because of the new meaning that the word *nyanja* has assumed after undergoing semantic shift, that is not the case. The Chicheŵa word for **saliva** is *malovu* or *mate*. This shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *malovu* and *mate* to the Chibrazi word *nyanja*. If this conversation were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would be rendered as follows:

Speaker A: *Mmmm! Mzanga ukundithila malovu!*

Speaker B: *Pepa mzanga. Sidala.*

The word *ada* has already been explained in section 5.2 above and it is used to mean "friend". The combination *mukutithila* is a Chicheŵa combination that comprises four elements: *mu* "polite you"; *ku* "are"; *ti* "us; polite me"; and *thila* "splash". The word *sole* is a borrowing from the English word **sorry**. The word undergoes morphophonological manipulation by way of vernacularisation thereby changing the /r/ sound into a /l/ sound. The meaning of the word remains unchanged. The Chicheŵa word for **sole** is *pepa* or *napepe*. This shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *pepa* and *napepe* to the Chibrazi word *sole*.

The word *mani* is a borrowing from the English word **man**. In Chibrazi the word *mani* is used to mean "friend". The word is also employed for other purposes in Chibrazi as it is explained especially under compounding below. The Chicheŵa word for **mani** is *mzanga* or *bwenzi*. This shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *mzanga* and *bwenzi* to the Chibrazi word *mani*. *Sidala* is another

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Chicheŵa combination that includes the negative marker *si*, which means “it is not” and the word *dala*, which means “deliberate”.

The word *nyatwa*, which is mentioned in chapter four of this thesis, is the second example of this type of semantic shift. The word *nyatwa* is a borrowing from Chisena, one of the traditional ethnic languages of Malaŵi. In the original language, the word *nyatwa* means “problems”. When the word *nyatwa* was introduced into Chibrazi, it was used in the context of greetings to mean “fine or well”. Then, speakers of Chibrazi would greet each other with *Nyatwa ada?* This was used to express the meaning “Are you fine my friend?” or “Are you well my friend?” In response to such a greeting, one would answer by saying *Nyatwa*. This was used to mean “I am fine” or “I am well”. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “How are you?” would be rendered as *Uli bwanji?* Alternatively, people would say *Muli bwanji?* The difference between the two is that the former is marked, while the latter is unmarked. The meaning “I am fine” or “I am well” would be rendered as *Ndili bwino* or *Tili bwino*. Even here, while the former is marked, the latter is unmarked. The word *nyatwa* demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions that are used in greetings to the Chibrazi expression *nyatwa*.

After some time, the word *nyatwa* went out of circulation and it was replaced by a myriad other forms of greeting. The contemporary forms of greeting that have come after the expression are presented in Appendix A. However, the word *nyatwa* came back into Chibrazi with a new meaning and new usage. The word adopted the meaning “very” or “a lot”. In contemporary Chibrazi, the word *nyatwa* is normally used in descriptions of different entities with the meanings such as “very”, “very good”, “very well”, “very beautiful” and others. This

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constitutes the second type of semantic shift. In this type of semantic shift, a word that was used to refer to one concept at some point in Chibrazi is used to refer to another concept at another point within Chibrazi. This is an instance of intraChibrazi recycling.

The two conversations below contain examples of how the word *nyatwa* is used in contemporary times. The first example is:

Speaker A: *Umawabara maveji?* “Do you like vegetables?”

Speaker B: *Nyatwa.* “Very much.”

What makes this example Chibrazi is the combination *umawabara*, which comprises the Chibrazi word, *bara* and the Chibrazi word *maveji*. If this conversation were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, the first speaker would say “*Umazikonda ndiwo za masamba?*” The word *bara* is a borrowing that is suspected to come from Chishona. In Chibrazi, it is used to mean “like” or “love”. The conversation demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word, *konda*, to the Chibrazi word *bara*. The word *maveji* is a truncation as well as a vernacularisation of the word **vegetable** that is borrowed from English. The word *maveji* is a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expression *ndiwo za masamba*, which falls under the category of semantic maintenance.

If the response of Speaker B were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, the speaker would have used any of the following possibilities: “*Kwambili.*” “*Kwambili kwake.*” “*Zedi.*” *Kwambili zedi.*” “*Kwabasi.*” “*Nkhaninkhani.*” There are several other possibilities of encoding this meaning. The conversation demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions such as *kwambili*, *kwambili kwake*, *zedi*, *kwambili zedi*, *kwabasi* and *khaninkhani*

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to the Chibrazi expression *nyatwa*. In this regard, the word *nyatwa* is an example of recycling with a change in both meaning and usage. It is one word that demonstrates the distinction between Old school Chibrazi, the Chibrazi that was spoken in the olden days, and Contemporary Chibrazi, the Chibrazi that is spoken recently.

The second example of how the word *nyatwa* is used in Chibrazi is contained in the conversation below.

Speaker A: *Bozi yazulo bwa?* Literally “How about yesterday’s football game?” but, meaning “How did you like yesterday’s football game?”

Speaker B: *Inali nyatwa badi.* “It was very nice.”

This example was taken from two Viphya Secondary School boys who were discussing the results of a football game that their school had with a neighbouring school on a weekend. If this conversation were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would most likely be rendered as follows.

Speaker A: *Masewela a mpila wa miyendo a dzulo bwanji?*

Speaker B: *Anali bwino kwambili.*

The word *bozi*, which is sometimes rendered as *bozizi*, is used to mean “football game” in Chibrazi. The word is a semantic narrowing of the English word **ball**. This word is explained further under examples of semantic narrowing in the next section. In Chicheŵa, the word *bozi* is *mpila wa miyendo*. In some instances, the word *futubo* or its variant *fitibo* might be used. The first word is a vernacularisation of the English name of the game **football match**. The

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second word is a vernacularisation of **football**, which is a kind of corruption of the term **football match**. The word *bozi* shows that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from *mpila wa miyendo*, *futubo* or *fitibo* in Chicheŵa to *bozi*.

*Yazulo* means “yesterday’s” and it comprises the preposition *ya*, which means “of” and the noun *zulo*, which means “yesterday” both of which are borrowed from Chicheŵa. It is important to note however, that *zulo* is a phonological simplification of *dzulo* whereby /dz/ is changed to /z/. The word *bwa* is also borrowed from Chicheŵa. It is a truncation of *bwanji*, which means “how”. *Inali* comprises the subject marker *i*, which means “it”, the tense marker *na*, which means “was” and *li*, which means “be”.

The word *badi* is a borrowing that is taken from the English word **bad**. The word undergoes vernacularisation through suffixation. It is used as a modifier of the adjective *nyatwa* to achieve the meaning “very much”. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “very much” would be expressed using expressions such as *kwambili kwake*, *kwambili zedi*, *kwabasi zedi* and *khaninkhani*. The conversation demonstrates that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions such as *kwambili kwake*, *kwambili zedi*, *kwabasi zedi* and *khaninkhani* to the Chibrazi expression *nyatwa badi*. *Badi* on its own is a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *zedi*. These two are used as degree markers in Chibrazi and Chicheŵa respectively.

The third type of semantic shift in Chibrazi happens when a word that is or was used to refer to one concept in a non Malawian language is transferred into Chibrazi where it is used to

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refer to another concept. Four words that are used to mean “leaving” or “going” exemplify this type of language shift clearly. These words are *kulowa*, *kulowelela* and *kunjila* or *kunjira*. *Kulowa* is originally a Chicheŵa word that means “to enter”. In Chitumbuka, this meaning is represented by the word *kunjila* or *kunjira*. In Chibrazi, the meaning of the two words *kulowa* and *kunjila* or *kunjira* shifts from “to enter” and becomes “to leave” or “to go”. *Kulowelela* is also originally from Chicheŵa where it is used to mean “to become prodigal”. In Chibrazi, the word is used to mean “to leave” or “to go”. These four words clearly show a semantic shift from the original meaning. One interesting thing about these four words is that generally speakers freely choose any of these words at any given occasion. However, it is more interesting that in certain occasions, speakers of Chicheŵa Chibrazi tend to prefer the Chitumbuka word than the Chicheŵa one, while the speakers of Chitumbuka Chibrazi tend to prefer the Chicheŵa word. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “to leave” is expressed by words such as *kupita* or *kumapita*, *kunyamuka* or *kumanyamuka*, *kuuyamba* (ulendo), and *kuyambapo*. This shows that there has been a shift from the Chicheŵa and Chitumbuka words to the Chibrazi words as listed here.

Another example of this type of semantic shift is the word *featuring*, which is used in the conversation below. The conversation is taken from a discussion of the wrath that soldiers demonstrated when they were disarming the Malaŵi Young Pioneers, a military wing of the Malaŵi Congress Party during Kamuzu Banda’s one party regime.

Speaker A: *Mani mabufalo amawilila. Mmene anawililila thaimu ya akayombe ija!*

“My friend; soldiers can be angry. The way they were angry during the time of the young pioneers!”

Speaker B: *Featuring achina mani Kamuuze?* “Including the likes of Kamuuze?”



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In this conversation, speaker B uses the word **featuring** that is borrowed from English. In Chibrazi, this word is used in the same way as it is used in the sense of singers producing a song by means of collaboration. The word is used in different ways depending on the context of conversation. Here, the speaker used it to mean “including”. This clearly shows a shift from the original meaning. If this conversation were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would sound something like:

Speaker A: *Mzanga; asilikali amakwiya. Mmene anakwiyila nthawi ya a Malawî*

*Young Pioneers ija!*

Speaker B: *Gulu la achina Kamuuze?*

The word *mani*, which means “friend”, has already been explained above. The word *mabufalo* is a plural form of the borrowing and vernacularisation that originates and directly translates into the English word **buffalos**. However, the word does not find its way into Chibrazi through this meaning and usage. Rather, the word is transported into Chibrazi through the popular reggae song by Bob Marley, Buffalo Soldier. The word is thus a truncation of *bufalo soja*, which is a vernacularisation of **buffalo soldier** and which is a vernacularisation of **buffalo soldier** and which in Chibrazi is used to mean “soldier”. The Chicheŵa word for “soldiers” is *asilikali*. Hence, Chibrazi shows a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *asilikali* to *mabufalo*.

The two combinations *amawilila* and *anawililila* are borrowed from Chicheŵa. They comprise derivations that come from the word *wilila*, which literary means “be bushy” or “get bushy”. In Chibrazi, the combinations mean “they get angry” and “they got angry”

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respectively. However, the latter only gets its contextual meaning when it is combined with the word *mmene*, which is also taken from Chicheŵa and which means “when” in order to make it “the way they got angry”. If the meaning “to get angry” were to be expressed in Chicheŵa, it would be expressed using the stems *kwiya* or *kalipa*, which would yield the combinations *amakwiya* or *amakalipa* for *amawilila* and *anakwiya* or *anakalipa* for *anawilila*. This demonstrates a clear lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *kwiya* or *kalipa* to the Chibrazi word *wilila*.

The word *thaimu* is a Chibrazi borrowing from the English word **time**, which keeps its meaning as explained above. The word is produced by means of vernacularisation through morphophonological manipulation. In Chicheŵa, “time” is expressed using the word *nthawi*. Thus, there is a lexical shift in Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa word *nthawi* to the Chibrazi word *thaimu*. *Ya* and *ija* are other borrowings from Chicheŵa meaning “of” and “that” respectively. The word *akayombe*, whose origin was not established, is a Chibrazi creation that means “the Malaŵi Young Pioneers”. In speaker B’s utterance, *achina* is a Chicheŵa borrowing that means “the likes of”, while Kamuze is a person’s name.

Another good example of semantic shift wherein a word that is or was used to refer to one concept in a non Malaŵian language is transferred into Chibrazi where it is used to refer to another concept is the word *gatsi*. The word *gatsi*, which is borrowed from the English word **guts**, is produced through morphophonological vernacularisation by way of suffixation in order to assimilate the Chicheŵa morphophonological environment. However, in Chibrazi, the word *gatsi* undergoes semantic shift in order to attain the meaning “intelligence”, which

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is totally different from “courage”, which the English word **guts** actually refers to. The Chicheŵa word for “intelligence” is *nzelu*. This shows a clear lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *nzelu* to the Chibrazi word ***gatsi***. It is important to note that sometimes, ***gasi*** appears as a variation of the word ***gatsi***.

The expression ***huzet***, which is also discussed under examples of semantic maintenance, is the last example to be presented under semantic shift wherein a word that is or was used to refer to one concept in a non Malaŵian language is transferred into Chibrazi where it is used to refer to another concept. In other instances of the use of this expression, ***huzet*** is used as a mechanism for threatening someone or as a defense mechanism when one is threatened. This use of the expression was probably more popular in the eighties than it is at the present. In most cases where the expression was used as an attacking or a defense mechanism, it was accompanied with a karate, kung-fu, or other martial art stance or move. The extract below is taken from a conversation in which a person was narrating a film. In this conversation, the narrator used the expression to explain an action in the film.

The narrator said: ***Chiswazi chinazangotulukila ndikuti “huzet”!*** (Showing a karate stance) ***Magayi wose njenjenje. Zikukhala bwanji? Thu minitsi anawavalika maraundi hosi; wose daki!*** If this were to be translated into English, it would sound something like “Suddenly, Arnold Swartznegger appeared. He displayed a karate stance, surprising all the guys. In a short while, he took them out with round house kicks and they all fled.” There could be several Chicheŵa translations of this utterance; mainly because most of the words have a number of Chicheŵa alternatives, but more specifically because I cannot find a Chicheŵa

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translation of the expression *huzet*. Hence, I will not attempt to provide a Chicheŵa translation. Suffice it to state that in this instance, the expression *huzet* is used as an attacking or a defense mechanism. As it can be seen, the expression is accompanied with a karate stance.

The part *Chiswazi chinazangotulukila* is borrowed from Chicheŵa and it means “Arnold Swartznegger showed up suddenly”. The combination *ndikuti* is also borrowed from Chicheŵa. While the meaning of this combination is “and said”, Arnold Swartznegger did not necessarily say anything. Rather, he displayed a karate stance. It is the karate stance that the expression *huzet* signifies. Two points should be noted. Firstly, the use of the prefix *-chi* is meant to denote the physical and other prowess of the character that is played by Arnold Swartznegger. Secondly, the name of the actor is used instead of the name of the character in the film.

The word *magayi* is made up of the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka plural prefix *ma-* and a vernacularisation of the English word *guy*. The word means “guys”. However, in the context of the narration, the word is used in the generic sense of “people”. In Chicheŵa, the word *anthu* would be used to refer to the guys in this instance, although the word *adani*, which means “enemies”, might also be used. What is clear here is that there is a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *anthu* and *adani* to the Chibrazi word *magayi*. Another Chibrazi word that would be used to mean “enemies” is *nyambaro*.

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The word *wose* is a borrowing from Chicheŵa *wonse*. As it can be seen, the word undergoes a slight morphophonological change in Chibrazi. That is also a lexical shift. *Zikukhala bwanji?* is an expression; in fact, an exclamation, that is used to express emotions such as surprise or shock and fear. In this extract, it is used to express a combination of all those emotions. The word *njenjenje* is another borrowing. It is an idiophone that is used to denote “a state of fear”. The word comes from the Chicheŵa word *njenjenje*. In Chicheŵa, the word is used to mean “to shiver (with fear or with cold)”.

The expression *thu minitsi* is a vernacularisation of **two minutes** and it is borrowed from English. It is generally used to mean “a short time” in Chibrazi. While the word **two** maintains its pronunciation, the word **minutes** is vernacularised to suit the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka linguistic environment. In Chicheŵa, “a short time” is denoted using expressions such as *nthawi pang’ono* and *nthawi yochepa*. That means that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions *nthawi pang’ono* and *nthawi yochepa* to the Chibrazi expression *thu minitsi*. *Thu mina* is also used as an alternative. A simplified version of the Chibrazi expression, *thu minisi*, also exists. In addition to that, there is also *thu minaa*. Interestingly, the literal meaning of **two minutes** in Chicheŵa is *mphindi ziwili*.

*Anawavalika* is a combination that comprises the pronoun *a*, which stands for “he”; the past tense marker *na*, which means “did”; the pronoun *wa*, which means “them”; and *valika*. *Valika* is a borrowing from Chicheŵa. While in Chicheŵa this word means “dress”, in Chibrazi it is used to mean “beat” as used in this case. The narrator literally says “he dressed

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them up in round house kicks” meaning “he beat them up with round house kicks”. If this combination were to be uttered in Chicheŵa, it would be uttered as *anawamenya* or *anawatchaya*. That shows that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *menya* and *tchaya* to the Chibrazi expression *valika*. It is important to note that in Chibrazi, “to dress” is actually *kudresa*, which is borrowed from English **dress up**. Other words that are used to mean “dress up” in Chibrazi are *kubaya*, *kugiya*, *kumphasha*, *kutchena*, and *kulumikiza ulusi*.

As it can be seen, *maraundi hosi* is a vernacularisation of “round house kicks” whereby *ma* is used as a plural marker, “round” is changed into *raundi*, and **house** is changed into *hosi*. The Chibrazi version makes use of the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka plural prefix *ma-* and drops the word “kick”. Chicheŵa does not have a direct translation for **round house kick**. The meaning can only be expressed using a long explanation of the action.

*Wose* is used in the same way as already explained above. The last word, *daki*, is an idiophone that is derived from the word *daka*, which is a borrowing from the English word **duck**, where it is used to mean something like “avoid being hit”. In Chibrazi, the word *daka* is used to mean “run away”. The word undergoes vernacularisation in Chibrazi by way of suffixation. The Chicheŵa translation of “run away” is *thawa*; hence, the word *daki* could be rendered as *kuthawa*. This shows that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *thawa* to the Chibrazi word *daka* and from the Chicheŵa combination *kuthawa* to the Chibrazi word *daki*.

### 5.5. Examples of semantic narrowing

Semantic narrowing is a process whereby a word whose referent originally included a whole range of items stops to include that whole range and only refers to one instance or a few instances of that range (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993). In other words, the word changes from a broad meaning to a narrow meaning. A good example of semantic narrowing in Chibrazi is the word *bozi*, which means “ball”. This word is a manipulation of the English word **ball** in two ways. Firstly, the word is pluralised to become **balls**. Then the word **balls** is vernacularised through suffixation to become *bozi*. The word *bozi* is used in two ways.

On the one hand, the word *bozi* is used to refer to any type of ball that is used in playing a ball game. Such games include netball, football, volleyball and basketball. In this regard, the word *bozi* can be used as a descriptor in front of a name of a game to denote the different types of ball that are used in playing the different ball games. The ball that is used for playing netball would be denoted as *bozi ya netball*; the ball that is used for playing football would be denoted as *bozi ya football* or *bozi ya soccer*; the ball that is used for playing volleyball would be denoted as *bozi ya volleyball* or *bozi ya vole*; while the ball that is used for playing basketball would be denoted as *bozi ya basketball* or *bozi ya bibo*. This is a generic use of the Chibrazi word *bozi*.

On the other hand, the word *bozi* is used to refer to a football match and not any other type of ball game. Other ball games have their own names. For instance, basketball is referred to as *bibo*, while volleyball is referred to as *vole*, both of which are vernacularisations and truncations of their original words, **basketball** and **volleyball** respectively. Netball either

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remains unchanged or it is vernacularised into *netibo*. In this instance, the meaning of the word *bozi* is narrowed down to the game of football and it excludes all other types of ball game. In other words, the word *bozi* is an instance of semantic narrowing because the word is specialised in meaning. The conversation that follows, which was recorded at Viphya Schools, illustrates this.

Speaker A: *Wawatu mani*. “Hullo my friend”

Speaker B: *Wawaditu*. “Hullo”

Speaker A: *Magemu a weekend munawatchekela?* “Did you watch the weekend’s games?”

Speaker B: *Yonse mani. Bozi tawang’amba thu zilo. Bibo chimozimozi. Vole atiphika. Netball sindinatchekele, koma anatikutumulaso. Umaziwa bai ze nthafu, chani chani*. “Yes I did. In football, we beat them by two goals to nil. In basketball, the same. In volleyball, they beat us. And, in netball they also beat us, though I didn’t watch the game. You know because of thighs and other things.”

If this conversation were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would sound something like,

Speaker A: *Moni mzanga*.

Speaker B: *Zikomo*.

Speaker A: *Masewelo a kumapeto kwa sabata yathayi unawawonelela?*

Speaker B: *Inde mzanga. Mpila wamiyendo tawagonjetsa thu zilo. Basketbo chimodzimidzi. Volebo atigonjetsa. Mpila wa ntchembele mbye (netibo) sindinawonelele, koma anatigonjetsanso. Umadziwa malingana ndi nthafu ndi zina zotelo*.



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It is important to note that in this Chicheŵa version of the conversation, although speaker B's utterance is rendered using the Chicheŵa version of the word **football**; that is, *mpila wamiyendo*, the vernacularised version of the word **football**; that is *futubo*, might also be used. The variant for that is *fitibo* and it might also be used in this context. Also, although the Chicheŵa version of the word **netball**; that is, *mpila wa ntchembele mbaye*, is used by speaker B, the vernacularised version of the word **netball**; that is, *netibolo* or its variant *netibo*, could also be used in this context. This conversation shows that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from *mpila wamiyendo* to **bozi**; from *mpila wa ntchembele mbaye* to **netball**; from *basketball* or its vernacularised versions *basketbo* and *basketbolo* to **bibo**, and from *volleyball* or its vernacularised versions *volebo* or *volebolo* to **vole**, although all these words are borrowings from English. More importantly, this conversation shows that the word **bozi** only refers to football because it is the only game that is referred to using this name. The rest of the games; that is, basketball, volleyball and netball are mentioned by their specific names.

In the conversation, the two combinations, **wawatu** and **wawaditu**, are variations of the word **wawa**, which is used as one of the forms of greeting in Chibrazi. In some instances, another variation of the word, **wawido**, is also used. The word comes from Chicheŵa and Chitumbuka *wawa*. In Chicheŵa and Chitumbuka, people use this word to acknowledge the presence of other people as a mark of politeness<sup>9</sup>. As it can be seen, upon being borrowed into Chibrazi, the word *wawa* underwent phonological simplification by changing the sound /w/ into the sound /w/. The word **wawa** and its variants, **wawatu**, **wawadi**, **wawaditu** and

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<sup>9</sup> The more popular form for acknowledging the presence of other people in Chicheŵa and Chitonga is *moni*, with slight phonological differences between the two languages. This is a short form of *tikuwoneni* and *timuwoneni* in the two languages respectively. In Chitumbuka, this appears as *monire*, but I am convinced that even in Chitumbuka, the original form should be *tikuwoneni*.

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*wawido* demonstrate that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chichewa word *moni* to *wawa* and its variants as forms of greeting.

The combination *magemu* is a borrowing of the English word **games** and it means “games”. It comprises the plural marker *ma-* and a vernacularisation of the English word **game** through suffixation. In Chicheŵa, *magemu* is encoded as *masewelo*. A word denoting the specific type of game is added in order to pinpoint the exact game. For example, *masewelo a mpila wa ntchembelembaye* means “netball”. The combination *magemu* shows that there has been a lexical shift in Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa word *masewelo*.

The word *weekend* is a borrowing from English and it means “weekend”. The vernacularised form of the word *weekend*, *wikendi*, which is a product of suffixation, also exists in Chibrazi. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “weekend” is encoded as *kumapeto kwa sabata*. In some cases, this appears as *kumapeto a sabata*, or *mapeto a sabata*. The word *weekend* shows that there has been a lexical shift in Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa expression *kumapeto kwa sabata*, *kumapeto a sabata*, and *mapeto a sabata*.

The combination *munawatchekela* is a Chibrazi combination that includes the Chibrazi word *tchekela*, which means **watch**. The word *tchekela*, is a derivation from the Chibrazi word *tcheka*, which is itself a semantic manipulation of the English word **check**. When the English word **check** was transferred into Chibrazi, its referent was changed from “check” into “see”. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “see” is encoded using such words as *wona*, *penya* and *yang’ana*,

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but it is the word *wona* that has a bearing on the Chibrazi word *tchekela*. This is so because in Chicheŵa, the meaning “watch” is encoded as *wonelela*, which is a derivation from the word *wona*. The word *tchekela* shows that there has been a lexical shift in Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa word *wonela*. It is also clear here that there has been a lexical shift in Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa words *wona*, *penya* and *yang’ana* to the Chibrazi word *tcheka*.

In speaker B’s utterance, the part *yonse mani*, which literary means “the whole of it my friend”, is used to mean “yes”. It comprises the borrowing from Chicheŵa, *yonse*, which means “whole”, and *mani*, which means “friend” and which has already been explained above. The word *yonse*, as used here, is itself a semantic shift; that is, from “whole” in Chicheŵa to “yes” in Chibrazi. In Chicheŵa, “yes” is expressed as *inde*, *ee* or *eya*. Hence, the expression *yonse mani* shows that there has been a lexical shift in Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa words *inde*, *ee* or *eya*. The word *mani* shows that there has been a lexical shift in Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa word *mzanga*, as already explained above.

The combination *tawang’amba* comprises the word *ng’amba*, which is borrowed from Chicheŵa where it means “tear”. Literally, this combination means “we have torn them”. Pragmatically though, the combination is used to mean “we have beaten them”. If this meaning were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it could have been rendered as *tawagonjetsa*. This shows that there has been a lexical shift in Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa word *gonja*, which paves way for combinations such as *tawagonjetsa* to the word *ng’amba*, which makes Chibrazi combinations such as *tawang’amba* possible.

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The combination *atiphika* is another piece of evidence of Chibrazi lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *gonja*. The combination *atiphika* literary means “they have cooked us”. This combination contains the borrowing from the Chicheŵa word *phika*, which means “cook”. In Chibrazi, the combination is used to mean “they have beaten us”. If the combination were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it could have been rendered as *atigonjetsa*. Therefore, this combination shows a lexical shift from Chicheŵa *atigonjetsa* to Chibrazi *atiphika*. Several other words that represent similar semantic shift are used in Chibrazi instead of the word *gonja*. These include *iswa*, which literally means “break”; *sosola*, which literally means “pluck off feathers”; and *lasa*, which literally means “pierce”.

*Thu zilo* is a vernacularisation of English “two-zero”. One significant change in the vernacularisation is the change of the sound /r/ into the sound /l/, which is a morphophonological manipulation. This is in fact a morphophonological simplification. If this were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would be rendered using a variety of long explanations. Over the years, such long explanations have come to be simplified in a way that would make them come out as *zigoli ziwili kwa duu*. The combination *thu zilo* shows that there has been a lexical shift in Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa expression *zigoli ziwili kwa duu*.

Another instance of the process of phonological manipulation that is a morphophonological simplification is the word *chimozi*. This word is a borrowing from the Chicheŵa word *chimodzimodzi*, which means “the same”. In Chibrazi, the word also means “the same”. The only difference is that the Chibrazi word contains the phonological simplification whereby /dzi/ is changed into /z/. The combination *chimozi* shows that there has been a lexical

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shift in Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa word *chimodzimodzi*, although the form largely remains unchanged.

The combination *sindinatchekele* comprises the word **check**, which is borrowed from English. The word **check** undergoes semantic manipulation in Chibrazi to make it embrace the meaning “look”. In addition to that, the word undergoes vernacularisation in order to suit the Chicheŵa morphophonological environment. If this combination were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would be rendered as *sindinawaonelele*. Hence, the Chibrazi combination *sindinatchekele* is a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa combination *sindinawaonelele*, which is essentially a lexical shift from Chibrazi *tchekela*, which is a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa combination *wonelela*.

In the rest of the utterance, *umaziwa*, which means “you know”; *ntchafu*, which means “thighs”; and *chani*, which means “what”, are all borrowings from Chicheŵa. The expression *chani chani* is a product of duplication in Chibrazi. The expression is mainly used to mean “and other things”, or “etcetera” in Chibrazi. However, the combination *umaziwa* is special. The combination, which means “you know”, comprises a phonological simplification of the Chicheŵa word *dziwa* whereby the sound /dzi/ is changed into the sound /zi/. While the former is a typical Chicheŵa sound, the latter is the typical Chibrazi variant. This expression is very popular in Chibrazi. It is used in a similar manner to how the English **you know** is used. *Bai ze* is another common expression that is used in Chibrazi.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The expression is a vernacularisation of the English combination **by the** that includes phonological simplification of the sound /th/ to the sound /z/. The combination is mostly used in front of nouns. If this

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## 5.6. Examples of semantic extension

Semantic extension or semantic broadening is a process in which the meaning of a word is extended or made broader than before. This means that apart from the items that the word used to refer to before, it also refers to other items (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993). The first good example of semantic extension or semantic broadening in Chibrazi that will be discussed is the stem *dya* that is used to form words like *idya* and *kudya*. These words were imported into Chibrazi from the Chicheŵa stem *dya* and its derivations *idya* and *kudya*. *Idya* means “eat”, while *kudya* means “to eat”. When it was brought into Chibrazi, this stem was mainly used to form words that mean “to perform (well), especially in class”.

A good example of this use of the borrowing is in the utterance *Afana Mystic adya boo tsado koyamba*. This utterance means “Mystic has performed well in mathematics for the first expression were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would be rendered as *malingana ndi*, although the translation is not quite exact. Thus, the Chibrazi expression *bai ze* shows a lexical shift from Chicheŵa *malingana ndi*.

In some instances of the use of this expression, the word *bai* is used with the word *ya*, to make *bai ya*, which means “of”. Three popular Malaŵians (in my view) can be cited as good examples of the representation of how the expression *bai ya* is used. The first one is a self-styled unique Blantyre-based entrepreneur who sold different cosmetic products that he concocted himself using other well-known cosmetic products that were in circulation. The man was popularly known as Nzwabani. Personally, I know the man from the early 90s. One of his ‘trade marks’ was *bai ya n’gadzililo*. The man used this expression as he shouted in the streets of the townships in the course of advertising his products. The second person is another self-styled and unique character who can generally be labeled as a comedian, Madolo. The third person is the music artist Njati Njedede who is featured by Fuggie Kasipa in the song “Ukanene”. In the introduction of this song, Njati Njedede uses the expression *umaziwa bebi bai ya n’gadzililo* .... In fact, Njedede’s part of the song is full of Chibrazi words.

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time.” This utterance is a combination of Chicheŵa, Chingoni or isiZulu, Chishona or French and English. The utterance was produced by my classmate who was commenting on my performance in a Mathematics test in a mocking way. Literally, this utterance means “The young man Mystic has eaten mathematics well for the first time.” However, pragmatically, it means “Mystic has performed well in mathematics for the first time.” If this utterance were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would be *Mystic wakhonza bwino masamu koyamba*. There is a clear difference between the Chibrazi utterance and the Chicheŵa translation. The main difference is in terms of the vocabulary that is used. However, the grammatical structure that is used in both utterances is that of Chicheŵa.

In this Chibrazi utterance, the combination *afana* is borrowed from isiZulu of South Africa or Chingoni, its Malaŵian relation wherein it means “young man” or “friend”. In Chibrazi, the word also means “young man” or “friend” as used here. Mystic is a person’s name as is obvious. In Chicheŵa, the combination *afana* would be rendered as *mnyamata*. Hence, this shows that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *mnyamata* to the Chibrazi word *afana*.

The combination *adya* literary means “has eaten”. It is a borrowing from the Chicheŵa combination, *adya*, which comprises the third person plural prefix *a-* and the stem *dya*, which means “eat”. The combination is created through metaphoric manipulation whereby eating is metaphorically used to represent achievement. More specifically, the word is an example of semantic extension. In Chicheŵa, the combination *adya* would be rendered as *akhonza*. This shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa

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stem *khonza* to the Chibrazi stem *dya*. Other instances of the semantic extension of the stem *dya* are presented further below.

The Chibrazi word *boo*, which means “well”, is a loanword that comes from either Chishona *bo* or French *bon*, both of which mean “good” or “well”. It is rather difficult to determine which of the two the loanword originates from. One might argue that this can be determined on the basis of proximity of the loanword to Malaŵian languages, but proximity itself is ambiguous in as far as the two languages are concerned. Chishona is closer to Malaŵian languages in terms of geographical as well as social distance, but French is also close to Malaŵian languages because it is taught in schools within the country. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “good” or “well” would be rendered as *bwino*. This shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *bwino* to the Chibrazi word *boo*.

The word *tsado* is a borrowing that comes from the Chicheŵa word *samu* (singular) or *masamu* (plural). The Chicheŵa word is itself transferred into Chicheŵa from the English word **sum**. The word means “mathematics”. Through morphophonological manipulation, the words *samu* and *masamu* have been changed to become *tsado*. This shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *samu* and *masamu* to the Chibrazi word *tsado*.

The last combination in the utterance, *koyamba*, is another borrowing from Chicheŵa. This combination means “for the first time” and it is used in exactly the same way in Chibrazi.



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Notice that both in the words *afana* and *adya* the plural third person prefix *a-* (that is, the honorific form in this case) is used instead of *wa-*, the third person singular prefix. As already pointed out above, the honorific form is one of the common features in Chibrazi that distinguishes the language from its source languages. The singular forms *mfana* and *wadya* would be used under “normal” circumstances. In that case, the utterance would thus read: ***Mfana Mystic wadya boo tsado koyamba. Or Mystic wadya boo tsado koyamba.***

The use of the stem *dya* in Chibrazi that is exemplified above is itself an extension of the meaning of the original Chicheŵa stem *dya*. With time, the meaning “eat” has been extended in Chibrazi. Apart from being used to mean “perform well” as in the case of the above example, the stem is also used to mean “to have sex”, “to win”, and “to swindle” just to mention some. The example sentences below illustrate these three uses of words that contain the stem *dya* in Chibrazi. The examples were supplied by students from Viphya Schools.

The first example is *Bebi iyoyo tinadya*. This utterance means “I have had sex with that girl (lady or woman)”. This sentence literary means “we have eaten that girl (or lady or woman)”. Considering the age of the boy who uttered this sentence, the most plausible meaning of the word *bebi* in this utterance should be “girl”, although the assumption could be wrong. If this utterance were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would most likely be: *Mtsikana uyoyo ndinagona naye*. This actually means “I have slept with that girl.” The explicit version of the utterance is normally avoided.

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The word *bebi* is a borrowing that is created through the vernacularisation of the English word **baby** (as in “girl”, “lady” or “woman”). In Chicheŵa, the meaning “girl” is encoded using words such as *mtsikana*, *msungwana* or *namwali*; while the meanings “lady” and “woman” are encoded using the words *mayi* and *mzimayi*. This word shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *mtsikana* and other such similar words as *mkazi* to the Chibrazi word *bebi*. *Iyoyo* is a borrowing from Chicheŵa, which means “that”.

*Tinadya* is a Chibrazi combination that comprises *ti* “we”, *na* “did”, and *dya* “eat”. In this instance, the stem *dya* means “have sexual intercourse with”. This shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word for having sex, which is *gonā* to the Chibrazi word *idyā*. Notice that instead of using the ‘normal’ singular marker *ndi* “I”, the boy uses the honorific form *ti* “we”. This is very common in Chibrazi as already mentioned.

It is important to note that sometimes when the word *kudya* is used to denote “having sex”, it is combined with other words. These instances include expressions such as *kudya ntavuma* and *kudya malesa*. The origin of the word *ntavuma* has not been established, but *malesa* is a Chicheŵa form that refers to a particular part of honey, which is sometimes used to refer to honey itself. Hence, in this regard, having sex is compared to and referred to as “eating honey” in Chibrazi. Constructions such as these are common in Bantu idioms. It is also important to note that there are a myriad other words that are used to refer to “having sex” in Chibrazi. These include *kuphwandula*, *kukhwakhwa*, *kupwala*, *kunyoba*, *kuplonga*, *kutimba*, *kulasa*, *kubonza*, *kukhimba*, *kuhama*, *kutchaya*, *kulowa*, *kugwetsa*, *kusoka*,

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*kutafuna, kuiphula (gemu), kumenya, kukwela, and kumenya programu.* Each one of these words and combinations is formed through its own type of metaphoric manipulation and each one of them is a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *kuchinda*, which is euphemised as *kugona*.

The second example of the use of the word *kudya* in Chibrazi that demonstrates semantic extension of the original meaning of the borrowed word appears in the utterance: *Mawule adya Manoma*. This utterance literally translates as “The Bullets have eaten the Nomads”, but it pragmatically means “The Bullets have defeated the Nomads”. Bullets and Nomads are manipulations of names of soccer clubs, Bakili Bullets and Telekom Wanderers respectively; as the teams were called at the time of recording of the utterances (the teams have since changed names due to sponsorships). While the former is simply a clipping of the name Big Bullets into Bullets, the latter comes from first the clipping of the name Telekom Wanderers into Wanderers, and then the paraphrasing of the part Wanderers into Nomads. The clipping and paraphrasing cannot necessarily be attributed to Chibrazi in terms of origin.

However, it is the two manipulations, *Mawule* and *Manoma* that are typical Chibrazi products. Both of these creations are truncations that involve the vernacularisation of the plural forms of the English words **bullet** and **nomad** into *Mabuleti* and *Manomadi* respectively. For the former to attain its current state, it first had to be truncated into *Mabule* and then transformed into *Mawule* by changing the /b/ sound into a /w/ sound. The latter simply underwent truncation to attain its current form *Manoma* by dropping the final /di/. If this sentence were to be uttered in Chicheŵa, it would be: *Bullets yagonjetsa Wanderers*. It is important to note that the vernacularised forms of the two names, *Buletsi* and *Wandalazi*,

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might also be used in this regard. This utterance shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there have been lexical shifts from the original names of the two teams; that is, from Bakili Bullets and Telekom Wanderers to *Mawule* and *Manoma* respectively. The utterance also shows that there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *gonjetsa* to the Chibrazi word *idya*.

The third example of the use of the word *kudya* in Chibrazi that demonstrates semantic extension of the original meaning of the borrowed word appears in the utterance: *Amudyela dola*. This utterance literally means “They have eaten his (or her) money”, but it pragmatically means “They have swindled him of his (or her of her) money”. If this sentence were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would appear as a long description that would attempt to capture the manner in which the swindling took place. One of the Chicheŵa words for money would be used in the long description: either *ndalama* or *makobili*. The other words for *ndalama* in Chicheŵa such as *makwacha* and *matambala* might also be used in this context. It is worth noting that *makwacha* is actually slang in as far as Chicheŵa is concerned. The word comes from the Malaŵian currency, Kwacha.

The combination *amudyela* comprises *a*, which means “they”, *mu*, which means “for him”, and the verb *dyela*, which means “eaten”. This shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa long description that would attempt to capture the manner in which the swindling took place, to the Chibrazi word *idya*. It is important to note that some people may argue that the use of the word *kudya* in the sense of “swindling” is not exclusive to Chibrazi and that it is actually part of Chicheŵa on the basis of its occurrence in Chicheŵa as well. However, this study attributes this use of the word to

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Chibrazi on the basis of the frequency that it has been heard in the context of Chibrazi rather than in the context of Chicheŵa. In this regard, it is also important to note that the word for “swindle” that is more clearly known to belong to Chibrazi is *ponda*. The word is borrowed from Chicheŵa *ponda*, which means “step on”. If the utterance above were to be rendered using this word, it would be rendered as *Amuponda dola*.

The word *dola* is a borrowing from the English word **dollar**. In Chibrazi, the word is used to mean “money” as already explained above. This shows that in as far as Chibrazi is concerned; there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words for money such as *ndalama*, *makobili*, *makwacha* and *matambala* to the Chibrazi word *dola*. There are several other words that are used in Chibrazi to mean “money”. These include *khwidi*, *dinyelo*, *njombwa*, *mandede*, *kashi* or *kash*, *shika*, *shikelo*, *doshi*, *doshmaki*, *khobriz*, *chipu*, *m’pamba*, *mane*, *chilembwe*, *chuma*, *paundi* or *phaundi*, and *mula*. While some of these words are borrowed from Chicheŵa, their use in Chibrazi is very different. For instance, while the word *chuma* means “wealth” in Chicheŵa, in Chibrazi, it simply means “money”.

Another example of semantic extension is the word *phwando*. This word means “party” in Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka (sometimes with a slight variation in Chitonga where it also becomes *phwandu*). In Chicheŵa, the other word for *phwando* is *madyelero*. However, the latter is less popular than the former. This tends to make the latter look as if it is ‘archaic’. In recent times, the word *pate* is more commonly used.

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In some cases, the word *phwando* is used as a Chicheŵa borrowing in Chibrazi whereby it also means “party”. This word can be attributed to Chibrazi just as much as it can be attributed to English- Chicheŵa code switching and it is a borrowing and vernacularisation of the English word **party**. However, in other cases, the word is used with a slight change in meaning; in fact, a semantic extension, where it refers to any form of enjoyment; not necessarily a party; for instance, a routine drinking spree. A good example of this semantic extension is found in the once popular song by a Blantyre based outfit called the Nyasa Gurus that talks about *phwando lazulo linali nyatwa*, which means “yesterday’s party was very nice” to quote just one part.

### 5.7. Examples of other morphophonological manipulation processes

This section explores some of the most common morphophonological manipulation processes that are used in the creation of Chibrazi vocabulary. As it can be seen, morphophonological manipulation includes two kinds of language manipulation. Morphological manipulation refers to the type of language manipulation that involves the application of morphology from one donor language to the lexemes within the mixed language or from another language in order to create new lexemes. Phonological manipulation involves the application of phonology from one donor language to the lexemes within the mixed language or from another language in order to create new lexical items.

A lot of vocabulary items undergo morphophonological manipulation in Chibrazi as already shown in the examples presented above. The boundary between the two types of language manipulation is not always clear cut. In addition to that, most of the vocabulary items in Chibrazi undergo more than one language manipulation process; and, while some of these are

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morphologically inclined, others are phonologically inclined. Hence, the demarcations that are made between the two processes should not be treated too strictly. Both morphological manipulation and phonological manipulation are part of metaphoric manipulation in Chibrazi.

It is important to note that the main idea behind presenting these examples is to demonstrate that there are new lexical items that have been produced in Chibrazi. That being the case, the presentation of the examples focuses on the lexical shift and not morphophonological analysis of the lexical items because, as already stated, that is deferred to other studies.

### 5.7.1. Compounding

Compounding refers to a process whereby new lexical items in Chibrazi are created by combining words or parts of words. What makes this process unique in Chibrazi is that generally the words or parts of words that are combined are from different languages. One good example of words that are combined with other words to form compounds is the word **man**, which is borrowed from English. The word is added to different words both from Chibrazi and other source languages to describe a person in terms of some characteristics. When this happens, the word **man** can either be changed slightly by adding /i/ at the end to achieve morphophonological compatibility with the base language thereby making it *mani*, or it can be left as it is. In the former instance, the word is essentially vernacularised through suffixation. A few examples where the word is combined with different words to form other lexical items are presented below.

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The first example is *ganja man*. The expression is used to mean “a person who smokes *ganja*; that is, Indian hemp”. The word *ganja* is borrowed from Jamaican English or Patois. In Chicheŵa, “a person who smokes ganja” or “a person who smokes Indian hemp” would be referred to using such utterances as *munthu wosuta fodya wankulu* or *munthu wosuta chamba*. As it can be seen, *ganja* is referred to as *fodya wankulu* or *chamba* in Chicheŵa<sup>11</sup>. There are several other words for Indian hemp both in Chicheŵa and in Chibrazi. What is clear here is that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *fodya wankulu* or *chamba* to the Chibrazi word *ganja*. There has also been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions *munthu wosuta fodya wankulu* and *munthu wosuta chamba* to the Chibrazi lexical item *ganja man*.

The second example is *ninja man*. The expression is used to mean “a martial artist”. This expression is formed by adding the English word **man** to the word *ninja*, which is borrowed from the Japanese concept *ninja*. The concept is brought into Chibrazi and it is popularised through films that feature this concept. The expression *ninja man* involves semantic manipulation of the word *ninja* such that the word is used as a generic word for “martial art”. Chicheŵa does not have a direct translation of this expression. That means if at all the expression is to be translated in to the language, it would have to be done using a long description of the concept in Chicheŵa. Otherwise, a *ninja man* would loosely be referred to as *munthu womenya* or *munthu wakutha ndewu* in Chicheŵa. I will therefore not attempt to provide such a translation.

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<sup>11</sup> Some of the other words for *ganja* in Chibrazi are *nthimbi*, *nanzi*, *widi*, *dyafu*, *kabenza*, *fodya wa mafumu*, *zitolilo* and *mlaka*.



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The last example is the expression *yada man*. This expression is used in Chibrazi to mean “a person who is sleeping” or “a person who is leaving”. Before explaining the meaning of this expression, it is important to explain the word *yada*. The word *yada* is a derivation from the Chibrazi word *yadi*, which is a morphophonological manipulation of the English word **yard** by way of vernacularisation. The word comes into Chibrazi through Jamaican English or Patois, which features highly in Jamaican reggae music wherein the word **yard** is used to mean “home” or “house”. The word gets to embrace this meaning through semantic manipulation of the meaning of the English word **yard**, that is; “the area around a house” into meaning “house” or “home” through semantic extension. The yard around a house is metaphorically used to represent a house itself or a home itself. In Chicheŵa, the words *nyumba* and *khomo* are used in different ways to mean “house”, “yard” and “home” depending on the prepositions that are used with the words. This shows that there is a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *nyumba* and *khomo* to the Chibrazi word *yadi*.

Utterances such as *Ndikuvaya pa yadi* are commonplace in Chibrazi. This utterance means “I am going home”. The combination *ndikuvaya* contains the Chibrazi word *vaya*. The word *vaya* is a borrowing from the South African urban contact vernacular, Tsotsitaal, which borrowed the word from Afrikaans. A good example of this word in Tsotsitaal is found in the name of the Johannesburg City’s Bus Rapid Transit System (RBT) *ReaVaya*, which translates as “we are going”. But, the word might as well be a semantic manipulation of the English word *via*. *Pa* is a preposition that means “at”. The utterance *Ndikuvaya pa yadi* can also be rendered as *Ndikuyada*. In this instance, two changes take place to the original utterance. Firstly, the preposition *pa* is dropped. Secondly, the suffix *-i* is changed to *-a* to make *yadi* *yada*. This new product is then combined with the construction *ndiku*, which means “I am”.

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It is from this truncated version of the utterance *ndikuvaya pa yadi*; that is, *ndikuyada*, which the compound *yada man* emanates. The compound *yada man* means “the man who is going” or “the man who is at home”. However, the expression is used to simply mean “the man who is leaving”. That is to say that through a combination of semantic shift and semantic extension, the word *yadi* is given the meanings “a place where a person sleeps” and “a place where one goes away from to fend for oneself and returns to rest”. The expression *yada man* is thus used to encode meanings such as “a person who is leaving (from home)” or “a person who is sleeping (at home)”. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “a person who is leaving” would be encoded as *munthu amene akupita* or *munthu amene akuchoka*; while the meaning “a person who is sleeping” could be encoded as *munthu amene akugona*. This shows lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions *munthu amene akupita* or *munthu amene akuchoka* and *munthu amene akugona* to the Chibrazi expression *yada man*. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “sleep” is encoded using the word *gona*, while the meanings “leave” or “go away from” are encoded using the words *pita* or *choka*. This shows that there is a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *pita*, *choka* and *gona* to the Chibrazi word *yada*.

The word *mani* is also used in front of people’s names, especially those of males. In this sense, the word is used as an honorific marker. An important point to note with regard to the use of the word is that while the unchanged form is more popular when the morpheme is added after words (as a suffix), the vernacularised form is more popular when the word is added before a name (as a prefix). In the latter case, the word is used as an honorific marker. Examples of cases where the word is used as a prefix are: *Mani Kumpe*, and *Mani Chim*, *Mani Chimz*, *Mani Chimze* or *Mani Chimzo*. *Kumpe* is the short form of the person’s name Kumpeta, while *Chim*, *Chimz*, *Chimze*, and *Chimzo* are the short forms for the person’s

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name Chimwemwe. It is interesting to note that while the short form for Kumpeta is also Kumpe in Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka, the short forms for the name Chimwemwe in Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka are *Chimwe* and *Mwemwe*. In some cases, *Mwemwemwe* is also used as an alternative for Chimwemwe, but this is not necessarily a short form. This shows a difference between Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka on the one hand; and Chibrazi on the other hand.

It is important to note that apart from being used for purposes of compounding, the word *mani* is also used independently as exemplified in some of the sections above. One more example sentence where the word is used in this manner is *Mani awawa ada ndi mani*. This utterance combines elements from Chicheŵa, English and Chitonga. I encountered this utterance during an interaction with some speakers of Chibrazi in a tavern. In fact, the utterer of the sentence was telling his friend (the third person in the interaction) about me. The statement was uttered several times before as well as after I bought the man a packet of beer.

This utterance can mean any of the following: “My friend, this man is a great man.”; “My friend, this man is a friend.”; “Man, this man is a man.”; and “My friend, this man is a man.”. These are only some of the possible English translations of the one utterance. Judging from the context of the interaction, the speaker meant the utterance in the sense of the first English translation listed above, which is itself not devoid of ambiguity. As already mentioned, the word *mani* originates from the English word **man** and it can either mean “man”, “friend” or “greatness”. *Awawa* is borrowed from Chichewa and it means “this one (honorific)”. The

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word *ada* originates from the Chitonga word *ada*, which means “man”, “mister” or “father” as already explained. In Chibrazi, the word is mostly used to mean “friend” or “male”.

It is difficult to provide a perfect Chicheŵa rendition of this statement because of the ambiguity in the meaning of the word *mani*. But, perhaps it would be more useful to provide some more sociolinguistic detail around the utterance. Utterances such as these are very common in the context of beer drinking especially in situations where someone who does not have (enough) money or just wants to save his or her own tries to persuade another person who is perceived or known to have money to buy a beer, any other drink, a cigarette or some other item. This is part of what is commonly referred to as *kuhasula* in Chibrazi, which means “working one’s way into getting what one wants”. This expression is a vernacularisation of the English word **hustle**. The expression originates from the English concept of *hustle* which has similar connotations in recent use. In other words, such people *amahasula biye*, “they hustle for beer”.

It is interesting to note that the combination *kuhasula* (and its related forms) is normally used by the ‘hustlers’ themselves, and it is more of a prestigious term than otherwise. In the context of beer drinking, ‘beer hustlers’ are derogatorily referred to using the label *telela*, which means “trailer”. This is because they do not go to beer drinking places independent of others, but rather *amamanga telela*, literary meaning “they hook themselves to other people as trailers”. The implied meaning of this expression is that “they trail or follow other people”. The combination *amamanga* is borrowed from Chicheŵa where it also means “they hook”, while *telela* is a vernacularisation of the English word **trailer**. The trick that the hustlers employ in such instances is to get a person to feel so elevated (financially in this case) to the

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point that they feel that if they do not buy the beer or whatever else the hustler wants, then they will appear unworthy of the praise that is accorded to them by the hustler.<sup>12</sup>

### 5.7.2. Pluralisation and depluralisation

As it can be seen from the two words, these processes are opposites of each other. Pluralisation is a morphophonological process whereby words that are transferred from source languages are pluralised to yield new words in Chibrazi. The words that are derived from this process are normally not plural in meaning though. They actually have to undergo other language manipulation processes in order to be changed to plural. A good example is the word *shets*. This word is a singular word that is created through the transfer of the plural English word “shirts” into Chibrazi. In order to pluralise this word, the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka plural morpheme *ma-* has to be prefixed to the word to make it *mashets* or its variant *mashetsi*.

The following conversation shows how the word is used in Chibrazi.

Speaker A: *Shets yaboo mani*. “Nice shirt my friend”

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<sup>12</sup> In discourse analysis, such an utterance would be called a pre-sequence (see Cook, 1989). By definition, a pre-sequence is a type of exchange that draws attention to the kind of turn that will be taken next. In other words, it prepares the way for the kind of turn that is going to be taken next by an interlocutor. Pre-sequences may be used to obtain the right to a longer turn, or to defend the next speaker against refusing, or to save time by determining whether to continue or not. In the Chibrazi example above, the speaker achieved the second function; that is, he made sure that I do not refuse to buy him a beer, which he asked for in the course of my conversation with him.

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Speaker B: *Umaziwa bai ze Jonitu basi. Yaife ija. Mungotizolowela. Mashets ndi chani pa maso paife?* “It is my habit my friend. I bought this shirt in South Africa. Just get used to me. What are shirts before me?”

In this conversation, the first speaker complimented his friend for the nice shirt that he was wearing using the singular form of the word *shets*. The speaker also used a singular subject marker *ya* and not the plural one *a*. In response to that, the second speaker uttered a long arrogant response that simply meant some kind of acknowledgement of the compliment. The second speaker added the plural marker *ma* to the word *shetsi* in order to show that he was referring to the plural form of the noun, *mashets*. In Chicheŵa, the word *shetsi* would be denoted using descriptions such as *chovala cha kuntunda* or the general term *malaya*. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions *chovala cha kuntunda* and *malaya* to the Chibrazi words *shetsi* and *mashets*.

*Yaboo* is a combination of the singular subject marker *ya* and the Chibrazi word *boo*, which is borrowed from either Chishona *bo* or French *bon* as already explained earlier. It is used to mean “good one” or “nice one” here. The word *mani* has also been explained already and it is used in the sense of “friend” as well here. *Umaziwa* is a borrowing from Chicheŵa *umadziwa*, which means “you know”. In Chibrazi though, the /dz/ is changed to /z/ by way of morphophonological simplification. *Joni* is the Chibrazi name that is used for Johannesburg, but it means “South Africa in general”. *Yaife* is a combination of *ya*, which is already explained above and the Chicheŵa borrowing *ife*, which means “us”. The combination means “my style”; hence, the plural form is used as an honorific marker. *Ija* is another borrowing from Chicheŵa, which means “the one” or “that one”. The rest of the utterance comprises borrowings from Chicheŵa, which in Chicheŵa would be rendered as *Ungondizolowela*.

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*Malaya ndi chani pamaso paine.* The basic difference between the Chibrazi version and the Chicheŵa one is that the former uses the plural markers *mu*, *ti* and *fe*; instead of *u*, *ndi* and *ne* that are used in the Chicheŵa version.

This example suggests the point that the word *shets* is not a case of double pluralisation, which happens to a lot of words that are borrowed from English into Malaŵian languages. In that regard, it is important to note that the word *mashati* or its variant *masheti* is also used as the plural of *shets* in some cases. The two words are both borrowings from the same English word *shirt*. They are pluralised forms of *shati* and *sheti* respectively. They both add the plural prefix *-ma* in order to be pluralised.

Another type of pluralisation that takes place in Chibrazi includes words that are created by making use of the English plural morphemes */-s/* and */-es/*. These words would perhaps be understood better if they were presented as outcomes of the process involving the application of morphology from one donor language to the lexemes from another language as explained by Kiessling and Mous (2004). However, there is so much variation among these words that they cannot neatly fit into this description. Hence, they are classified under pluralisation.

One example is the word *yakaz* or its variant *yakazi*, which is created using the Chibrazi combination *kuyaka*, which means “to drink”, “to be drunk” or “to get drunk”. The origin of this combination is the Chicheŵa combination *kuyaka*, which means “to burn”. The pluralised form of the Chibrazi combination, *yakaz*, is created by pluralising *yaka*, which is

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the stem of the combination *kuyaka* using the morpheme */-z/*. Sometimes the word *yakaz*, undergoes further manipulation whereby it is turned into *yakaz feri*. This realisation of the word emanates from the proximity in sound that the combination shares with Walkers Ferry, a name of a place in Blantyre, Malaŵi. In other instances, the suffix *-roz* is added to the word to make it *yakaroz*. The variant of the Chibrazi combination *kuyaka*, *yaking*, which is formed by adding the English progressive form *-ing*, also undergoes pluralisation to make it *yakings* sometimes. In Chicheŵa, the meanings “to drink”, “to be drunk” or “to get drunk” would be denoted using combinations such as *kumwa mowa*, *kukhuta* or *kuledzela*. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions *kumwa mowa* and *kuledzela* to the Chibrazi words *kuyaka*, *yakas*, *yakaz feri*, *yakaroz* and *yakings*.

*Khutazi*, which is also created through pluralisation, is yet another word that is used to express “drinking” or “getting drunk” in Chibrazi. The origin of this word is *kukhuta*, which is a Chicheŵa or Chitumbuka combination that means “to be full” or “to get full” (in the sense of food). The Chicheŵa or Chitumbuka word is metaphorically used in Chibrazi to mean “to drink”, “to be drunk” or “to get drunk”. It is from this metaphoric manipulation that the pluralised form *khutazi* is created. The morpheme */-zi/* is added to the stem *khuta*. Just as with *kuyaka*, *kukhuta* has the two variants *khuting* and *khutings*. The former is created by adding the English progressive morpheme *-ing*, while the latter is created by pluralising the product of that. Interestingly, *kukhuta* has got yet another variant in Chibrazi. This is *khutros* or *khutroz*. The word carries the same meaning “to drink”, “to be drunk” or “to get drunk”. By virtue of the word *khutros* coinciding with; that is, sounding similar to Boutros, which is the name of the former United Nations’ Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali, in Chibrazi, drinking beer is sometimes referred to as *khutros khutros gali*. This demonstrates



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lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions *kumwa mowa* and *kuledzela* to the Chibrazi words *khutazi*, *khuting*, *khutings*, *khutros*, *khutroz* and *khutros khutros gali*.

Three more examples of pluralisation are listed here. The word *injinz* or its variant *injinzi* is a borrowing and vernacularisation of the English word **Engineering**. This word is used to refer to the study field engineering. Just as its donor, the word does not have a plural form. Chicheŵa does not have a direct translation for engineering; hence, a description would have to be used. The word *pots* or its variant *potsi* is a borrowing and vernacularisation of the English word **pot**. The word maintains its original meaning, which is encoded as *poto* in singular and pluralised as *mapoto* in Chicheŵa. The plural forms *pots* and *potsi* are *mapots* and *mapotsi* respectively. The word *kochez* or its variant *kochezi* is a borrowing and vernacularisation of the English word **coach**. This word also maintains its original meaning. In Chicheŵa, it is encoded as *mphunzitsi wa masewelo*. The plural form of the word is *makochez* or its variant *makochezi*.

Depluralisation involves changing words that seem as if they are in plural form into what could be supposed to be their singular forms. Generally, in this process, words that denote uncountable nouns, but which sound and are orthographically presented as if they denote countable nouns, are changed in order to make them look like words in singular form. Such words can be referred to as pseudo plurals because they sound like plural words. Depluralisation commonly happens to words that are borrowed from the grammatical bases of Chibrazi; that is, Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka; for example. Generally, the basic

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meanings of the words remain intact. Three examples, all of which are taken from Chicheŵa Chibrazi, are provided here.

The first example is the word *gazi*. This word comes from the Chicheŵa word *magazi*, which means “blood”. The Chibrazi word appears as if it is a singular form of the original word because it contains *ma*, the morpheme that is used for pluralising words in Chicheŵa and other Malaŵian languages. This demonstrates lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *magazi* to the Chibrazi word *gazi*. The conversation below, which was recorded at Chancellor College in 1998, illustrates how the word is used. The conversation took place between two friends who were discussing the death of their mutual friend.

Speaker A: *Kodi akuti zinakhala bwanji?* “According to them, what happened?”

Speaker B: *Akuti anataya gazi lochulukilapo. Komaso lina linakhena mubrenzo.*

“They say he lost a lot of blood. And, some of it went into the brain.”

In this example, not only did speaker B use the supposed singular form of the Chicheŵa word *magazi*, but he also employed singular prefixes *lo-* in *lochulukilapo*, which means “a lot”, *li-* in *lina*, which means “some of it”, and *li-* in *linakhena*, which means “it entered”, rather than the corresponding plural forms *o-*, *e-* and *a-* respectively, to achieve subject verb agreement with the singular form. If this conversation were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would read:

Speaker A: *Kodi akuti zinakhala bwanji?*

Speaker B: *Akuti anataya magazi ochulukilapo. Komanso ena analowa mu ubongo.*

Here, while the first speaker’s utterance remains the same as in Chibrazi, the second speaker’s utterance changes. Speaker B’s utterance contains the conventional *magazi*, and

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accordingly, the Chicheŵa conventional prefixes *o-*, *e-* and *a-* rather than the singular *lo-*, *li-* and *li-*. The word ***khena*** demonstrates lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *lowa*. The word originates from the isiZulu or Chingoni word *ngena*, which means “enter”. Sometimes this word is used in its original form.

The second example of depluralisation is the word ***lilo***. This word is a borrowing and clipping that is derived from the Chicheŵa word *malilo* and it means “funeral”. The word ***lilo*** also appears as if it is a singular form of the original word because it contains ***ma***, the morpheme that is used for pluralising words in Chicheŵa and other Malaŵian languages. It is interesting to note that the word ***lilo*** sometimes undergoes further manipulation to become ***li roy*** or ***li roy siboz***. Lee Roy Seybos is a name of a Jamaican reggae artist. This name is manipulated to mean “funeral” by virtue of the closeness of the first names Lee Roy to the clipping ***lilo***, notwithstanding the difference between the /l/ and the /r/. This demonstrates lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *malilo* to the Chibrazi words ***lilo***, ***li roy***, or ***li roy siboz***.

The last example of depluralisation is the word ***vuzi***. This word originates from the Chicheŵa word ***mavuzi***, which means “pubic hair”. The word also appears as if it is a singular form of the original word because it is created by dropping the plural marker ***ma***, the morpheme that is used for pluralising words in Chicheŵa and other Malaŵian languages. However, the word is not necessarily plural because it denotes an uncountable noun.

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### 5.7.3. Duplication

Duplication is a morphophonological process in which words are created by repeating syllables of other words. The words *kukaka* and *kakaka* are two good examples of this morphophonological process. In Chibrazi, these words denote the meanings “to laugh” and “laughter” respectively. The origin of these words has got something to do with the expression *kikiki*, which is used to denote laughter or the act of laughing in Malaŵian languages; for instance, Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka. *Kukaka* is a verb, while *kakaka* is the corresponding noun. It can be seen that the base form of the verb; that is *kaka*, is formed by duplicating the syllable /ka/. The noun for this word, *kakaka* is simply formed by duplicating this syllable. It is important to note that words that contain duplication and of this kind do not always have such correspondence between nouns and verbs or words of other parts of speech.

In Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka, the meaning “laughter” is denoted using the words *phwete*, *seko* and *seko* respectively; while the meaning “to laugh” is encoded using the combination *kuseka* in all the three language. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka words that denote the meaning “laughter”; that is, *phwete*, *seko* and *seko* respectively; to the Chibrazi word *kakaka*. This also demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka word that denotes the meaning “to laugh”; that is, *kuseka*; to the Chibrazi word *kukaka*. There are several other words that are used to denote the meaning “laughter” in Chibrazi; especially written Chibrazi, that are formed through reduplication. Some of the words are *hahaha*, *hehehe*, *hiihi*, *hohoho*, *huhuhu*, *phwaphwaphwa*, *kwakwakwa*, *kwekwekwe*. In some cases, the morpheme *mu-* is prefixed to the words to yield words such as *muhahaha*, for example.

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Another example of duplication is the word *nkwanyanya*. This word originates from the English word **squad**. The word is pronounced in two ways in Chibrazi. The one form is pronounced as it is pronounced in English, while the other form is vernacularised into *skwadi* in Chibrazi. Two of the meanings of the original English word are “a small group of people trained to work together” and “a team in sports from which the players for a match are chosen” (Cambridge advanced learners’ Dictionary, 2005). When this word was imported into Chibrazi, two variants of the word were created. The first one maintained the first English dictionary meaning. The second variant embraced an extension of the second of the two original English meanings specified above.

The meaning of the word was changed into “a crowd of people”. The word *skwadi* with the changed meaning later evolved into *nkwadi*, which later evolved into *nkwanyanya* through morphophonological manipulation. As it can be seen, the word *nkwanyanya* contains a duplication of the morpheme /*nya*/. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “a crowd of people” is denoted as *gulu la anthu* or *chinantindi cha anthu*. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions *gulu la anthu* or *chinantindi cha anthu* to the Chibrazi words *skwadi*, *nkwadi* and *nkwanyanya*.

There are several other words that are formed through duplication in Chibrazi. These include the ones that follow. *Lololo* or its variants *rororo* and *lwalwalwa* or its variant *rwarwarwa* are used to mean “many” or “a lot”, which in Chicheŵa is encoded using the stems *mbili* and *basi* and words such as *zedi* and *nkhaninkani*. *Khwakhwakhwa* and its variant *lululu* are used to mean “broke”, which in Chicheŵa would be encoded using a variety of descriptions.

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*Dadada* is used to mean “delay”, which in Chicheŵa is encoded using the stem *chedwa*. *Pakalapakala* and its variant *pakrapakra*, which is an Anglicised version of *pakalapakala*, are used to mean “a state of confusion” or “a state of disturbance”. In Chicheŵa, this would be encoded using a variety of explanations. *Salalala* is used to mean “beauty” or “a beautiful girl”, “a beautiful lady” or “a beautiful woman”. In Chicheŵa, beauty is encoded using the stem *kongola*. Consequently, “a beautiful girl” would be encoded as *mtsikana wokongola*, *msungwana wokongola* or *namwali wokongola*; while “a beautiful lady” and “a beautiful woman” would be encoded as *mai wokongola* or *mzimai wokongola*. *Talalala* and its variant *tananana* are used to mean “English”. In Chicheŵa, English is Chingelezi, but sometimes Chizungu is also used.

#### 5.7.4. Truncation or clipping

Truncation or clipping is a morphophonological process through which a word or a phrase is shortened. The process is one of the ways in which communication is simplified in Chibrazi. It is commonly applied to nouns that denote names; for instance, names of people, places, school subjects and institutions. The creators of Chibrazi just have a knack for shortening names. As such, one can bet that every Malaŵian name has its short form in Chibrazi. This habit is typical of urban contact vernaculars as Kiessling and Mous (2004) observe.

Some of the examples of truncation of names of people are *Tcha*, *Tchale*, *Tchalii* and *Tchalo*; which come from the name Charles; *Nkhankhu*, *Nkha* and *UK*, which come from the name Unkhankhu; *Joze* and *Jozee*, which come from the name Joseph; *Thini*, which comes from the name Martin; and *Edo* and *Dwa*, which come from the name Edward. Examples of truncation of names of places include *BT*, *Bithiz*, *Bithizi*, *B-Town*, *Bithaz* and

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*Bithazi*; which come from the name Blantyre; *Bay*, which comes from the name Nkhata-Bay; *Chinkhz*, which comes from the name Chintcheche; *LL*, *Elazi* and *Elozi*, which come from the name Lilongwe; and *Keroz* and *KG*, which come from the name Karonga. Examples of truncated names of school subjects include *Bayo*, which comes from the name Biology; *Eju*, which comes from the name Education or Education Foundations; *Fizo*, which comes from the name Physical Science; *Jiyo*, which come from the names Geography and Geography; and *Jome*, which comes from the name Geometry.

Sometimes clipping happens simultaneously with other processes for creating lexemes in Chibrazi. In other words, the lexical items undergo a number of other processes including truncation. Hence, some names are not only shortened forms, but they are also instances of other strategies of language manipulation. One example of a person's name that undergoes truncation and other changes is the name Zalerapi. The name first undergoes truncation and aspiration to become *Raphi*. Then it undergoes metathesis to become *Phari*, *Ripha* or *Riphi*. Truncations of names of places are even better illustrations of this and the names Blantyre and Lilongwe best demonstrate this. To begin with, through truncation, Blantyre became *BT*, while Lilongwe became *LL*. Following from these, *BT* became *BTs*, while *LL* became *Ls* through pluralisation. The two were then vernacularised. Following that, *BTs* became *Bithiz*, *Bithaz* or *Bithazi*, while *Ls* became *Elazi* or *Elozi*<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Through similar changes, Ekweneni has become *Ekhwenzi*, and Chintcheche has become *Chinkhz*.

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It is important to note that while truncation is a common process in all languages, it tends to be used in a special way in Chibrazi in order to produce new forms. In addition to that, there are differences between certain truncations that are employed in other Malaŵian languages and those that are employed in Chibrazi, although some of them are common to both. A good example that distinguishes Chibrazi and other Malaŵian languages in terms of truncation is the name Chimwemwe. While the short forms for this name in other Malaŵian languages are *Chimwe* and *Mwemwe*, in Chibrazi, the most common short forms for the name are ***Chim***, ***Chimz***, ***Chimze***, and ***Chimzo***<sup>14</sup>. In some cases, *Mwemwemwe* is also used in other Malaŵian languages.

Truncation is not only applied to names, but it is also generally applied as a speech style. The speakers of Chibrazi cut words, phrases and sentences just as a way of speaking. In this regard, there are two general ways in which truncation works. In the first instance, a speaker cuts a word, a phrase or a sentence and his or her interlocutor(s) come in with the missing part. The example below, which was taken from a conversation in which one person was narrating a film to others, illustrates this.

Speaker A: ***Mukapitiliza ndikuvekani makha...***

Speaker B: ***Makhatcha.***

Speaker A does not complete the word ***makhatcha*** leaving it to the interlocutor to do so. The interlocutor understands that and does exactly as expected. Literally, this utterance means “If you continue, I will dress you up in slaps”, or “If you continue, I will clothe you in slaps”, but its actual meaning is “If you continue, I will slap you”.

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<sup>14</sup> I find it very interesting when I introduce myself to South Africans who generally find it hard to pronounce my name, Chimwemwe Kamanga. When I ask them to come up with alternative means of calling my name, they come up with *Chi*, *Chimz*, *Chimza*, *Chimzoza*, *Chim Chim* and *CK* as some of the truncations or clippings of my name. What is interesting is that *Chim* and *Chimz* are actually typical in Chibrazi.



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In the exchange above, *mukapitiliza*, which means “if you continue”, is a borrowing from Chicheŵa. *Ndikuvekani* is another borrowing from Chicheŵa, but one that is peculiar to Chibrazi. *Ndi* is a subject marker “I”, *ku* is the tense marker “will”, *veka* is a verb “dress up” or “clothe”, and *ni* is an object marker “you”. It is the verb *veka* that makes this combination a Chibrazi combination. While in Chicheŵa the word *veka* is used to mean “dress up” or “clothe”, in Chibrazi, the word is used to mean “beat”. In Chicheŵa, “beat” is encoded using words such as *menya*, *kuntha* or *tchaya*. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *menya*, *kuntha* and *tchaya* to the Chibrazi word *veka*. It should be noted that the variant of this word, which is also a variant of the Chicheŵa word, *valika* is also possible.

The word *makhatcha* is a Chibrazi word for “slaps”. The word is a plural form of the word *khatcha*, which is an idiophone that captures the sound that is produced when a slap lands or is landed wherever it strikes. Some of the Chicheŵa words for the word *khatcha* are *mbama*, *pama* and *khofi*. These words are pluralised as *mambama*, *mapama* and *makofi* respectively. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *mbama*, *pama* and *khofi*, which are pluralised as *mambama*, *mapama* and *makofi*, respectively to the Chibrazi word *khatcha*, which is pluralised as *makhatcha*.

Chibrazi has got several other words and expressions that are used as alternatives for the word *makhatcha*. One word whose origin is the name of a character in a school textbook is *bwande*. Another word is *mbamela*, which is a manipulation of the words *mbama* and *pama*. The word *mbamela* comes about as a result of the proximity of *pama* to the name Pamela.

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The singular form for *makofi*, *khofi*, is used to produce two other synonyms for the word *makhatcha*; *khofi olomide* and *khofin wekshop*. The former is truncated into *olomide* and the latter is sometimes truncated into *wekshop*. *Khofi olomide* comes from the name of a popular Congolese musician, while *khofin wekshop* comes from English “coffin workshop”. I would not be surprised to see *barak*, *obama*, or *barak obama* being other synonyms of the word *khatcha*. This is because the name Obama sounds similar to the Chicheŵa words *mbama* and *pama*.

In the second instance of truncation, a speaker truncates a word, a phrase or a sentence and completes it himself or herself. The following example illustrates this. *Abebi ifeyo tikubolela ini... iniyo (inuyo). Umaziwa ineyo ndi mwana Ja... mwana Jafe*. This utterance can be translated as “Baby, I want yo’ ... you. You know my name is Ja... Japhe (Japheth).” Before explaining this example, it should be pointed out that the utterer of this extract is someone who at the time of recording the utterance was still struggling with Chicheŵa. He was a Chitumbuka mother tongue speaker who had just moved to Mzuzu City and he was learning to perfect his Chicheŵa for the first time. At the same time, he was also learning Chicheŵa Chibrazi. As such, his pronunciation of most of the words was heavily influenced by Chitumbuka. This led him to change most of the words in a unique manner.

In this extract, the speaker cuts two words and completes them himself. Firstly, he cuts the word *iniyo*. The word *iniyo* was actually supposed to be *inuyo*. Secondly, he truncates a vernacularised form of his own name Japheth. In proper Chibrazi, this extract should have come out as: *Abebi ifeyo tikubulila inu... inuyo. Mumaziwa ineyo ndi mwana Ja... mwana*

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*Jafe*. If it were to be rendered in Chicheŵa, it would have been something like: *Mtsikana iwe; ineyo ndakukonda. Ine dzina langa ndine Jafeti*. “Girl; I like you. My name is Japheth.”

The combination *abebi* contains the Chibrazi borrowing *bebi*, which is a vernacularisation of the English word **baby**. This word has already been explained. It means “girl” in this instance. The combination *tikubulila* contains the Chibrazi word *bulila*, which means “look for”. This word was used inappropriately here. The word that is normally used under such circumstances is *foyila* or its variant *poyila*. Thus, the boy should have used the derivation *foyilila* or its variant *poyilila*. The words *bulila*, *foyila* and *poyila*, as explained here, are all lexical shifts from the Chicheŵa word *funa*. The origins of the words *bulila*, *foyila* and *poyila* were not established.

It can be argued that when truncation is used as a speech style, it acts as a technique for ensuring that one’s interlocutors actively participate in conversation. By having to complete what one person begins, the interlocutors are persuaded to stay actively involved in the conversation. It is important to note that truncation is also used as a speech style by many people as they speak other languages other than Chibrazi. Teachers are one good example in this regard. Teachers generally capitalise on the potential that truncation has in maintaining active participation of their learners. A lot of teachers truncate their utterances and expect their learners to complete them. Their learners indeed complete the utterances thereby staying actively involved in lessons. However, the nature of truncation that is employed in Chibrazi is different from that. Apart from maintaining active participation of interlocutors by actually engaging them in the conversation, truncation also makes conversation entertaining.

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### 5.7.5. Metathesis

Metathesis is a morphophonological process that involves the swapping or transposition of morphemes or syllables in words. However, there are also cases where the process involves whole words and phrases in sentences. Other scholars (for example, Kiessling and Mous, 2004, and Hammond, and Hughes, 1978) perceive this process as a language game. For instance, Kiessling and Mous observe that “metathesis and other language games are attractive because they add an element of competition, when used productively”, and “one can gain extra prestige if one can produce them quickly” (2004: 324).

Hammond and Hughes, (1978) perceive metathesis as an instance of word pun. In their theory of punnology (a theory that seeks to explain word puns), they say that word puns can be seen as ‘accidents of language’ that invest certain words with the same sounds. A word pun, they say, is created when someone (a punster) notices such ‘accidents of language’ and draws two disparate meanings together in each punning word, and orchestrates these absurd relations into a capricious whole. In a Metathesis, words in a phrase exchange some of their phonemes or letters in order to form new words in a new phrase.

Metathesis occurs at two levels. Firstly, metathesis occurs at the word level. This process can also be referred to as morphological transposition (as in Kamanga, 2008) in which case it is seen as a swapping of morphemes within words. This can also be referred to as *lexical metathesis*. Three example words are presented to illustrate this first type of metathesis. **Shika** is a lexical metathesis that means “money” or “wealth”. The word is a metathesis of the Chibrazi word *kashi* or *khashi*, which is transferred into Chibrazi from the English word **cash**. In this word, the syllables /ka/ or /kha/ and /shi/ are swapped. It is important to note

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that the aspirated version of the syllable /ka/, /kha/ is not used in the metathesis. It is equally important to note that sometimes *shika* undergoes further manipulation to become *shikelo*, but it maintains its meaning. In Chicheŵa, “money or wealth” is encoded using words such as *ndalama* or *makobili* as already explained. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *ndalama* or *makobili* to the Chibrazi words *kashi* and *khashi*, which are truncated into *shika* and *shikelo*.

Another example of lexical metathesis is the word *laphwa*. This lexical metathesis originates from the Chibrazi word *phwala* whose origin was not established. In Chibrazi, the word is used to mean “testicle”, “a stupid person” or “a foolish person”. In the metathesis, the syllables /phwa/ and /la/ are swapped. The syllables of the plural form of the word, *mapwala*, can also be transposed to produce *malaphwa*. As it can be seen, the plural form does not utilise the unaspirated form *pwa*. Rather, it utilises the aspirated form *phwa*. Interestingly though, the forms that are produced through metathesis; that is, *laphwa* and *malaphwa*, are more applicable to the second meaning; that is, “a stupid person” or “a foolish person”, than they are to the first meaning, “testicle”<sup>15</sup>. In Chicheŵa, “testicle” is encoded using the word *tchende*, while “a stupid person” or “a foolish person” is encoded using words such as *chitsilu*, *chidzete* and *mbutuma*. This demonstrates two lexical shifts that have taken place in Chibrazi. The first lexical shift is from the Chicheŵa word *tchende* to the Chibrazi word *phwala*. The second lexical shift is from the Chicheŵa words *chitsilu*, *chidzete* and *mbutuma* to the Chibrazi word *laphwa*, which is a metathesis or transposition of the word *phwala*.

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<sup>15</sup> Another word that is used to refer to “testicle” in Chibrazi is *tchaba*. However, this form is not used to denote the meaning “a stupid person” or “a foolish person”.

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The third example of metathesis in Chibrazi is the word *nyima*, which means “faeces”. This metathesis comes from the Chicheŵa word *manyi*, which also means “faeces”. In this word, the positions of the syllables /*nyi*/ and /*ma*/ are swapped. Chibrazi also has the word *zamanyi*, which is sometimes rendered as its own metathesis *zanyima*. Both of these words are also used to mean “stupid things”, “foolish things” or some other “undesirable things”. These words usually appear in expressions such as *zamanyi ndimakana* or *zanyima ndimakana*, which mean “I do not like stupid things” or “I do not like foolish things”. The expression is parallel to the English expression “I don’t take shit”. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “stupid things” or “foolish things” would be encoded using various combinations such as *zauchitsilu* and *zopusa* as already explained. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *manyi* and combinations *zauchitsilu* and *zopusa* to the Chibrazi words *nyima* and *zanyima* respectively.

It should be noted that some words undergo the process of metathesis simultaneously with other processes. A good example is the name Zalerapi which becomes *Phari*, *Ripha* or even *Riphi* as explained above. Other such words undergo further manipulation after metathesis. For example, the word *shika* is further manipulated morphophonologically to become *shikelo* while maintaining its meaning also as demonstrated above. Some other words are produced through what might be called double metathesis because they undergo the process twice. A good example of that is the word *mbunde*. This word comes from the word *mbendu*, which means “girl”. The origin of this word was not established. When the word *mbendu* undergoes metathesis, it becomes *ndumbe*. However, *ndumbe* is also put through metathesis to become *mbunde*. The word was popular at Chancellor College. It came from an honest spoonerism (slip of the tongue) by one person, but it quickly gained popularity. As such, the process was

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applied to other words as well thereby producing a multiplicity of other words of this nature in the mixed language. The word *mbendu* and its variants, *ndumbe* and *mbunde* are all Chibrazi shifts from the Chicheŵa words *mtsikana*, *mkazi* and *namwali*.

In some cases, speakers of Chibrazi utter long chunks of the mixed language wherein almost every word is presented in transposed form. The present research proposes that this process represents what can be argued to be another speech style within Chibrazi. It is important to note in this regard, that Moto (2001), in his description of the origins of Chibrazi, identifies the speech style wherein almost every word is presented in transposed form as a predecessor of Chibrazi. However, this argument is not drawn any further as it is outside the scope of the present research.

Personally, I believe that this speech style exists in every Malaŵian language just as Chibrazi exists in every Malaŵian language. I know that in Chitonga, the speech style is generally known as Chimbakaya. Some of my informants suggested that in Chicheŵa and in Chitumbuka this speech style is referred to as Chpakaya. There are even other speech styles (or language games) that are employed in Malaŵian languages that are similar to this speech style. For example, in Chicheŵa, there was one style in which the sound /p/ was inserted into almost every word. A word like *iwe* was changed into *ipiwepi*. However, speech styles such as these are not utilised in Chibrazi. As Moto (2001) suggests, such speech styles have ‘died’.

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One example sentence from Chimbakaya will help to illustrate how metathesis takes place in this instance. The sentence is *Mbiku wei (or wii); uŵazi kumbaka Chimbakaya?* This sentence means “Do you know how to speak Chimbakaya?” If this sentence were to be rendered in Chitonga, it would be rendered as *Kumbi iwi (or iwe); uziŵa kukamba Chimbakaya?* As it can be seen, all the words in the Chimbakaya sentence are transposed; except for the last word, which is the name of the language itself.

In the Chibrazi example that follows, every word is transposed. *Nima, fei sitikulafi wobo.* This utterance means “My friend, I am not feeling well.” This example was recorded at Chancellor College. In Chicheŵa, the sentence would be rendered as *Mzanga, ine sindikumva (or sindikupeza) bwino.* In normal Chibrazi, this sentence would be, *Mani, ife sitikufila boo* or *Mani ine sindikufila boo.* The word *mani*, which means “friend”, has already been explained above. *Fei* is a transposition of *ife*. This word is a borrowing from Chicheŵa and it means “we”. The speaker uses this word to mean “I”. As already indicated, most of the times, Chibrazi speakers refer to themselves or each other using honorific plural rather than the normal singular, which is different from other Malaŵian languages. The speaker chooses to use the honorific *fei*, which means “we” instead of the singular *nei*, which means “I”. *Nei* is a metathesis of *ine*.

*Sitikulafi* is a transposition of *sitikufila*, which means “we are not feeling”. *Kufila* is made up of *ku*, the tense marker, and *lafi*, which is a metathesis of the word *fila*. The word *fila* is a morphophonological manipulation, a vernacularisation, of the English word **feel**. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “feel” would be encoded using words such as *peza* and *imva*; hence the utterance *sindikumva bwino* or its alternative *sindikupeza bwino* would be used in



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Chicheŵa for the part *sitikufila*. The plural form of these two alternatives could also be used. This would make the two *sitikumva bwino* and *sitikupeza bwino* respectively. As it can be seen, in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *imva*, and *peza* to the Chibrazi word *fila*, which is transposed as *lafi*.

*Wobo* is a transposition of *boo*, which means “well”, “okay” or “fine”. As already explained, the word *boo* is a loanword that comes from either Chishona *bo* or French *bon*, both of which mean “good” or “well”. It is important to note that the sound /w/ is introduced in the metathesis *wobo* making it look as if the original word is *bowo*. The transposed form of *boo* is also used popularly as a greeting. Interestingly, the word *boo* is sometimes duplicated to become *boobo*. As such, *boobo* may sometimes appear in duplicated form as *wobowobo*. This shows more lexical shifts from the Chicheŵa word *bwino*.

The second instance of metathesis appears at the sentential level. Therefore, this type of metathesis is referred to as *sentential metathesis* in the present research. It can also be referred to as *syntactic transposition* as in Kamanga (2008) because it involves the swapping of the syntactic positions of words in a sentence. In fact, this type of metathesis involves the swapping of positions of concepts in utterances. Hence, it can also be referred to as *conceptual metathesis*. Hammond and Hughes (1978) refer to this type of word pun as *Chiasmus*. In a Chiasmus, two phrases are juxtaposed such that the order of the words in the first is reversed in the second (Hammond and Hughes, 1978). Thus the words are crossed; and by that token, the focal words do double duty.

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One example that demonstrates syntactic transposition in Chibrazi is the utterance *Muli ndi bladi yambili m'biye yanu*. This utterance means “There is a lot of blood in your alcohol”. In this utterance, the positions of the concepts *bladi*, which means “blood” and *biye*, which means “alcohol”, are deliberately switched in order to create the desired semantic effect. This conceptual metathesis is created through metaphorical manipulation. It is meant to create the impression that there is a high concentration of alcohol in a person’s blood or body to the extent that alcohol performs the duties of blood. This expression was recorded at Chancellor College. It was used to mock people who drank beer a lot, but it is also used outside of the college.

*Muli ndi* is a borrowing from the Chicheŵa honorific form of “you have”. The unmarked form of this combination would be *uli ndi*. *Bladi* is a vernacularisation of the English word **blood**. In Chicheŵa, **blood** is *magazi*. This shows that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *magazi* to the Chibrazi word *bladi*. Another Chibrazi word for blood is *mwazi*. This is a borrowing from the Chicheŵa word *mwazi*, which also means “blood”. However, while in Chibrazi, the word *mwazi* is used anyhow, in Chicheŵa, the word *mwazi* is used in a marked manner such that it signifies blood that is shed for a purpose; for example, the blood of Jesus.

The combination *yambili* is borrowed from Chicheŵa and it means “a lot of”. *Biye* is another vernacularisation. It is borrowed from the English word **beer**. Upon being transferred into Chibrazi, the word **beer** underwent semantic extension in order to embrace both its original meaning, “beer”, and a new meaning “alcohol”. In Chicheŵa, the meaning “beer” would be encoded using words such as *mowa*, *bota* and *phala*. This shows that in Chibrazi, there has

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been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *mowa*, *bota* and *phala* to the Chibrazi word *biye*. The last combination in the sentence, *yanu* means “your” in honorific form. It is yet another borrowing from Chicheŵa. The normal Chibrazi rendition of the meaning in this utterance would be *Muli ndi biye yambili m’bladi yanu*. In Chicheŵa, the meaning would be rendered as *Muli ndi mowa wambili m’magazi anu*.

Another example, which was also recorded at Chancellor College, is: *Ada; kukhrashaku bwanji; mumasowa?* This statement literally means “My friend; does your sickness mean you were scarce?” Here, the swap happens between the concepts *kukhrasha*, which refers to “being sick” and *kusowa*, which means “being scarce”. *Kukhrasha* is a Chibrazi combination that contains the word *khrrasha* whose origin is the English word **crash**. The word is produced by extending the meaning of the original word and vernacularising it. In the utterance, even though the positions of the two concepts are switched, the meaning that is targeted is that of the normal order expression: *Ada; kusowaku bwanji; mumakhrasha?* This means “My friend; does your scarcity mean you were sick?” In Chicheŵa the sentence would be, *Mzanga, kusowaku bwanji; umadwala?* Even in this sentence the honorific form *mu* is used instead of the singular form *u*<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> More recently, Chibrazi has borrowed the words *soweto* and *sowetan* to mean *kusowa*. The Chicheŵa word *kusowa* or its Chitonga and Chitumbuka ‘equivalent’ *kusoba*, has two meanings: “to be scarce” and “to disappear”. This borrowing has happened due to the morphophonological proximity between the words *kusowa* or *kusoba* on the one hand and *soweto* and *sowetan* on the other hand. These two words are borrowed from the name of one South African township, SOWETO and one of South Africa’s newspapers, The Sowetan. Using these two words, “being scarce” can be expressed in so many different ways. For example, one could say *AJijo nde alowa sowetanitu* meaning “George is scarce”. This utterance literary means “George has entered sowetan”.

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The last example of conceptual metathesis was recorded at Viphya Schools during supper in the dining hall. Upon receiving his meal for the night, one boy shouted: *Eeh! Musotsi yalelo muli mitsoo yambili bwanji!* This utterance means “There is a lot of meat in today’s salt.” In normal Chibrazi, this expression would be rendered as *Eeh! Mumitsoo yalelo muli sotsi yambili bwanji!* This means “There is a lot of salt in today’s meat”. It can be seen that the basic change that takes place in this syntactic transposition or sentential metathesis is that words exchange their grammatical functions. A word that originally functioned as a subject is made to function as an object and vice versa. By virtue of that exchange, the words also exchange their meanings in as far as this utterance is concerned. When this utterance was made, the rest of the students laughed and others made similar remarks that drew similar reactions. One of the students reported that this was one of the popular meal time jokes that the students entertained themselves with. In Chicheŵa, this sentence would be rendered as, *Eeh! Munyama yalelo muli mchele wambili bwanji!*

The two words *sotsi* and *mitsoo*, which are swapped in the metathesis, are what make this utterance a Chibrazi utterance. The word *sotsi* whose variant is *sots* is a Chibrazi borrowing from the English word **salt** that was created through vernacularisation and pluralisation. In Chicheŵa, salt is encoded as *mchele* whose variant is *nchele*. This shows that in Chibrazi,

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The two borrowed words are also used to mean “to leave” whereby the other meaning of *kusowa* or *kusoba*; that is “to disappear”, is called upon. In this regard, some of the example utterances are: *Ife timenye Soweto*, literary meaning “Let me hit Soweto” or *Ife timenye Sowetan*, literally meaning “Let me hit sowetan”. Both of these utterances mean “Let me go” or “Let me leave”. These utterances are made possible by manipulating the Chibrazi utterance *Ife tisowe*, which literally means “Let me disappear”. In utterances such as this, the act of leaving or going away is metaphorically perceived as an act of disappearing.

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there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *mchele* and *nchele* to the Chibrazi word *sotsi*. The word *mitsoo* is a Chibrazi borrowing from the English word **meat** that was created through vernacularisation and pluralisation. In Chicheŵa, **meat** is encoded as *nyama* or *ndiwo ya nyama* in full. This shows that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa word *nyama* and the expression *ndiwo ya nyama* to the Chibrazi word *mitsoo*.

### 5.8. Examples from other varieties of Chibrazi

This section serves to provide a hint of evidence of the claim that Chibrazi also uses the grammatical structures of other traditional Malaŵian ethnic languages. All the examples that are presented above are taken from Chicheŵa Chibrazi. Two examples; one from Chitonga Chibrazi and one from Chitumbuka Chibrazi, are presented below. The Chitonga Chibrazi example comes from a conversation that was recorded at Chintheche Town in Nkhata-Bay in Northern Malaŵi. In this conversation, two friends were discussing a third person that they had been drinking with who had just left.

Speaker A: *Aimwi; mfana yuwa wanguphoza yapa wavaya nunkhu?* “My friend; where did that guy who was sitting here go?”

Speaker B: *Weke wavaya padeni pawu.* “He said he has gone to his home.”

Speaker A: *Wavaya ndi dola yangu.* “He has gone with my money.”

If this exchange were to be rendered in Chitonga, it would read something like:

Speaker A: *Aimwi; mnyamata yuwa wangujaa yapa waluta (or waya) nunkhu?*

Speaker B: *Weke waluta (or waya) kunyumba kwawu.*

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Speaker A: *Waluta ndi ndalama yangu (or zangu).*

In this exchange, the basic difference between the Chibrazi utterances and their Chitonga equivalents lies in the vocabulary that is used. The grammatical structure that is used in both versions is that of Chitonga. As it can be seen from these two renditions, the key words that make the first exchange a Chitonga Chibrazi exchange are *mfana*, *wanguphoza*, *wavaya*, *padeni*, and *dola*.

*Mfana* is a Chibrazi word that is borrowed from isiZulu of South Africa or Chingoni, its Malaŵian relation. The literal meaning of the word in the original languages is “boy” or “young man”. However, in Chibrazi, the word means “young man” or “friend” as it is used here. As it can be seen, the word is used in a similar manner to the way the word *afana*, which is used in the example *afana Mystic adya boo tsado koyamba*, above. The words *mfana* and *afana* are actually interchangeable. Just as the word *afana*, in Chitonga, the word *mfana* would be rendered as *mnyamata*. Hence, this shows that there has been a lexical shift from the Chitonga word *mnyamata* to the Chibrazi word *mfana* or *mfana*.

The combination *wanguphoza* comprises *wa*, which means “who” *ngu*, which means “did”, and *phoza*, which means “sit”. While the first two segments are from Chitonga, the latter is a typical Chibrazi word. This Chibrazi word is a semantic manipulation of the English word *pose* into the meaning “sit”. Apart from undergoing semantic manipulation, the English word also undergoes vernacularisation through suffixation to make it *phoza*. In Chitonga, the meaning “sit” is encoded using the word *jaa*. As such, the Chitonga Chibrazi combination *wanguphoza* would be rendered as *wangujaa* in Chitonga. This shows that in Chibrazi, there

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has been a lexical shift from the Chitonga word *jaa* as represented by *wangujaa* in this exchange to the Chibrazi word *phoza* as represented by *wanguphoza*.

The word *vaya* in *wavaya* has already been explained above. The word means “go”, while the combination *wavaya* means “has gone”. It has been said that the word *vaya* might be a borrowing from Tsotsitaal in which it is also used to mean “go” or it might as well be a semantic manipulation of the English word *via*. In Chitonga, the meaning “go” is encoded using the word *luta*. As such, the Chitonga Chibrazi combination *wavaya* would be rendered as *waluta* in Chitonga. This shows that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chitonga word *luta* as represented by *waluta* in this exchange to the Chibrazi word *vaya* as represented by the combination *wavaya*.

The word *dola* has also been explained already above. The word is a borrowing from the English word *dollar*. In Chibrazi, the word is used to mean “money”. The word is a semantic manipulation of the English word *dollar* that is used to denote currencies such as the American one. The Chitonga words for money include *ndalama* and *makopala*. This shows that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chitonga words *ndalama* and *makopala* to the Chibrazi word *dola*.

The word *deni* in the combination *padeni* is a Chibrazi word that is borrowed from the English word *den*. In Chibrazi, the word is used to mean “home” or “house”. The former is applicable in this instance. In Chitonga, the meaning “home” is encoded using the word *nyumba*. As such, the Chitonga Chibrazi combination *padeni* would be rendered as *kunyumba*

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in Chitonga. This shows that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chitonga word *nyumba* as represented by the combination *kunyumba* in this exchange to the Chibrazi word *deni* as represented by the combination *padeni*.

The Chitumbuka Chibrazi example that we will look at is the conversation:

Speaker A: *Mani; nkhubaya padeni. Tithaimanenge lethi.* “My friend; I am going home. We will meet later.”

Speaker B: *Yonse mani.* “Okay my friend”

This conversation took place between two friends who were parting ways to see each other again at another time in the day. It was recorded in Kataba Township in Mzuzu. One way in which the exchange would be rendered in Chitumbuka is:

Speaker A: *Akulu (or bwezi or abwezi, nganya, and mnyane); nkhumuta kunyumba. Tikumanenge mwene kale.*

Speaker B: *Yewo akulu.*

It is also clear here that the basic difference between the Chibrazi utterances and their Chitumbuka translations is vocabulary. The grammatical structure that is used in both cases is that of Chitumbuka.

The word *mani* has already been explained above. The words *vaya*, which appears in the combination *nkhuvaya* and *deni*, which appears in the combination *padeni*, have also been explained above already. *Mani* means “friend”; *nkhuvaya* means “I am going”; and *padeni*



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means: “home”. *Nkhu* is a Chitumbuka verbal prefix that means “I am”, while *pa* is a Chitumbuka preposition that means “at” or “to”. In Chitumbuka, *mani* would be encoded using words such as *akulu*, *bwezi* or *abwezi*, *nganya*, and *mnyane*; *nkhuvaya* would be encoded as *nkhuluta* or *nkhuhamba*; while *padeni* would be encoded as *kunyumba* or *kukaya*. It is important to note that there is a lot of variation in Chitumbuka vocabulary because there are various varieties of the language. This conversation demonstrates a number of lexical shifts that have taken place in Chibrazi. Firstly, there has been lexical shift from the Chitumbuka words *akulu*, *bwezi* or *abwezi*, *nganya*, and *mnyane* to the Chibrazi word *mani*. Secondly, there has been a shift from the Chitumbuka words *luta* and *hamba*, which appear in the combinations *nkhuluta* or *nkhuhamba* to the Chibrazi word *vaya* as shown in the combination *nkhuvaya*. There has also been a shift from the Chitumbuka words *nyumba* and *kaya*, which appear in the combinations *kunyumba* and *kukaya* to the Chibrazi word *deni* as shown in the combination *padeni*.

*Tithaimanenge* contains the Chibrazi word *thaima*. *Thaima* is a Chibrazi vernacularisation of the English word **time** that is produced through morphophonological manipulation as well as semantic manipulation. In Chibrazi, this word is used to mean “see” or “meet”. In Chitumbuka, the meaning “see” or “meet”, as used in this context, would be encoded using the words *wona* or *kumana* in which case, the combination *tithaimanenge* would be rendered as *tiwonanenge* or *tikumanenge*. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chitumbuka words *wona* and *kumana* to the Chibrazi word *thaima* as shown in the combination *tithaimanenge*.

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The word *letha* is a Chibrazi vernacularisation of the English word **later**, which also includes morphophonological manipulation. The original English meaning is maintained in the manipulation; hence this word is an example of semantic maintenance in Chibrazi. In Chitumbuka, the meaning “later”, would be encoded using the combinations *mwene kale*, *mwene mbele*, or *nyengo inyake*. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chitumbuka combinations *mwene kale*, *mwene mbele*, and *nyengo inyake* to the Chibrazi word *letha*.

The expression *yonse*, which speaker B uses, is a common Chibrazi expression that is used in a variety of ways. The expression originates from the Chicheŵa word *yonse*, which means “the whole of it”. In this instance, the expression is used to mean “okay”, “fine” or “noted”. In Chitumbuka, the meaning “okay”, “fine” or “noted”, would be encoded using a variety of words and combinations. Some theses are *yewo* or *nawonga*, both of which mean “thank you”; or *napulika*, which means “I have heard you”. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chitumbuka words and combinations *yewo* or *nawonga* and *napulika* to the Chibrazi word *yonse*.

### 5.8.1. The basic structure of Chibrazi

Up to the point of the closure of the last section in this chapter, we have looked at different ways in which the lexicon of Chibrazi is created. We will now shift the attention of the study slightly to deal with the basic structure of Chibrazi and what makes Chibrazi different from other Malaŵian languages. In order to achieve that, we will take a closer look at some other examples of Chibrazi. However, it is important to take cognizance of all the examples that

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have been presented thus far because the conclusions that are made apply to those examples as well.

The examples that are presented in section 5.8 and the ones that are presented in the rest of this chapter above demonstrate that in terms of linguistic structure, Chibrazi generally comprises two components. The first component of Chibrazi is what is referred to as the grammatical base component. This component comprises the grammatical structure on which Chibrazi is based. This component also includes vocabulary and other structural elements that come from the language that is used as a grammatical base of Chibrazi. On the basis of the grammatical base, there are different sub varieties of Chibrazi as demonstrated in the examples above.

The examples presented before this section 5.8 of the chapter represent Chicheŵa based Chibrazi. The two examples that are presented in this section 5.8 represent Chitonga based Chibrazi and Chitumbuka based Chibrazi respectively. Put differently, the grammatical base of the examples presented before section 5.8 of the chapter is Chicheŵa, while the grammatical base of the first example in section 5.8 is Chitonga; and the grammatical base of the second example in section 5.8 is Chitumbuka. These varieties can be referred to as Chicheŵa Chibrazi (Chibrazi cha Chicheŵa in local languages), Chitonga Chibrazi (Chibrazi cha Chitonga in local languages) and Chitumbuka Chibrazi (Chibrazi cha Chitumbuka in local languages) respectively. Using such a distinction, it can be argued that there are various dialects or sub dialects of Chibrazi based on the concept of grammatical base.

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The second component of Chibrazi is referred to as the core Chibrazi component. This includes vocabulary and other linguistic innovations that are created by the speakers of the mixed language using different language manipulation processes such as the ones presented in the sections above this section. These can be seen as new linguistic inventions in as far as the Malaŵian linguistic landscape is concerned. In other words, core Chibrazi refers to features of the mixed language that are unique to the mixed language or that are at least ‘new on the Malaŵian language scene’ in reference to the tribal languages of the country. As already stated, this component includes vocabulary and other linguistic elements that are transferred or imported from other languages rather than the grammatical base. These make up a body of vocabulary and other linguistic elements that the speakers of Chibrazi draw from in their quest to communicate meaning. It is this body of vocabulary that is ‘inserted’ into the grammatical base of the mixed language.

The linguistic structure of Chibrazi can therefore be roughly described as a conglomeration of elements from all its donor languages and the new inventions. To this end, it can be argued that Chibrazi represents the sum total of the key players (that is, languages) in as far as language contact in Malaŵi is concerned. However, it might be difficult to establish a clear demarcation between Chibrazi and its donor languages because the linguistic structure of Chibrazi oscillates between the linguistic structures of its donor languages and the new inventions that are unique to the mixed language. It is the projection of this study that distinguishing core Chibrazi and its donor languages will become even more difficult as time goes on because the two components will be so integrated into each other that they will appear as though they were one and the same thing.

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Having presented the two basic components of Chibrazi, it should be pointed out that it is the lexicon of Chibrazi that distinguishes the mixed language from other Malaŵian languages. As it has been shown in the examples cited above and as it is shown in the rest of the examples that are presented in this research, there is a clear distinction between the vocabulary of the Malaŵian languages and the vocabulary of Chibrazi, although Chibrazi uses the grammatical structures of the Malaŵian languages as well as some items from their lexicons<sup>17</sup>. This is the main reason why this research asserts that Chibrazi is an emerging unique language in its own right, even though it makes use of other languages in terms of grammatical structure and vocabulary.

However, this study does not take the assertion that Chibrazi is an emerging unique language in its own right any further than stating it because that enterprise is beyond the scope of the study. The outline of this study that is presented in the first chapter bears witness to that. With regard to the uniqueness of Chibrazi, it can be stated that Chibrazi is not necessarily mutually intelligible with the Malaŵian languages. Although some words might appear or sound familiar to the uninitiated, when these words are combined into sentences in real time communication, the uninitiated; more often than not, cannot understand what is being said. This makes Chibrazi a different language rather than a variety of one particular Malaŵian language. Otherwise, if Chibrazi should be interpreted as a variety, it is a variety of all Malaŵian languages. Mutual unintelligibility is one of the justifications that can be used to determine whether or not Chibrazi and the languages that are used as its grammatical bases are different languages.

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<sup>17</sup> It is important to note that I have so far collected over two thousand words that I recognise as belonging to the Chibrazi lexicon.

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There are instances of breakdown in communication that were caused by lack of mutual intelligibility between Chibrazi and other Malaŵian languages, which were recorded in this research. One instance was reported by one of the lady interviewees in the case study part of this research. A minibus conductor shouted to the driver of the minibus, “*Ashoveli, yaloda tiyeni tibanduke!*” By this utterance, the conductor meant “Driver, the minibus is full; let us go”. If this statement were to be made in Chicheŵa, Chitonga or Chitumbuka respectively, it would have been *A draiva, minibasi yadzadza, tiyeni tizipita*; *A draiva, minibasi yazaza, tiyeni tikengi*; or *A draiva, minibasi yazula, tiyeni tilutenge*. Upon hearing this utterance, one old lady shouted to the minibus conductor saying, “*Iwe apo ukuti tibanduke, ukung’anamula kuti ukhumba kuti draivala watikome? Pala ni nthena ine mbwe nikhile!* The old lady meant, “Are you trying to tell the driver to kill us? If that is the case, then I have to get out”.

The main cause of the problem in this breakdown in communication was the combination *tibanduke* whose root word is *banduka*. In Chibrazi, this word means “go” or “leave”, while in Chicheŵa, where it is borrowed from, the word means “break”. From what the old lady said, it can be deduced that she perceived the minibus conductor’s statement as an attempt to get the passengers killed because of employing *tibanduke* in his utterance. When the conductor said *tibanduke*, the old lady felt that he was saying “let us break” rather than “let us go”. This can be said to be rooted in the general perception that ‘minibuses are death risks’. The main cause of this perception is that many minibuses generally travel at high speed and because of that, they are more likely to be involved in accidents that lead to fatalities than any other means of transport. The names that minibuses are accorded in Chibrazi are evidence of that general perception. The one name is *zobanduka*, which means “the ones that drive at high speed”; which tends to create the impression that they are “the

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ones that break”. Another name that minibuses are accorded is *n’dula moyo*, which means “cutter of life”, creates the impression that they are “terminators of life.”

### 5.9. Examples that show signs of syntactic change: Foreignisation

Up to the point of the closure of the last section in this chapter, we have looked at different ways in which the lexicon of Chibrazi is created. We will now shift the attention of the study to some examples of Chibrazi that show signs of syntactic change. The examples fall under a language manipulation process that is referred to as foreignisation. In the context of the examples presented here, foreignisation is a process whereby words are given a foreign morphophonotactic make up in order to create new grammatical structure.

As already indicated in chapter two, one common instance of foreignisation manifests in a Chibrazi morphophonological or morphophonotactic manipulation process that can be labeled as Frenchalisation. This is a process in which words in Chibrazi are made to sound like words in French or other languages akin to French. In so doing, the grammatical structure that these words appear in changes. The grammatical structure that the examples presented exhibit is part of what makes Chibrazi different from other Malaŵian languages. The first way in which foreignisation is achieved is through the elongation of vowel sounds at the end of words.

The first example of Frenchalisation in Chibrazi is the expression *gemu kulee*. This expression is a further manipulation of the Chibrazi expression *gemu yakula*. In order to clarify the expression *gemu kulee*, I will explain the expression *gemu yakula* first. The

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expression *gemu yakula* literary means “the game has grown big”, but it is used to express the meaning “the situation is tough” or “things are tough”. The word *gemu* is a borrowing and vernacularisation of the English word *game*, which is used to mean “situation”; while the combination *yakula* is a borrowing from Chicheŵa that means “has grown big”. In Chicheŵa, *gemu yakula* would be encoded using expressions such as *zinthu zavuta* or combinations such as *kwavuta* and *kwayipa*. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions such as *zinthu zavuta* or the combinations *kwavuta* and *kwayipa* to the Chibrazi expression *gemu yakula*.

In the expression *gemu kulee*, the Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka stem *kula*, which means “grow”, is modified by changing the vowel sound from /a/ to /e/ and then elongating the sound to yield a sound similar to a typical French sound like the final sound in the French name Fuget. Just as is the case with *gemu yakula*, in Chicheŵa, *gemu kulee* would be encoded using expressions such as *zinthu zavuta* or combinations such as *kwavuta* and *kwayipa*. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa expressions such as *zinthu zavuta* or the words *kwavuta* and *kwayipa* to the Chibrazi expression *gemu kulee*.

As it can be seen, the expression *gemu kulee* changes the grammatical structure of the expression *gemu yakula*, even though it maintains its meaning. In the latter, the verb *ya*, which means “has”, is added to the stem *kula*, which means “grow”. That is to say that the expression *gemu yakula* employs the syntactic structure verb *ya* plus verb *kula*. In the former, the *ya* plus stem *kula* structure is represented by the dropping of the prefix *ya* and the



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changing of the vowel sound from /a/ to /e/ and the elongation of the vowel sound at the end of the *kula*.

Another example of Frenchalisation is *bauthee*. This combination is created from a further manipulation of the Chibrazi words *bauta* and its variant *bautha* and *bauti* and its variant *bauthi*. All these words mean “fight”, but while the former is a verb, the latter is a noun. These words are morphophonological manipulations and vernacularisations of the English word *bout*. In Chicheŵa, the verb *bauta* or *bautha* would be expressed using such words as *menya*, *tchaya* and *panda*, while the noun *bauti* or *bauthi* would be encoded using words such as *ndewu*. This demonstrates that in Chibrazi, there has been a lexical shift from the Chicheŵa words *menya*, *tchaya* and *panda* to the Chibrazi words *bauta* and *bautha*; and from the Chicheŵa words *zinthu zavuta* or the word *ndewu* to the Chibrazi words *bauti* and *bauthi*.

It is from these words that the foreignisation *bauthee*, which is used in the example above, was born. One example of *bauthee* is an utterance wherein in reporting about a friend’s involvement in a fight, one speaker of Chibrazi said, *Waimva? A Richie awabauta*. This utterance means “Have you heard? Richie has been beaten”. In this utterance, the speaker used the ‘normal’ version of the word *bauta*. When reporting about the person who beat Richie, the speaker chose to use the foreignised version of the word. The speaker said, *Iyoyo nde Richie bauthee*. This means “That is the guy who beat up Richie”.

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The expression *waimva* is a borrowing from Chicheŵa where it means “have you heard about it?” Richie is a truncation of the name Richard. The honorific marker *a* is used as is usually the case in Chibrazi. *Iyoyo* and *nde* are both borrowings from Chicheŵa. If the utterance were to be rendered in Chicheŵa though, the first sentence would be rendered as *Wamva kuti Richie amumenya?* The second sentence would be rendered as *Uyoyo ndi amene wamumenya Richie*. These are also just some of the possible Chicheŵa renditions of the utterances.

If the normal version of the word *bauta* were to be used in this instance, the speaker could have said something like, *Iyoyo nde gayi imene ya m'bauta Richie*. Alternatively, the utterance may be rendered as *Iyoyo nde gayi imene ya abauta a Richie*. Another alternative is *Awowo nde mani amene am'bauta Richie*. This is just to mention a few of the options. It can be seen here that the part *gayi imene ya m'bauta Richie*, *gayi imene ya abauta a Richie*, or *mani amene am'bauta Richie* is changed into *Richie bauthee*. The grammatical construction noun plus adverb plus verb plus noun is changed to noun plus verb.

The second way in which new lexical items are created through foreignisation is by adding the two suffixes *-ishta* and *-ishto* to other lexical items. These two suffixes achieve the effect of making lexical items sound as if they were Portuguese. Some of the words that are created through this manipulation are *barishta* or *barishto*, which is made up of the Chibrazi word *bara* and which means “like” or “love”; *marishta* or *marishto*, which is made up of the Chibrazi word *mara* and which means “marry”, and *khutishto*, which is made up of the Chibrazi borrowing from Chicheŵa *khuta* and which means “full” or “drunk”. The Chicheŵa words for *bara*, *barishta* and *barishto* are *funa* and *konda* depending on the meaning that is

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encoded. The Chicheŵa words for *mara*, *marishta* and *marishto* are *banja*, *ukwati*, *kwatila* and *kwatiwa*, also depending on the meaning that is encoded. The Chicheŵa words for *khuta* and *khutishto* are *idya*, *imwa*, *ledzela* and *khuta*, again depending on the meaning that is encoded. This clearly shows lexical shift from Chicheŵa to Chibrazi.

These two suffixes, *-ishta* and *-ishto* are actually added to a lot of words that come from different sources including Chibrazi itself to create new words in Chibrazi. Chibrazi speakers can even make statements using different combinations of words such as these. Statements that are made in this manner exhibit signs of change in syntactic structure. For example, the expression *barishta marishto* or its variant *marishta barishto* is used to express the desire to marry. One example of this combination that was uttered by a member of staff of Mzuzu University is: *Pano nde marishta barishto yagwiladi amwene*. This utterance means “My friend; this time I really have the desire to marry.” One of the ways in which this utterance would be rendered in Chicheŵa is, *Mzanga; pano nde ndikufunadi kukwatila*. The syntactic structure of the Chibrazi construction is different from that of its Chicheŵa translation<sup>18</sup>.

Foreignisation in Chibrazi is also achieved using the English progressive suffix *-ing*. This process can be referred to as Anglicisation because it makes non-English words sound as if they were English. The products of this process actually embrace the present continuous tense

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<sup>18</sup> There are other examples of foreignization that do not use the suffixes *-ishta* and *-ishto*. Two example lexical items that are made to sound as if they were Portuguese are *kondomezure dibrokenado*, which means “condom”, and *sifilis permanento*, which means “sexually transmitted disease”.

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or infinitive as it happens with verbs in English. In this process, speakers of Chibrazi tend to add **-ing** at the end of different words both from core Chibrazi and donor languages. A good example of this process is found in the word *nyauding*. The word *nyauding* comes from the Chibrazi word *nyauda*, which means “enjoy”. This word was popularly used in the University of Malaŵi’s constituent colleges to mean “demonstration in the sense of strike action”. The more general meaning of this word is “enjoying”. Other Chibrazi words for “enjoying” include *kunjoya*, *kuupeza*, *kufila*, *kufila boo*, *kufila aile* or *kufila aire*, *kufila ntasa*, *kutasa*, *kutchila*, *kuzipepesa*, and *kuusumana*. Some of these words can be turned into infinitives using the suffix **-ing**. Examples include *filing aile* or *filing aire*, *filing ntasa*, *tchiling*, and *usumaning*. In Chicheŵa, *nyauding* is *kusangalala*, *kukondwa* or *kukondwelela*. This demonstrates that there are several lexical shifts from the Chicheŵa combinations *kusangalala*, *kukondwa* and *kukondwelela*. The basic structural change that takes place here is from **ku-** plus verb to verb plus **-ing**.

Another good example of words in which the English progressive marker is used is the word *udying*. This word literary means “eating beer”, but it pragmatically means “drinking beer”. This word is formed by adding **-ing** to the Chicheŵa word *kudya*, which means “to eat”. The word *udying* is realised by first changing the word *kudya* into *kuudya*, which means “eating it (beer)”. Thereafter, the **ku-** is dropped and **-ing** is added at the end. It is important to note that the concept of eating is also applied in reference to the consumption of other substances. For instance, *kudya mogo* is “smoking”; *kudya dragi* is “using drugs”; and *kudya widi* is “smoking marijuana”. However, in instances like these, the **-ing** is not applicable. Chibrazi does not have words like *moging*, *draging* and *widing*. It might thus appear as though the suffix **-ing** is not a productive morpheme in Chibrazi. But, such occurrences might be future

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possibilities; especially if and when an English version of Chibrazi is developed. It should also be pointed out that the concept of eating is also used in other contexts such as “scoring high marks”, and “having sex” as presented under semantic shift.

Two other examples of scientification are presented before closing this chapter. These examples are expressions that were popularised at Chancellor College between 1998 and 1999. These are *faranjendai animas* and *faranjendai ravazandai*. The two expressions are formed using the word *faranje*. This word signifies “occurrence of something in extreme”. *Faranjendai animas* uses a manipulation of the English word **animal** and it means “fight”. This meaning emanates from relating animals to the fighting instinct. *Faranjendai ravazandai* means “love”. This emanates from a manipulation of the English word **love** into *rav* and then changing *rav* into *ravaza*. Although, these expressions were used in different ways by different people at the college, the meanings that are presented here were the most popular ones.

## 5.10. Conclusion

This chapter has fulfilled two of the specific objectives that this research set out to achieve. Firstly, the chapter has presented different examples of Chibrazi in the form of vocabulary, chunks extracted from conversations, and common sayings. Secondly, through the presentation of the examples, the chapter has presented a more detailed description of some of the common strategies that are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi. The chapter has demonstrated that there are many linguistic strategies that are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi. The strategies are typical of what Kiessling and Mous (2004) describe as deliberate language manipulations.

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In fulfilling these two specific objectives, the chapter has also demonstrated that in terms of basic linguistic structure, Chibrazi has two basic components: the grammatical base component and the core Chibrazi component. Finally, also through the fulfillment of these specific objectives, this chapter has demonstrated what makes Chibrazi unique from other Malaŵian languages. It has been demonstrated that although Chibrazi draws a lot from other languages, there are certain linguistic characteristics of the mixed language that make Chibrazi a unique language in its own right. The lexicon of Chibrazi is the component of the mixed language that best illustrates the uniqueness of Chibrazi.

It is important to note that the innovations in Chibrazi start at a very small scale, but with the passing of time, the innovations become more and more widespread and therefore conventionalised within the mixed language. It should also be noted that some of the language manipulation processes that are discussed in this chapter in relation to the creation of Chibrazi vocabulary are not restricted to Chibrazi, but they are also employed in the expansion of the vocabulary of other Malaŵian languages. However, what makes the difference between Chibrazi and the other Malaŵian languages is that these processes are the hub of Chibrazi, which is not the case with the other Malaŵian languages. In other words, the products of these language manipulation processes are the core of Chibrazi.

## CHAPTER SIX

### WHO SPEAKS CHIBRAZI?

#### 6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents some answers to the question of who speaks the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi. These answers are based on the data that was collected through the questionnaire that was administered in the case study part of the present research. Some of the data that was obtained from the follow-up interviews and observation is analysed alongside the data obtained from the questionnaire by way of corroborating the data from the questionnaire. The analysis was structured according to the questionnaire itself. That is to say that the data is presented in three parts based on the fact that the questionnaire contains three parts. The data was analysed in such a way that information from the responses to a question in the questionnaire is presented first. Thereafter, additional information from the other data collection methods used in the case study is presented on the same question wherever relevant in order to clarify matters further.

Therefore, the present chapter is divided into three sections based on the sections of the questionnaire. The first section tackled different questions that were generally classified as being about exposure to Chibrazi. The second section is about attitude towards Chibrazi. The third section of this chapter contains data that was obtained from questions that were classified under the heading perceptions about Chibrazi.

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One important point to note is that the statistical analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire is rather restricted to the participants who took part in the written questionnaire. The analysis of the data from the participants who answered the simplified version of the questionnaire orally and as groups does not include figures since they responded in groups, which rendered it impossible for precise data to be obtained. The only accurate information about these participants that is included in the analysis is on gender and occupation. Attempts were made to obtain other information through the schools' records. However, this was not possible because this was reported to be privileged information. As such, while in some cases intelligent guesses were made about this information, in other cases, such information was simply ignored, even though it is recognised that might have compromised the quality of the research. Nevertheless, in some cases, data obtained from this group is included in the analysis because it adds more information to the data obtained from the written questionnaire. Below is the analysis of the data.

## **6.2. Exposure to Chibrazi**

The second part of the questionnaire sought to solicit answers to questions about participants' exposure to the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi. Participants' responses to the questions are recorded below. Some of these responses are accompanied by tabulations, while others are just explanations.

### **6.2.1. Awareness about the existence of Chibrazi**

The first question asked whether or not participants were aware of the existence of Chibrazi. In response to this question, 95.6 % of the participants (87) said they were aware of the existence of the mixed language, even though they did not necessarily recognise it as a language in its own right. Only 3 participants (3.3%) said they were not aware of the



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existence of Chibrazi. Two of these were males in the group of 40 and above, while the other was a male in the group of 20 to 29. It is interesting to note that some of the participants who claimed not to be aware of the existence of Chibrazi contradicted themselves in their responses to subsequent questions in the questionnaire, which suggests that they actually knew the mixed language. For example, they were able to provide examples of words, phrases or sentences in the mixed language and they provided a name for the mixed language. Only 1 of these participants was consistent in their responses throughout the questionnaire. One female of 10 to 19 did not respond to the question. Table 6 below shows a summary of these results.

**Table 1: Awareness about the existence of Chibrazi**

| Response                               | Males |        |        |        | Females |        |        |        |
|--|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|  | 40 +  | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 | 40 +    | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 |
| Aware of the existence of Chibrazi     | 13    | 3      | 2      | 47     | 2       | 3      | 4      | 13     |
| Not aware of the existence of Chibrazi | 2     | 0      | 1      | 0      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Not attempted.                         | 0     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 1      |

There was also a strong indication from the participants who answered the questionnaire orally that they were aware of the existence of Chibrazi. The participants were able to provide a lot of examples of words, phrases and sentences in the mixed language. They were able to provide their sources of the mixed language, the domains in which the mixed language is used and even information about the appropriateness of the mixed language. The participants were able to respond to Chibrazi greetings and to explain the meanings of some words that they were asked in addition to providing examples of their own. All this shows that they had

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enough awareness about the existence of the mixed language. Generally, the data that was collected against this question shows that there were more participants who were aware of the existence of Chibrazi than those who were not.

### 6.2.2. The name of the language

The next two questions in the questionnaire are directly related because they both asked about the name or names of the mixed language under study. The second question in this section asked participants to mention the name that they personally used to refer to the mixed language. Sixty participants (65.9%) identified the mixed language as *Chibrazi*, with numerous other variations of the name as shown below. Sixteen participants (17.6%) did not provide a name for the mixed language. Four participants (4.4%) identified it as *youth language*. Three participants (3.3%) identified the language as *Chichewa*. Another two groups, each comprising 2 participants (2.2%), identified the mixed language as *vernacular* and *Chibro*. Each of the remaining 4 participants (1.1%) had a different name for the mixed language. The names are *Creo*, *Slang*, *Chifela* and *Street talk*.

The questionnaire also sought to find out what names other people used to refer to the mixed language. This came as the third question in this section. A whole host of other names came up in this regard, apart from the ones provided in response to the above question. The following other names were provided: *African Nigger language*, *borrowed language*, *Chaachinyamata*, *Chibuti*, *Chachinyamata*, *Chichewa cha makono*, *Chifrenzo*, *Chiguy*, *Chinfanakalo*, *Chining'a*, *Chinyatwa*, *Chipwi/frac*, *Chiras*, *Chitoti*, *chiyankhulo cha chinyamata*, *chiyankhulo cha mafana*, *chiyankhulo cha makosini*, *chiyankhulo cha masikuno*, *Chiyo*, *fashionable language*, *gangstar talk*, *Gog's*, *language for the civilised youth*,

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*language for the youth, language of mayo, Mariya, language ya achinyamata, slang Chichewa, street language, the language of young people and yos, Thoni, Yo, Yo-talk (young offenders' talk), youth's language, and vernacular.*

In order to provide a better picture of the names that were given to the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi, the names presented above are glossed in Table 6 below. Note that *chi* is a Malaŵian<sup>19</sup> prefix that is attached to names of languages and that the word *chilankhulo* or its variant *chiyankhulo* is the Chicheŵa word for *language*. The word *cha* is also a Chicheŵa (in fact, Malaŵian) word that means “of” or “for”.

**Table 2: The names for the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi**

| Name  | Gloss  |
|---|--|
| <i>Chibrazi</i> or<br><i>Chibraz,</i><br><i>Chibrazii,</i><br><i>Chibraze,</i><br><i>Chibulazi,</i><br><i>Chiblazi,</i><br><i>Chibrazee,</i><br><i>Chibro</i> and<br><i>Chiburazi</i> | The language of or for brothers. <i>Brazi</i> or its variants <i>braz,</i> <i>brazii,</i> <i>braze,</i> <i>bulazi,</i> <i>blazi,</i> <i>bro</i> and <i>burazi,</i> is <b>lexified (lexified?)</b> from the English word <i>brother</i> . The word is one of the words that are used as address terms for males. Thus, the name <i>Chibrazi</i> means “the language for or of brothers”. However, as noted in Chapter one, this does not mean that females are excluded in this language. |
| <i>Youth language</i>   | A language spoken by the youth. This term underscores the fact that the language is generally used by or among the youth and is therefore, commonly associated with the youth.   |
| <i>Chichewa</i>   | Chicheŵa, the national language of Malaŵi. Here, perhaps the language is taken to be a dialect of Chicheŵa.  |
| <i>Creo</i>   | A Creole. A pidgin that has attained mother tongue speakers. I am not sure if the respondent meant this word in the technical sense as defined here.   |
| <i>Slang</i>  | “Words and phrases that are often ‘invented’ in keeping with the new ideas and customs; often by recombining old words into new meanings” (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993: 276).   |
| <i>Street talk</i>  | Informal language. The language that is commonly used in the streets, where  |

<sup>19</sup> The prefix is referred to as Malaŵian because it applies to most of the Malaŵian languages. For example, Chicheŵa, Chitonga and Chitumbuka.

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|                                | interaction is largely informal, as opposed to formal.  |
| <i>African Nigger language</i> | The language of African Niggers. <i>Nigger</i> is a term that is borrowed from American English and American culture. The term is commonly used among youths that associate themselves with American English and culture mainly through their music, dress and life style.  |
| <i>Borrowed language</i>       | Language that is borrowed. This name sums the fact that most of the material contained in Chibrazi is borrowed from other languages.  |
| <i>Chaachinyamata</i>          | For or of the youth. This is an ellipsis of the name <i>Chilankhulo</i> or <i>chiyankhulo cha achinyamata</i> , which means “the language for or of the youth”. This is another name that underscores the fact that the language is generally used by or among the youth and is therefore, commonly associated with the youth.  |
| <i>Chibuti</i>                 | The language for or of brothers. <i>Buti</i> or its variant <i>buthi</i> is another word that is commonly used by male speakers of Chibrazi to refer to one another. The word means “brother” or “friend”. It is most likely borrowed from the Chingoni or isiZulu word for <i>brother</i> , <i>ubuti</i> . In Chibrazi, the male folk are generally referred to as <i>mabuti</i> or <i>mabuthi</i> .   |
| <i>Chachinyamata</i>           | Of or for youth. This is an ellipsis of <i>Chilankhulo</i> or <i>chiyankhulo cha chinyamata</i> , which means “the language for or of youth”. That is, the language that represents (that is denotes or connotes) youth. While this term looks almost the same as <i>cha achinyamata</i> , there is a significant difference between the two. In <i>chachinyamata</i> , the emphasis is on the age of the members of the group (youth), while in <i>cha achinyamata</i> , the emphasis is on the members of the members of the group themselves (the people who are young). |
| <i>Chichewa makono cha</i>     | Modern Chicheŵa. The language is referred to as such because it is a recent occurrence in the Malaŵian society. It is, in this sense, regarded as a variety of Chicheŵa.  |
| <i>Chifrenzo</i>               | The language of or for friends. The word <i>frenzo</i> or its variant <i>frenzoo</i> is a lexification of the English word <i>friend</i> . In Chibrazi, the word means friend. Hence, the language of or for friends.   |
| <i>Chiguy</i>                  | The language of or for guys. The word <i>guy</i> or its variants <i>gaye</i> or <i>gayi</i> is borrowed from English <i>guy</i> . This word is used in Chibrazi to mean male, hence males are referred to as <i>maguy</i> , <i>magaye</i> or <i>magayi</i> , with other variant ways of pluralizing using the morpheme /s/ or/z/. In addition to that, the word is also used to mean “cleverness” in which case the name suggests that this is a language of or for the clever.   |
| <i>Chinfanakalo</i>            | This term seems to be a corruption of the word Fanakalo or Fanagalo, the famous South African pidgin (see for example, Cole, 1953). It is not straight forward what the respondent means by this term. However, in my view, the name might be indicative of the opinion that Chibrazi is similar to Fanakalo. This might be an indication of the opinion that Chibrazi is a pidgin. It is hard to tell whether the respondent applied the word in any technical sense.  |
| <i>Chining'a</i>               | A riddle. The use of this name represents one of the major reasons for which Chibrazi is used in communication. That is, to conceal meaning from other people hearing the conversation. In that case, it can be said that perhaps the language is seen as one big riddle that encompasses a lot many others.  |
| <i>Chinyatwa</i>               | It is also difficult for me to fathom out what the respondent meant by this term because it is rare. However, the word <i>nyatwa</i> is not. The word, which comes from Chisena, another Malaŵian language, wherein it means  |

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|                                   | <p>“problems”, actually means “a lot”, “very much”, “okay”, “fine” and many others in Chibrazi. The word was a form of greeting in the 1970s and 1980s. Thus speakers of the language would greet each other with “<i>Nyatwa ada?</i>” “Fine my friend?”, as in one of the examples in section 1.1 of Chapter one above, to which one would answer “<i>Nyatwa</i>” “Fine”. The word has since evolved to other forms of use. The name can thus be roughly fathomed as meaning “the language that includes words like <i>nyatwa</i>”.</p>  |
| <i>Chipwi/frac</i>                | <p>I do not know the meaning of this name. Efforts to find out from other people have proven futile.</p>  |
| <i>Chiras</i>                     | <p>The language of or for Rastas. The word <i>Ras</i> or its variant <i>Rasi</i> is a clipping of the word Rastafarian or its short form Rasta, which is borrowed from Jamaican Creole. The term, in fact, to be more precise, its plural form <i>Maras</i> or <i>Marasi</i>, is used to refer to Rastafarians or other people that are akin to them by virtue of their music, dressing or general life style, but most importantly, their language.</p>  |
| <i>Chototi</i>                    | <p>I do not know the meaning of this name. Efforts to find out from other people have proven futile.</p>  |
| <i>Chiyankhulo cha chinyamata</i> | <p>The language for or of youth. This is the full version of <i>Chachinyamata</i> presented above.</p>  |
| <i>Chiyankhulo cha mafana</i>     | <p>The language of or for the youth. The word <i>mafana</i>, which mainly means “young ones” in Chibrazi is borrowed from Chingoni or isiZulu <i>mfana</i> “boy”. This is another name that underscores the fact that the language is generally used by or among the youth and is therefore, commonly associated with the youth. I am not sure whether the ‘boy element’ of the original meaning of the word <i>mfana</i> has any significant bearing on the Chibrazi usage.</p>  |
| <i>Chiyankhulo cha makosini</i>   | <p>The language of or for friends or the language of or for brothers. This is another version of the meaning behind the word Chibrazi. <i>Makosini</i> or its variant <i>makosana</i> is a borrowing from either deep or archaic Chicheŵa or another language, which is used to mean “friend” in Chibrazi. The word is also a mark of the solidarity of the speakers of the language. The word was popular in the 1970s and 1980s, but it has since been replaced by other words like <i>brazi</i>, <i>frenzo</i> and <i>frenya</i>, although it is still in use, especially among “old school” speakers of the language.</p> |
| <i>Chiyankhulo cha masiku ano</i> | <p>The language of these days (nowadays). The language is referred to as such because it is a recent occurrence in the Malaŵian society. Note that here the language is generalised rather than being attached to a particular standard language as is the case in <i>Chichewa cha makono</i>.</p>  |
| <i>Chiyo</i>                      | <p>The language of or for young offenders (YOs). The word <i>yo</i> or its variant <i>yoo</i> is another term that is borrowed from American English and American culture. It is actually an abbreviation for <i>young offenders</i>. Just like the term <i>nigger</i>, the term <i>yo</i> is commonly used among youths that associate themselves with American English and culture mainly through their music, dress and life style.</p>  |
| <i>Fashionable language</i>       | <p>Fashionable language. This name is a pointer to the fact that the use of Chibrazi is in certain cases regarded to be a mark of fashionability. Those that are able to use the language are regarded as being fashionable, while those that cannot are seen as rather primitive (<i>achimidzi</i> or its variant <i>achimizi</i>).</p>  |
| <i>Gangstar talk</i>              | <p>The language for or of gangsters. Roughly speaking, the word <i>gangster</i></p>   |

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|   | means more or less the same as <i>nigger</i> and <i>yo</i> . Hence, what is said about the other two names of the language also applies here.   |
| <i>Language for the civilised youth</i>     | The language of or for the civilised youth. Similar to the points about the name <i>fashionable language</i> above, the use of Chibrazi is generally regarded to be a mark of civilisation. Those that are able to use the language are regarded as being civilised, while those that cannot are seen as being rather primitive.  |
| <i>Language for the youth</i>               | A language for or of the youth. Just like the term <i>Youth language</i> , this term underscores the fact that the language is generally used by or among the youth and is therefore, commonly associated with the youth.   |
| <i>Language of mayo</i>                     | The language of YOs. The word <i>mayo</i> or its variant <i>mayoo</i> is a plural form for <i>yo</i> . The meaning of the name here is thus more or less the same as that above under <i>Chiyo</i> .  |
| <i>Maria</i>                                | I do not know the meaning of this name. Efforts to find out from other people have proven futile.   |
| <i>Language ya achinyamata</i>              | The language of or for the youth. This is a different version of the name <i>Chilankhulo</i> or <i>chiyankhulo cha achinyamata</i> , which means “the language of or for the youth”. The term is different in that instead of using the Chicheŵa word <i>chilankhulo</i> , its English equivalent is used. This name highlights one of the linguistic processes employed as communicative strategies in Chibrazi. That is, code switching or code mixing, which is a conversational strategy that involves the alternative use of two or more languages within the same stretch of a communicative utterance. |
| <i>Slang Chichewa</i>                       | Chicheŵa slang or slang Chicheŵa. Here, there appears to be an inherent presupposition of the language as a variety of Chicheŵa. According to Fromkin and Rodman (1993: 276), “slang refers to words and phrases that are often ‘invented’ in keeping with the new ideas and customs; often by recombining old words into new meanings”.  |
| <i>Street language</i>                      | The language that is commonly used in the streets, where interaction is largely informal, as opposed to formal. Informal language.  |
| <i>The language of young people and yos</i> | There are two issues here. Firstly, Chibrazi is said to be a language of or for young people in which case the term means the same as the term <i>Youth language</i> . As already said, this term underscores the fact that the language is generally used by or among the youth and is therefore, commonly associated with the youth. Then there is the addition of YOs, which implies that Chibrazi is also a language for or of YOs. In this case, the explanation given above for <i>Chiyo</i> applies here as well.  |
| <i>Thoni</i>                                | This word is a Chibrazi word that means “town”. It is a vernacularisation of the English word <i>town</i> . It is not clear to me exactly how the respondents who provided this name understand the word as a name of the language. However, I can say that the word implies that Chibrazi is an urban language as it is mainly spoken in town. That is, in urban areas.  |
| <i>Yo</i>                                   | This name can best be explained as the English version of the name <i>Chiyo</i> or its variant <i>Chiyoo</i> , meaning the language of or for the YOs. That said, the explanation given about <i>Chiyo</i> above applies here as well.  |
| <i>Yo talk (young offenders’ talk)</i>      | Talk of or for the YOs. This name also means the language of or for the YOs, in which case the explanation above also applies.  |
| <i>Youth’s language</i>                     | A language spoken by the youth. This is another name that underscores the fact that the language is generally used by or among the youth and is therefore, commonly associated with the youth.  |

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| <i>Vernacular</i> | I am not sure if the respondents who provided this name have any special meaning for this term. However, taking the word as it is, the name implies that the language is indigenous. And, indeed the language is indigenous to Malaŵi. |
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As can be seen in the table above, different people referred to Chibrazi using different names. This is a further indication of their awareness of the existence of the mixed language. The fact that Chibrazi was by far the most popular name among the participants in the case study supports the proposal in the present research to call the mixed language by this name. The variations of the word *chibrazi* in its use as a name of the mixed language were morphological and phonological in some cases. These variations are one representation of the idiosyncratic tendencies that are inherent in Chibrazi. Different speakers simply do things differently for different reasons. One of the major reasons why this happens is for the sake of being unique.

The participants in the oral version of the questionnaire did not appear to know any names used to refer to the mixed language. Instead of providing names of the mixed language, they went on providing examples of the lexicon of the mixed language. This made it appear that they either did not have a name or names for the mixed language themselves or they had not heard of any from other people. This study did not explore the reasons why this should be the case.

Perhaps the most important point to raise about the different names that different people used to refer to the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi is that each one of these names has got a

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meaning, which is indicative of a lot of other aspects of the mixed language. For example, the names represent the kind of attitude that different people have towards the mixed language on the one hand, and the people who speak it or that are associated with it, on the other. It should be noted however, that these attitudes are neither clear cut nor rigid. For instance, while a name may be prestigious for members of the in-group, it may be negative for the out-group. One good example is the name Chiyoo meaning “the language of or for YOs”. While this name is a mark of prestige for the in-group, it has got an inherent negative connotation because the term YO is associated with negative behaviour for the out-group. Two full forms of this acronym are presented here to illustrate this point.

The one full form is given in the glosses above; that is, *young offenders*. This term implies that the members of the in-group are identified as such because of their ‘unbecoming behaviour’. Among the so called ‘unbecoming behaviour’ is language, which violates the standard as it is commonly known. Interestingly though, the in-group regards whatever is labeled as offending as a source of pride. The other full form of the acronym is *young orphans*. This term is used to explain the origin of the big clothes that members of this group are popular for as a prominent feature of their dress style. In explaining the origins of the term, some people employ a story that is claimed to be told about an organisation in the United States of America that collected donations on behalf of young orphans. It is said that some people mistook the big size clothes that these young orphans received from well-wishers (being beggars and therefore, no choosers) for a new trend in town; hence, the dress style of the YOs. For the in-group, the big size clothes are a sign of sophistication, while to other people, they represent something wrong.



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### 6.2.3. Competence and performance of Chibrazi

The fourth question in the second part of the questionnaire asked participants about their competence and performance with regard to Chibrazi. In the literature on language studies, competence refers to a person's knowledge of a language, while performance refers to a person's ability to use their knowledge of the language in real time communication. The participants were required to choose from five options that were provided. The fifth option allowed participants to come up with a response of their own.

Forty nine participants (53.8%) stated that they spoke and understood the mixed language fluently. Eighteen of them (19.8%) said they only spoke and understood the mixed language a little. Twelve participants (13.2%) said they could understand the mixed language, but they did not speak it. Five participants (5.5%) said that they could speak the mixed language, but they did not understand it well; while another five participants chose the option of *other*. Among the respondents that chose the option of *other*, two respondents said that they did not know the mixed language; while one simply said that they did not speak the mixed language. Two respondents (2.2%) did not respond to this question. The table below presents this data.

**Table 3: Competence and performance of Chibrazi**

| Response   | Males |        |        |        | Females |        |        |        |
|--|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|  | 40 +  | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 | 40 +    | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 |
| I speak and understand the language fully.                 | 3     | 0      | 2      | 32     | 0       | 0      | 3      | 9      |
| I can speak the language, but I do not understand it well. | 1     | 2      | 0      | 1      | 0       | 0      | 1      | 0      |
| I can understand the language, but I do not speak it well. | 8     | 0      | 0      | 1      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 1      |

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|  |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|
| I only speak and understand the language a little. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 11 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| Other.   | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1  | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Not attempted.                                     | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The majority of participants in the oral version of the questionnaire also indicated that they spoke and understood Chibrazi to varying degrees. The participants actually spoke the mixed language in the course of answering the questionnaire. The follow up interviews and observation confirmed these findings as well. Learners were actually heard speaking the mixed language outside of the classroom, especially during break time. And, they spoke the mixed language in the course of the follow up interviews.

The data obtained from this question shows that while both the young people and the old people spoke and understood Chibrazi, generally, there were more of the former who did so than the latter. In fact, while the majority of the older people could understand Chibrazi, they could only speak it a little. These two extrapolations resonate with the general assertion that Chibrazi is a ‘language’ for the youth. It is interesting however, to find out that old people also spoke or at least understood this mixed language. This finding strengthens the assertion of the present research that the mixed language is currently spoken among people of varying ages. Moto (2001) supports this assertion.

### 6.2.4. Frequency of the use of Chibrazi

Question 5 required participants to choose the best option that described their frequency of use of the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi. The largest number of participants 43

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(47.3%), indicated that they only spoke Chibrazi some times. These were followed by participants who said they spoke Chibrazi most of the time. There were 31 of these (34.1%). In third position were a group of 9 participants (9.9%) who pointed out that they had never spoken Chibrazi at all. Seven of these were males of 40 and above, while the other 2 were females of 40 and above. Six participants (6.6%) said that they had spoken the mixed language before, but they no longer do. Five of these were males of 40 and above, while the other one was a female of 30 to 39. The remaining 2.2% of the respondents chose *other* saying that they only used Chibrazi when they met fellow speakers. Table 8 shows the details.

**Table 4: Frequency of use of Chibrazi**

| Response   | Males |        |        |        | Females |        |        |        |
|--|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|  | 40 +  | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 | 40 +    | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 |
| I speak the language most of the times.                | 1     | 0      | 1      | 23     | 0       | 0      | 1      | 5      |
| I only speak the language some times.                  | 2     | 3      | 2      | 23     | 0       | 1      | 3      | 9      |
| I have spoken the language before, but I no longer do. | 5     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0       | 1      | 0      | 0      |
| I have never spoken the language at all.               | 7     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 2       | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Other.   | 0     | 0      | 0      | 1      | 0       | 1      | 0      | 0      |
| Not attempted.   | 0     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      |

Participants' responses to this question indicated that there were a lot of people who used Chibrazi. Only few people had never spoken it. There were more participants who used Chibrazi seldom than those who used it often. This can be considered to be a hint at the fact that the use of Chibrazi is domain specific. People used Chibrazi only in certain domains.

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That is to say that Chibrazi was seen to be inappropriate in the domain where they found themselves most of the time; the school, which makes the use of it rather seldom. Most of the participants who answered the questionnaire orally indicated that they used Chibrazi some times. Observation showed that the participants in the case study only used Chibrazi some times. As already indicated above, the participants indicated that they did not speak Chibrazi in class, but they were heard speaking it outside classes; for instance, during break time and in the hostels.

It is interesting that although some people used to speak Chibrazi before, they no longer did so at the time of the research. Such people can be said to have grown out of Chibrazi or outgrown it. One participant in the follow up interviews emphasised the point that as people grow up, they tend to ‘shed off’ Chibrazi. However, there were other people who had not stopped using Chibrazi on account of growing up. This point can be used to predict the possible future of Chibrazi. It can be argued that Chibrazi might continue growing and become more and more widely used if people do not ‘grow out of it’. A situation of a similar type is already in progress in the case of Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho in South Africa. These two varieties have become part and parcel of people’s languages.

### **6.2.5. Provision of examples of Chibrazi**

The sixth question in the second part of the questionnaire required participants to provide any five examples of words, phrases or sentences in Chibrazi. The question intended to find out what kind of words, phrases or sentences the participants had in their Chibrazi repertoire. It also intended to confirm the responses that participants had provided in the preceding questions as well as the others after it. Out of 91 participants, 82 (90.1%) provided examples

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of Chibrazi. A whole range of words, phrases and sentences came up. According to my knowledge of Chibrazi, the examples were all typical Chibrazi, except for those provided by one male of 30 to 39. Such examples are spread across this thesis. The majority of the participants who did not provide examples of Chibrazi (7 out of 9) were in the group of males of 40 and above. This was a further indication of the participants' awareness of the existence of the language and a confirmation of the reality of their responses to other questions in the questionnaire. Table 9 below shows the details.

**Table 5: Provision of examples of Chibrazi**

| Response  | Males |        |        |        | Females |        |        |        |
|-----------|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|           | 40 +  | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 | 40 +    | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 |
| Given     | 10    | 3      | 3      | 46     | 0       | 3      | 4      | 13     |
| Not given | 5     | 0      | 0      | 1      | 2       | 0      | 0      | 1      |

The participants in the oral version of the questionnaire also provided a lot of examples of Chibrazi. Even from observation, a lot of words, phrases and sentences were heard. I was actually intrigued that after hearing the word *kagunde* several times from different participants, I only got a clear understanding of the meaning of the word from one of the participants in the standard five group. This was interpreted as an indication that indeed the participants in the case study knew and/or used Chibrazi. It was also interpreted as pointing to the fact that Chibrazi vocabulary is indeed ubiquitous and dynamic. More examples of Chibrazi were also collected in the course of the interviews and observation in this study.

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The results that were obtained from this question indicated a number of things about Chibrazi and its speakers. First of all, the results indicated that Chibrazi had its own vocabulary that was different from the vocabulary of its source languages. Secondly, the results indicated that it was the lexicon that made Chibrazi different from other Malaŵian languages. Thirdly, the data from the question revealed some of the processes through which the vocabulary of Chibrazi is produced. The data also pointed to the linguistic structure of Chibrazi. Finally, the data from the question indicated that there were differences in terms of a number of issues regarding the type of Chibrazi that was spoken by different people.

#### **6.2.6. Context of first encounter with Chibrazi**

In the seventh question, participants were asked to state the place where they first came across Chibrazi. The results from this question are summarised in Table 10 below. The majority of the participants, 59 (64.8%) claimed that they first came across Chibrazi at school. The school is the most popular domain of first encounter for all the age groups that participated in the case study. Fifteen of them (16.5%) said that they first encountered Chibrazi at the playground, while 13 (14.3%) indicated the home as the place where they first came across Chibrazi. The radio and the television were each chosen by one participant, while another one chose the option of *other*. Interestingly, the participants who chose *other* actually stated that they first encountered Chibrazi at home. This means that in actual fact, 14 participants first encountered Chibrazi at home. One participant did not answer this question. The three contexts, school, playground and home, were also the most popular among the participants in the oral version of the questionnaire, although none of them clearly stood out.

**Table 6: Contexts of first encounter with Chibrazi**

| Response                         | Males |        |        |        | Females |        |        |        |
|----------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                  | 40 +  | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 | 40 +    | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 |
| At school.                       | 9     | 1      | 2      | 30     | 0       | 3      | 3      | 11     |
| At home.                         | 2     | 0      | 1      | 7      | 2       | 0      | 0      | 1      |
| At the playground<br>(kosewela). | 2     | 1      | 0      | 9      | 0       | 0      | 1      | 2      |
| On radio.                        | 0     | 1      | 0      | 0      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| On television.                   | 1     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Other.                           | 1     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Not attempted.                   | 0     | 0      | 0      | 1      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      |

From the data gathered through this question, the school was seen to be the most popular domain in which the participants in the case study first encountered Chibrazi. However, the playground and the home also appeared to be important domains. This showed that different people encountered Chibrazi in different contexts because the mixed language was present in the different contexts. It is plausible to contend that the school featured as the most popular agent through which the participants in the case study were exposed to Chibrazi because it was one of the most central places where people met. This applied especially to people with similar characteristics (in this case, the youth). Such was not the case with regard to the other domains like the home, the playground and the radio where interaction was confined to smaller numbers. The data from this question also showed how ubiquitous Chibrazi was.

### 6.2.7. Contexts in which Chibrazi is commonly used

Questions number 8 and 9 of Section B of the questionnaire are related because they both intended to solicit information about the contexts in which Chibrazi was commonly used. Question 8 asked subjects to indicate the contexts in which they either spoke the mixed

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language if they (still) did, or where they had spoken the mixed language if they no longer spoke it. The question asked participants to choose all applicable options providing them with 5 such, with the fifth one being *other*. It is important to note that with regard to questions 8 and 9, the choice of one option implied the denial of its counterpart.

For question 8, 81 people (89%) chose the option *anywhere with friends*, while eleven (12.1%) did not. The option *at home* was chosen by 21 people (23.1%), while 70 people (76.9%) did not. The option *at school with my teachers* was chosen by 7 participants (7.7%), while 84 subjects (92.3%) shunned this option. Only 3 participants chose the option *at church or the mosque with religious leaders*. That means that 88 participants (96.7%) were against this option. Four participants (4.4%) chose the option of *other*.

These participants included the following statements:

- At the club with friends;
- Usually where the youth meet;
- Whenever I am with my friends, we feel it's the language that is lighter;
- With relatives, e.g. uncle, cousins, e.t.c.;
- I don't speak this language with my parents<sup>20</sup>; and
- Any associations like games or parties.

Table 11 below shows the summary of the statistics for question 8.

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<sup>20</sup>This statement is obviously misplaced here. It does not quite agree with the question. It is simply included to show what the participant said.



**Table 7: Contexts in which Chibrazi is spoken by participants**

| Response                                       | Males |        |        |        | Females |        |        |        |
|--|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|  | 40 +  | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 | 40 +    | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 |
| Anywhere with my friends.                      | 8     | 3      | 3      | 47     | 0       | 3      | 4      | 13     |
| At home.                                       | 2     | 1      | 0      | 16     | 0       | 0      | 1      | 1      |
| At school with my teachers.                    | 1     | 0      | 0      | 5      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 1      |
| At church or mosque with my religious leaders. | 1     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0       | 0      | 1      | 1      |
| Other.   | 2     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 1       | 0      | 1      | 0      |
| Not attempted.                                 | 5     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 1       | 0      | 0      | 1      |

In question 9, participants were asked to talk about contexts in which they had heard other people speak Chibrazi. They were also required to indicate all options that applied to them, choosing from 5 given, including that of *other*. Seventy nine participants (86.8%) chose the option *anywhere with their friends*, while 12 (13.2%) did not. Thirty five subjects (38.5%) chose the option *at home*, while 56 of them did not. Only 8 participants (8.8%) went with the option *at school with their teachers*, while 83 (91.2%) did not. The option *at church or the mosque with their religious leaders* was only chosen by 2 respondents (2.2%). The other 89 participants (97.8%) did not.

Another minority of 6 people (6.6%) chose the option *other*. The following statements came up under the option of *other*:

- Because it's the youth language<sup>21</sup>;
- At special functions like parties and outdoor recreations;

<sup>21</sup> This statement does not sound like a response to the question at hand. It is only included to show what the respondents said.

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- Only if they can understand;
- At school with friends;
- On television youth programmes;
- My uncles with their friends;
- It is spoken among the youth;
- When fighting with other people; and
- Trading places like markets, in buses.

Table 12 below summarises the data from question nine.

**Table 8: Contexts in which participants have heard other people speak Chibrazi**

| Response  | Males |        |        |        | Females |        |        |        |
|---|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|   | 40 +  | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 | 40 +    | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 |
| Anywhere with their friends.                      | 13    | 3      | 3      | 42     | 1       | 2      | 4      | 11     |
| At their homes.                                   | 3     | 1      | 0      | 23     | 0       | 0      | 2      | 6      |
| At school with their teachers.                    | 1     | 0      | 0      | 7      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| At church or mosque with their religious leaders. | 0     | 0      | 0      | 2      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Other.  | 0     | 0      | 0      | 5      | 0       | 1      | 0      | 0      |
| Not attempted.                                    | 1     | 0      | 0      | 2      | 1       | 0      | 0      | 2      |

The responses to questions 8 and 9 clearly demonstrated that Chibrazi was mainly used between and among people that were close to each other, especially friends in different contexts that they found it appropriate. The contexts in which Chibrazi was used were generally informal. Another point is that only few participants used Chibrazi at home. These patterns were seen to be common for all age groups. These observations were seen as an

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indication that what determined the appropriateness of the use of Chibrazi was the relationship between or among interlocutors rather than the place where the conversation took place. As can be seen from the data, Chibrazi was used in different domains including the home and the school, but only when there was a close relationship between or among the speakers. This issue is explored further in the section on perceptions about Chibrazi below.

The points raised above also came out clearly from the participants in the oral version of the questionnaire, in the follow up interviews, and from observation. The learners that were interviewed also mentioned the hostels in this regard. Participants in the follow up interviews explained that the language was only used between or among friends. For example, the group of male learners that were interviewed said that they used Chibrazi during break time. This was actually witnessed through observation. Some teachers mentioned that they sometimes used Chibrazi as a strategy to ‘connect’ with their learners. Some of these mentioned that they even did that in the classroom, but they only did so when the environment was right. That is, when the use of Chibrazi enhanced learning.

However, the teachers who said that they used Chibrazi in class and those that said that they did not agreed on the point that Chibrazi had an inherent potential of disrupting the learning process. This potential could be explained by saying that Chibrazi, as an anti-language, was an expression of disrespect of linguistic as well as other societal norms and purity (see Kiesling and Mous, 2004 for further discussion of anti-languages)<sup>22</sup>. Hence, it may be said that the classroom is not the best place to entertain it, although it does help to ‘connect’ the

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<sup>22</sup> According to Kiesling and Mous (2004, citing Halliday, 1978: 164), an anti-language is a sociolect that expresses conscious social and linguistic opposition, putting emphasis on the interpersonal function at the expense of the referential function of language.

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teacher to his or her learners. My personal experience of using Chibrazi in the classroom supports this statement.

#### 6.2.8. Sources of Chibrazi

Question 10 of section B of the questionnaire asked the subjects to provide all the sources of their knowledge of Chibrazi as at the time of the research. They were given the options *television, radio, music, friends* and *other*. The majority of the respondents, 78 (85.7%) indicated that friends were the source of their knowledge, while 13 (14.3%) said that friends were not sources of their knowledge of Chibrazi. Music was the second most popular source of knowledge of Chibrazi for the participants with 41 participants (45.1%), while 50 of them (54.9%) shunned it. Twenty subjects (22%) identified the radio as a source of their present knowledge of Chibrazi, while 71 (78%) denied it as a source of their knowledge of Chibrazi. Eleven participants (12.1%) chose television as a source of their present knowledge of Chibrazi, but 80 (87.9%) did not choose the television as a source. Four people chose not to respond to this question, while 3 chose the option *other*.

One respondent who chose the option of *other* suggested that sometimes Chibrazi came from teachers. Two respondents indicated that the youth were the source of their knowledge of Chibrazi. Another one identified drama or plays as their source, while yet another one mentioned siblings, parents and other relatives. The last of the respondents who chose the option of *other* simply indicated some of the places where they source their knowledge of Chibrazi. These included parties, youth clubs, games and what they called “boys outs”. Table 13 below show the results for question 10.

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**Table 9: Sources of Chibrazi**

| Response      | Males |        |        |        | Females |        |        |        |
|---------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|               | 40 +  | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 | 40 +    | 30- 39 | 20- 29 | 10- 19 |
| Television    | 1     | 1      | 0      | 4      | 0       | 2      | 0      | 3      |
| Radio         | 2     | 2      | 0      | 11     | 0       | 0      | 1      | 4      |
| Music         | 5     | 2      | 1      | 23     | 0       | 1      | 1      | 8      |
| Friends       | 8     | 3      | 2      | 44     | 2       | 2      | 4      | 13     |
| Other         | 2     | 0      | 0      | 1      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Not attempted | 3     | 0      | 0      | 1      | 0       | 0      | 0      | 0      |

The data obtained from question eleven shows that there were numerous sources from which different participants of the case study drew their knowledge of Chibrazi. Among these various sources, friends stood out as the most common source for both the young and the old, and for both females and males. This point tallies with the fact that Chibrazi was mostly used between and among people who were closely related. Music comes second. However, the television and the radio did not feature as prominent sources of Chibrazi. This is a very interesting point considering the fact that music, which was claimed to be a source of Chibrazi by a good number of participants, is also popularised through the media of radio and television. This being the case, one would expect that the radio and television would be equally popular or at least close as sources of Chibrazi.

The oral version of the questionnaire yielded similar results to the ones outlined here. However, siblings and elderly friends were the ones that featured more prominently than other sources. This group also included *mavenda* “vendors”, *ajigidi* “hip hop musicians and followers of hip hop music”, and *marasi* “Rastas, people with Rastafarian traits or followers

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of ‘Rastafarian music’: reggae and ragamuffin”. The participants indicated that they heard *mavenda* speaking Chibrazi when they walked in the streets in town. It is interesting though, that for these participants, the radio and television were important sources with regard to *ajigidi*. They heard them on the radio and saw and heard them on television. This outcome complicates the contradiction among music, the radio and television as sources of Chibrazi even further.

Although music, the radio and television did not feature as highly as friends in this question, the data indicates that they too were significant sources of information on Chibrazi. Perhaps one of the reasons why music, the radio and television were not as prominent as friends lies behind the level of accessibility of these sources to the participants. It can be argued that generally the participants tended to have more access to friends and relatives than to music, the radio and television due to various reasons; for example, time. Participants tended to have more time with friends than with these other sources. Another reason that might be behind such a trend has to do with the level of interaction that is involved in the various sources of Chibrazi. It is observed in the literature on language acquisition that sources of language such as the radio and television tend to be not very effective sources of language because they are ‘dry’ in terms of interaction. For example, Kamanga (2009: 129) argues that the more interaction a person gets in a particular language, the more they learn it.

### 6.3. Variation in Chibrazi

There is a considerable amount of variation within Chibrazi on the basis of different factors. Differences such as these are typical of what is recorded about language in the literature. However, the data in this research did not provide any insight into the differences on the basis

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of other factors like mother tongue or language in general and geographical location. In this regard, Chibrazi can be said to be a general cover term for different language practices in contemporary Malaŵi that encompass different phenomena within the realm of language change in general and the creation of new languages in particular. One may argue that such variations are tantamount to the existence of different varieties or dialects of Chibrazi. However, it is difficult to come up with a clear demarcation of the varieties or dialects of Chibrazi because there is always crossing among speakers of the different varieties to the extent that they always share information. Therefore, the present study only presents some of the most common factors that create the variation within Chibrazi.

### 6.3.1. Geographical variation

First of all, there is variation in Chibrazi on the basis of geographical location. Each of the urban centers has got certain unique language practices within Chibrazi because the speakers in each region are influenced by different factors. Just to give one example, variation in Chibrazi can be divided into four regional demarcations: the Chibrazi of Zomba City, the Chibrazi of Blantyre City, the Chibrazi of Lilongwe City, and the Chibrazi of Mzuzu City. It should be remembered that the demarcations among these centers are not straight forward due to the level of intermingling among the peoples of these cities.

One piece of vocabulary can be used as an example of such differences. A speaker of Chibrazi in Mzuzu may refer to beer as *pombe* in addition to the many other terms that are used for the same, while a speaker of Chibrazi in Blantyre may not use the term *pombe* as a referent for beer. This may be because the speaker of Chibrazi who is based in Blantyre is not influenced in the same way by Kiswahili of Tanzania, where this term comes from, as the

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speaker of Chibrazi who is based in Mzuzu and is therefore much closer to the influence of Kiswahili.

### 6.3.2. Variation in grammatical base

The second factor that leads to variation within Chibrazi is the language that is used as the grammatical base. This is largely determined by the mother tongues or the language preferences of the speakers of Chibrazi. It is important to remember the explanation that Chibrazi comprises a grammatical base component and a core Chibrazi component. Using this premise, the present research proposes that there could be as many varieties of Chibrazi as the ethnic languages of Malaŵi because each one of these ethnic languages can be used as a grammatical base for Chibrazi. Examples from three ‘varieties’ have been presented in the present study: Chicheŵa based Chibrazi, Chitonga based Chibrazi, and Chitumbuka based Chibrazi. Speakers of Chibrazi can choose whichever ‘variety’ of Chibrazi to use at any given time depending on their mother tongue or the languages that they are comfortable with or the languages of their interlocutors. I for instance, can use any of these three ‘varieties’ cited above.

The example of *pombe* given under Section 6.3.1 above fits perfectly here. Other examples are the Chibrazi words for *go*. These include *kuvaya*, *kulowa* and *kunjira*. The two latter Chibrazi words are interesting because they are imported from Malaŵian languages; that is, Chicheŵa and Chitumbuka respectively. But, they both mean “to enter” in their original languages. In order to say “I am going” in Chibrazi, a speaker of the Chicheŵa based Chibrazi has the option of saying *Ndikuvaya*, *Ndikulowa*, or *Ndikunjira*; while a speaker of



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the Chitumbuka based Chibrazi has the option of saying *Nkhuvaya*, *Nkhulowa*, or *Nkhunjira*. These examples are drawn from my own knowledge of Chibrazi.

### 6.3.3. Occupational variation

Occupation is the third factor from which differences within Chibrazi arise. Speakers of Chibrazi may differ because of the different occupations that they belong to since each one of the occupations exposes them to different life experiences. In fact, speakers of Chibrazi will draw most of the Chibrazi vocabulary from the register that they normally use. To illustrate this point, three Chibrazi equivalents of the word *enemy* are presented here. These examples are taken from my knowledge of Chibrazi. A speaker of Chibrazi who is a soldier by occupation will most likely refer to an enemy as *mmaliwongo*. This word is taken from army jargon. It is a word that is used to denote the adversary. A football player will most likely refer to an enemy as *n'dani*. This word is taken from Chicheŵa and it is commonly used to refer to an opponent in the game of football. A criminal is most likely to use the word *nyambaro* to refer to an enemy. This word is the common word for people that are deemed to be their enemies. The word is especially used to refer to the police who happen to be their number one enemy.

### 6.3.4. Gender variation

The fourth factor that causes variation in Chibrazi is gender. Males and females tend to differ in a number of ways in terms of their use of Chibrazi. On that note, three issues are pointed out in terms of gender differences in Chibrazi. To begin with, females tend to not use the mixed language so much as males do. The Chibrazi that females speak can be said to be more grammatical base language dominated than the Chibrazi that males speak. Conversely, the

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Chibrazi that males speak is more core Chibrazi dominated than that which females speak. Secondly, the Chibrazi vocabulary of the two groups differs. For example, females tend to avoid what may generally be considered to be ‘offensive Chibrazi’, while males are more carefree. In other words, the Chibrazi of females is rather ‘diluted’, while that of males is ‘hard core’: while the Chibrazi of the females is devoid of obscenity; the Chibrazi of the males is full of obscenity. However, it is important to note that females tend to talk about ‘girl stuff’, while males talk about ‘boy stuff’.

In addition to that, females are generally regarded as defenders of societal norms (see for example, Kaphamtengo, 2009; Kusankha, 2009; Luwayo, 2009; and Kayira, 2007). The third difference between males and females regarding Chibrazi is that while males are generally more up to date with the trends in Chibrazi, females tend to lag behind. In fact, males set the pace and females follow, but very slowly; hence there will be variation at any point in time. Generally speaking, Chibrazi can be said to be more of ‘masculine’ than ‘feminine’ in nature. For example, it was born among males. As such, it tends to lean more towards males more than females.

### 6.3.5. Age variation

There is also variation in Chibrazi on the basis of the ages of its speakers or the generations to which its speakers belong. The basis of this variation is the fact that the mixed language is always changing in keeping with different trends of development in the country in general and more specifically in the lives of the speakers of the mixed language. Roughly speaking, Chibrazi can be divided into three ‘varieties’ on the basis of generations. The Chibrazi of the 1960s and 1970s may be labeled as the earliest Chibrazi or pioneer Chibrazi. The Chibrazi of

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the 1980s and the 1990s may be labeled as the intermediate Chibrazi. The third type of Chibrazi would be labeled as the Chibrazi of the new millennium.

However, such a demarcation is not accurate and it would require constant review over time. It would thus be much easier to polarise Chibrazi into two possible ‘varieties’. In this regard, the term *Old School Chibrazi* is used to represent old Chibrazi, while the term *Contemporary Chibrazi* is used to represent newer Chibrazi. As an example of this kind of variation, in the 1980s, people used to greet each other using expressions like *nyatwa*, *banya*, *mushe* and other, which can in 2014 be considered as old school. In 2014, people are using such words as *shapu*, *bo*, *boobo*, which can be considered as contemporary to 2014. However, even that is not straight forward because the words “old” and “contemporary” are relative.

In an attempt to simplify the complication above, the present research proposes that there are two basic ‘varieties’ of Chibrazi on the basis of the ages of individual members of the speech community of Chibrazi. The one ‘variety’ is the Chibrazi that members of the speech community speak in their youth. This can be referred to as the Contemporary Chibrazi for each individual speaker. The other ‘variety’ is the Chibrazi that members of the speech community speak in their mature days. This becomes Old School Chibrazi for the individual speakers.

It is important to note that just as Chibrazi is dynamic at the collective level; it is also dynamic at the individual level. As such, the two labels are also dynamic. What is

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contemporary at one point becomes old school at another; and what is contemporary to one individual may be old school for another.

#### **6.4. Conclusion**

This chapter sought to provide some answers to the question of who speaks the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi using Viphya Schools as a case. The general conclusion that can be drawn is that Chibrazi is spoken by people of different kinds at Viphya Schools. It is spoken by both males and females; the young and the old; and learners, teachers and members of the support staff of the institution. However, this conclusion ought to be sharpened in light of the differences in degrees between and within these juxtapositions of the members of the institution.

Firstly, the young people at the institution tend to speak and understand Chibrazi better than the old. The males among these speak and understand Chibrazi more than females. Secondly, the young people at the institution tend to speak Chibrazi more than the older people. Among these, the males tend to speak Chibrazi more than the females. Thirdly, the type of Chibrazi that is spoken and known by these groups of people is different across their groupings. The old tend to know and speak more of 'Old School' Chibrazi, while the young people know and speak more Contemporary Chibrazi. There are also differences between the Chibrazi that males speak and the Chibrazi that the females speak. The fourth conclusion is that different people encountered Chibrazi in different contexts because the mixed language is present in the different contexts, especially places where different people converge. The fifth conclusion is that Chibrazi is mainly used between and among people that are close to each other, especially friends in different contexts that they find the mixed language appropriate. Finally,

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there are numerous sources from which different members of the Viphya Schools community draw their knowledge of Chibrazi. Among these various sources, friends stand out as the most common source for both the young and the old and the males and the females. It should also be noted that the conclusions about the juxtapositions between males and females, and the young and the old should not be treated as fixed. This is so because the present research did not make any deliberate effort to unravel these in detail.

Using these conclusions, similar conclusions might be made about other similar institutions and settings not only in Mzuzu City or the Northern Region of Malaŵi, but about such institutions and settings across the entire country. However, these generalisations would have to be made cautiously taking into account the different dynamics that abound and the limitations of generalising from a case study as explained in chapter three. Therefore, ‘different types of Chibrazi are known and spoken to different degrees by different people in different contexts in Malaŵi’.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### PERCEPTIONS ABOUT CHIBRAZI

#### 7.1. Introduction

The fourth set of empirical data that was obtained in this research is on participants' perceptions of Chibrazi. This data was obtained from the written questionnaire that was administered in the case study part of this research. The questionnaire included questions that asked the participants their opinions about a number of issues pertaining to Chibrazi. It is from the participants' answers to these questions that the perceptions that are summarised in this chapter are drawn. In other words, this chapter provides some indicators regarding the attitude that the participants in the case study of this research have towards Chibrazi. The items that were included in the questionnaire came from sentiments that were deduced from the review of literature and those that I have encountered before.

Eight factors were considered as the indicators of participants' perceptions of Chibrazi. The following are the factors that were included in the questions: the participants' description of Chibrazi; the impact of Chibrazi; legislation around Chibrazi; the functions of Chibrazi; people's liking of Chibrazi; the popularity of Chibrazi; appropriateness of Chibrazi; and the socioeconomic importance of Chibrazi.

It is noted that there is a high number of participants who did not respond to some of the statements in the last section of the questionnaire. The reasons behind this were not

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established because this was only discovered during the time of analysis of the data. This affected the quality of the data in this section as the numbers were reduced. Such being the case, the patterns that were drawn in the responses were based on a smaller number of participants than in the rest of the questionnaire.

In the majority of the questions, participants were asked to state whether they agreed or disagreed with given statements on a five point scale: *strongly disagree (1)*, *disagree (2)*, *neutral (3)*, *agree (4)* and *strongly agree (5)*. In order to ease the work in the analysis, the participants' responses were polarised in such a way that the focus was narrowed to two sides. On the one side were responses of the participants that agreed with the statements. This side combined the *agree* and *strongly agree* options. On the other side were the responses of the participants that disagreed with the statements. This side combined the *disagree* and *strongly disagree* options. The third dimension to the analysis was that of participants who opted to be neutral on certain issues.

## 7.2. Participants' descriptions of Chibrazi

Question 11 of the written questionnaire was asked to solicit data on how participants generally described Chibrazi. The question provided participants with a list of different descriptions of Chibrazi expressed in Chicheŵa. It asked them to choose the one option that they themselves embraced. The majority of the subjects, that is 63 of them (69.2%), described Chibrazi as a language of the youth. Eighteen participants (19.8%) regarded Chibrazi as modern days' language. Four respondents (4.4%) chose the option *other*, and another 4 did not respond to this question. Under the option of *other*, participants said Chibrazi was a native language, a language by tribe (which is rather difficult to fathom), a language for all

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people, and a normal language spoken when you are relaxing with your mates. There was only one respondent each (1.1%) for the options *the language of smokers of Indian hemp* and *the language of the uncivilised*. See the table below.

**Table 10: Participants' description of Chibrazi**

| PERCEPTION OF CHIBRAZI   | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|--|-----------|------------|
| <i>Chilankhulo cha achinyamata</i> (a language of the youth)                   | 63        | 69.2       |
| <i>Chilankhulo cha masiku ano</i> (Modern days' language)                      | 18        | 19.8       |
| <i>Chilankhulo cha anthu a chamba</i> (The language of smokers of Indian hemp) | 1         | 1.1        |
| <i>Chilankhulo cha anthu osazindikila</i> (The language of the uncivilised)    | 1         | 1.1        |
| Other  | 4         | 4.4        |

This data shows that the majority of the participants in the case study perceived Chibrazi as a youth language or a language of the youth. That is very interesting considering the fact that the questionnaire had also demonstrated that most of the participants, including both the young and the old spoke Chibrazi. One would think that if Chibrazi was regarded as a language for the youth, then it would be spoken only by the youth. That was not the case though. The findings in this research suggest that Chibrazi is 'a language for all people', as one participant said in response to this question. However, in comparison, the youth use the mixed language more and they are more instrumental in the creation of Chibrazi than adults, hence the association of the language with the youth and youth itself. It is equally interesting that the participants who perceived Chibrazi in positive light by far outnumbered those that perceived it in negative light. There were only 5 participants who perceived Chibrazi in



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negative light. One of these perceived it as a language for smokers of Indian hemp, while 4 evaluated it as a language of the uncivilised.

The results from the oral version of the questionnaire on this question are also interesting. The pattern in the responses of the participants is more or less the same as that of the participants in the written questionnaire mainly in the sense that all the options were chosen by some participants, although there were more on the positive side than on the negative one. When I asked those participants who had stated that Chibrazi was a language for uncivilised people whether they themselves were uncivilised by virtue of speaking Chibrazi, they were quick to say no. In fact, they ended up changing their minds about their earlier response to this question.

### **7.3. Participant's opinions about legislation around Chibrazi**

Question 12 of the questionnaire solicited information on participants' opinions about Chibrazi and legislation. In this regard, the question listed six statements about Chibrazi. Two of the statements were on the impact that Chibrazi is having. Three statements were on what should be done considering this impact. The last statement was on whether or not the participants liked Chibrazi. The statements in this question can be said to be related. It is for this reason that they are generalised under this heading. The table below summarises the findings in this question.

**Table 11: Participants' attitude towards Chibrazi**

| STATEMENT  | 1  |      | 2  |      | 3  |      | 4  |      | 5  |      | M  |      |
|--|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|
|  | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    |
| The language is "killing" other languages  | 22 | 24.2 | 21 | 23.1 | 13 | 14.3 | 18 | 19.8 | 8  | 8.8  | 9  | 9.9  |
| The language is spreading  | 1  | 1.1  | 3  | 3.3  | 3  | 3.3  | 43 | 47.3 | 26 | 28.6 | 15 | 16.5 |
| People should be allowed to continue using the language                                    | 7  | 7.7  | 12 | 13.2 | 17 | 18.7 | 24 | 26.4 | 15 | 16.5 | 16 | 17.6 |
| I would support a policy that tries to stop or minimise the use and spread of the language | 28 | 30.8 | 23 | 25.3 | 9  | 9.9  | 10 | 11.0 | 7  | 7.7  | 14 | 15.4 |
| The language should be banned  | 39 | 42.9 | 27 | 29.7 | 3  | 3.3  | 3  | 3.3  | 4  | 4.4  | 15 | 16.5 |
| I like the language  | 5  | 5.5  | 4  | 4.4  | 13 | 14.3 | 26 | 28.6 | 30 | 32.9 | 13 | 14.3 |

### 7.3.1. Whether Chibrazi is killing other languages

The first statement was: *This language is "killing" other languages*. Twenty two subjects (24.2%) indicated that they strongly disagreed with this statement. Twenty one of them (23.1%) showed that they simply disagreed with the statement. Eighteen people (19.8%) stated that they agreed with the statement. Thirteen participants (14.3%) chose to be neutral on this statement. Eight participants (8.8%) indicated that they strongly agreed with the statement. The rest of the participants, that is 9 (9.9%), did not respond to this statement. If the responses of the participants to this statement are polarised, there are more participants (43, being 47%) that thought that Chibrazi is not killing other languages than those who thought that Chibrazi is killing other languages.

In the follow up interviews, I attempted to dig deeper into the issue. The interviews yielded results similar to those found in the questionnaire. The interviewees stated a lot of reasons

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why they considered Chibrazi not to be killing other languages. Participants' responses can perhaps be summarised into three general observations in this regard. Firstly, participants felt that there was a clear demarcation between Chibrazi and other languages in terms of domains of use such that Chibrazi did not necessarily encroach into other languages' territory. Secondly, participants highlighted the fact that it was not everybody that spoke the mixed language. The participants indicated that in general terms, while the youth were speaking the mixed language, elders were acting as preservers of the other languages. Thirdly, participants argued that Chibrazi was not spoken everywhere. The participants stated that the mixed language was only spoken in urban areas, not in rural areas where the other languages were pure.

However, those participants that believed that Chibrazi was killing other languages based their belief on the other side of the arguments presented above. Participants in this category reacted to the first argument by saying that there were some speakers of Chibrazi who did not respect the supposed demarcation between the other languages and Chibrazi itself in terms of domain of use. Some participants in this category countered the second argument by stating that with the passing of time, more and more rural people were converting to the urban way of life. They stated that this meant that soon the people in rural areas would also turn the way of the people in urban areas. The participants in this category reacted to the third argument by saying that considering the fact that the youth were the future of the Malaŵian society, there was every reason to worry about the death of the other languages on account of the advent of Chibrazi. They indicated that if the current trend was to continue, there would come a time when the mixed language would be so 'normal' that it would be taken to be 'the language' instead of the ethnic languages.

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As for the participants in the oral version of the questionnaire, one of the greatest fears that they expressed in line with its impact was that Chibrazi might cause them to fail Chicheŵa examinations. They feared that they might find themselves using Chibrazi even in Chicheŵa composition exercises, for example. One of the teachers echoed this fear during the follow up interview. The teacher clarified that in fact, one of the items in the final (national) examinations tests learners' knowledge of 'pure Chicheŵa' against Chicheŵa Chibrazi, which is labelled as wrong Chicheŵa.

In more precise terms, this study holds the opinion that the impact that Chibrazi exerts on other languages originates in the dynamics of a different form of diglossia between the ethnic vernacular as the High variety and the urban contact vernacular as the Low variety within the domains where the ethnic vernacular is traditionally spoken. Chibrazi competes with ethnic languages in certain domains, especially the informal ones. It is in domains where Chibrazi competes with ethnic languages that it poses a threat to the ethnic languages. Rudwick (2005) presents this kind of analysis of isiTsotsi and isiZulu in the Umlazi township of Durban in South Africa. The issue of diglossia is not tackled in detail in this research. It is deferred to future studies.

### **7.3.2. Whether or not Chibrazi is spreading**

The second statement that was included in this part of the questionnaire is: *The language is spreading*. In response to this statement, the majority of the respondents, that is 43 of them (47.3%), stated that they agreed with the statement. These were followed by 26 others (28.6%) who pointed out that they strongly agreed with the statement. Fifteen participants (16.5%) did not respond to this question. The options *disagree* and *neutral* were at par, with

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each having a population of 3 (3.3%). Only one person (1.1%) strongly disagreed with the statement. By combining the responses of the participants, it is very clear that the majority of the participants (69, being 75.9%) believed that Chibrazi was spreading.

The participants in the case study were of the view that Chibrazi was spreading. This tends to support the point that Chibrazi has grown from a mere small sociolect to a much more elaborate communication tool that is not necessarily restricted to a particular group of people any more. Chibrazi has also grown in terms of the domains in which it is used. Even domains that were traditionally considered to be ‘sacred, no go zones’ to Chibrazi have now been penetrated.

### **7.3.3. Whether or not people should be allowed to continue using Chibrazi**

The third statement in this part of the questionnaire was: *People should be allowed to continue using the language.* Twenty four participants (26.4%) stated that they agreed with the statement. Seventeen participants (18.7%) chose to be neutral on this statement. Sixteen of the participants (17.5%) did not respond to this statement. Fifteen of them (16.5%) strongly agreed with the statement. Twelve people (13.2%) disagreed, while seven of them (7.7%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The polarised statistics for this statement show that there were more participants who felt that people should be allowed to continue using Chibrazi than those who were in disagreement with that (39 against 19), although there were many more participants who did not respond to this statement.

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#### **7.3.4. Whether or not a legislation should be made against Chibrazi**

The fourth statement in this part of the questionnaire was: *I would support a policy that tries to stop or minimise the use of this language.* Twenty eight participants (30.8%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement. Twenty three of them (25.3%) indicated that they disagreed with this statement. Fourteen of the participants (15.3%) did not respond to this statement. Ten respondents (11.0%) mentioned that they agreed with the statement. Nine participants (9.9%) opted to remain neutral about the statement. Only 7 participants (9.1%) were the ones who said they strongly agreed with the statement. Here, the combined statistics show that the majority of the study population (51, being 56.1%) disagreed with the idea of legislating against the use of Chibrazi.

#### **7.3.5. Whether or not Chibrazi should be banned**

The next statement that was included in this part of the questionnaire is: *The language should be banned.* The majority of the participants, that is thirty nine respondents (42.9%), strongly disagreed with this statement. Twenty seven of them (29.7%) disagreed with the statement. Fifteen participants (16.4%) did not respond to this statement. The option of *strongly agree* was chosen by four people (4.4%). There were three respondents (3.3%) that were neutral about this statement. Another 3.3% of the respondents mentioned that they agreed with the statement. Clearly, the people who expressed the desire to see Chibrazi banned were fewer than those who would not.

The responses to the third, the fourth and the fifth statement are analysed together because they are related to one another. The three statements point to the same question. That is, whether or not Chibrazi should be allowed. While the question of whether or not people

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should be allowed to use Chibrazi may seem bizarre, it was included in the questionnaire based on the history of Malaŵi's language policy, which discouraged the use of certain languages, and the deliberate efforts that have been taken against Chibrazi before, as presented in chapter four. There was a clear majority in all these three statements that supports Chibrazi. The data shows that there were more participants of this study who would like people to continue using Chibrazi than those who would not. More participants were against a policy that would try to stop or minimise Chibrazi than those that would support it. And, there were fewer people that would like to have Chibrazi banned than those that would not. All this shows that there were more participants in support of the use of Chibrazi than those against it.

The same sentiments were registered in the follow up interviews in this case study. When asked to clarify themselves during the follow up interviews, participants gave different other reasons why they would not want the mixed language to die. The one additional result that stood out is that Chibrazi makes communication easier and ultimately quicker than when the other languages were used. One female learner gave the example of greetings. She said that it was much easier to greet someone with *Boo?*, which means "Fine?", than the Chicheŵa *Muli bwanji* "How are you?", for example. In answering the standard greeting, one would have to say *Ndili* or *Tili bwino kaya inu?* This is also more tedious than the Chibrazi *Boo, Boo boo, Sharp* or *Sharp sharp*, or indeed variants of these expression or even other different expressions that are used for greetings.

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The learners that were interviewed generally indicated that it would be *kuwakhomelela*, that is “oppressing them”, if Chibrazi would be disallowed. As competent communicators, they have learnt the when and the where about Chibrazi so clearly and so well that they saw it not to interfere with any other language. By ‘competent communicators’ we mean as people who understand and follow the rules of communication. Hence, they saw no reason why it should not be allowed.

Even the teachers and the one member of support staff interviewed were against banning Chibrazi, although for their own reasons. Some of these respondents down played the impact of Chibrazi on other languages, and on the basis of that, they said there was no need to ban it. Others saw it as a waste of time and resources because Chibrazi was simply unstoppable. In the words of one male teacher, “Whatever board is going to be instituted to take care of the problem will have a mammoth task to get rid of the language, because the moment they are working on a set of words that are new, the next minute, a new set of words comes in”.

One teacher simply pointed out that Chibrazi was a key to understanding youth behaviour. He said,

It is really a complex group whereby we have to take our time in order to understand them. And, understanding them, it is to take note of some of the things which are creeping in in their lives. Because, if you ... Some of those things which are creeping in; they like them. We should ask ourselves questions: why do they like them? And, why is it that they are going away from the mainstream; the languages that we feel that they are the languages? Why are they getting away from them? That shows that somewhere the general society have not understood the youth very well. So, if we can understand them in whatever they are doing,



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like these type of colloquial language that has come in, the Chibrazi type of language, we can easily know which are some of the projects which can help them and the projects which cannot help them.

### 7.3.6. Participants' liking of Chibrazi

The last statement in this question was: *I like the language*. Thirty of the respondents (32.9%) strongly agreed with this statement. Twenty six of them (28.6%) stated that they agreed with the statement. Thirteen people (14.3%) chose to remain neutral. Another 13 respondents did not respond to this statement. Five of the participants (5.5%) indicated that they strongly disagreed, while 4 of them (4.4%) pointed out that they disagreed with the statement. Overall, there were more participants who indicated that they liked Chibrazi (56, being 61.1%) than those who disagreed with it (9, being 9.8%).

Perhaps the responses to the three statements in 7.3.3 to 7.3.5 can be explained using the responses that the participants provided to the last statement in the twelfth question of the questionnaire. The last statement in question 12 asked the participants to state whether or not they liked Chibrazi. It is clear from these responses that the majority of the participants like Chibrazi, although some of the participants did not respond to this statement. This was also confirmed in both the oral version of the questionnaire and the follow up interviews. The observations that were made in the course of the present research also indicated that people like Chibrazi. They use it at any opportune time that they feel like doing so as long as the environment is right. Maybe, that is why the participants would like Chibrazi to continue rather than for it to die. The reasons for which Chibrazi is spoken and liked might be yet another factor that could be used to explain the responses registered in this question. In this

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regard, the responses are explained using the responses to questions 13, 14 and 15 that are presented in sections 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 below respectively.

#### 7.4. Reasons for speaking Chibrazi

Question 13 in the questionnaire was asked to find out from participants the reasons why people speak Chibrazi. These could also be referred to as functions of Chibrazi. Note that in this question, choice of one option is taken to be negation of the other. Participants were required to mark all applicable options from the 5 listed, which included the option *other*. The first option was *to cut out other people from conversation*. Forty people (44.0 %) chose this option. The second option was *in order to assert certain authority or status*. This option was selected by 23 people (25.3%). The third option said *to show off to other people*. Twenty five participants (27.5%) chose this option. Another option in this question was the option *I do not know*. This option was selected by 16 people (17.6%).

The last option was *other*. The option was chosen by 16 participants (17.6%). The following reasons came up under this option:

- It's fun;
- Because they just like it;
- To be open to other words regarded as taboos when mentioned;
- It is a very interesting language;
- Because we are proud that youth have finally found a language of their own;
- To converse amongst (I am not sure what was meant);
- To fit into company of peers;
- It is how we converse to each other;

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- It simplifies communication as it usually uses short form;
- To enjoy themselves when with friends;
- To shorten statements and for fun;
- It's a way of urban ghetto life/ person;
- It's a faster way of communication;
- It feels nice using it;
- People like this language for showbiz “people like the language for showing off”<sup>23</sup>;
- For fun;
- They are used to the language;
- To express their happiness;
- To pass out some secret to one another; and
- Just for fun.

The data in this question is presented in the table below.

**Table 12: Reasons for speaking Chibrazi**

| <b>REASON FOR USING CHIBRAZI</b>               | <b>YES</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>NO</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--|------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| To cut other people out of conversation        | 40         | 44.0     | 51        | 56.0     |
| In order to assert certain authority or status | 23         | 25.3%    | 68        | 74.7     |
| To show off to other people                    | 25         | 27.5     | 66        | 72.5     |
| I do not know                                  | 16         | 17.6     | 75        | 82.4     |
| Other  | 16         | 17.6     | 75        | 82.4     |

The participants' responses to question 13 of the questionnaire indicate that there are various reasons for which different speakers of Chibrazi use the mixed language. Similar responses

<sup>23</sup> *Showbiz* is a Chibrazi word that is borrowed from the English slang *showbiz*, which is a short form for *show business*. It has *shobi* and *show* as its variants. The word is used in Chibrazi to mean “show off”.

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were obtained from the oral version of the questionnaire as well as in the follow up interviews. The reason *to cut other people out of conversation*, which is mentioned in a different way by one participant who chose the option of *other*, was stated as the most popular reason for which speakers use Chibrazi. Cutting out other people implies preventing other people from understanding what is said. According to the interviewees in the case study, the people who mostly tend to be cut out of the conversation of Chibrazi speakers are teachers, parents and elders in general. One interviewee gave the example that he could talk about his plans to go and have sex with a girl in the presence of his parents without them knowing what he is saying by using Chibrazi.

The other popular reasons are that Chibrazi generally simplifies communication; that it is an interesting language; and that it transcends the taboo factor. A good example of how Chibrazi simplifies communication and makes it quick has been given citing greetings above in section 7.3.5 above. Different people find Chibrazi interesting for different reasons. Puzzling each other and puzzling each other out is one of the interesting things about using Chibrazi. Kamanga (2009) provides more details about this function of Chibrazi. On the taboo factor, Chibrazi affords its speakers the opportunity to express themselves rather freely on issues that are otherwise considered by society at large to be taboo. For example, issues about sex, as in the example above. Chibrazi generally tends to 'lighten the weight' off certain words and expressions that in ethnic languages are considered taboo.

As already observed in section 7.3.6 above, the reasons why people use Chibrazi are indicative of the reason why they would not want to see the mixed language die. Generally

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speaking, the mixed language is beneficial to its users. Hence, continued use of the mixed language can be said to be seen as beneficial to the speakers of the mixed language. The findings in the case study have also hinted at the fact that Chibrazi also transcends the ethnic divide in that it is not restricted to any particular ethnic group of the country. As such, a lot of people prefer using the mixed language to their own languages because that removes any connotations about ethnicity. This is in line with the general trend of accommodation in Malaŵi with regard to bilingualism or multilingualism. Generally, people accommodate one another by speaking a common language rather than trying to understand each other's languages. Other scholars have also linked urban contact vernaculars to breaking the ethnic divide and on that account; they have viewed the mixed languages as lingua francas. Examples of such scholars include Kube (2003, cited by Kiessling and Mous, 2004) McLaughlin (2001) Childs (1997) and Mazrui (1995).

### 7.5. Reasons for liking Chibrazi

In question 14 of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate why they thought some people like Chibrazi. They were provided with 5 options from which to choose all that were applicable for them. This also included the option *other*. The first option in this question was *because it is fashionable to use the language*. This option was selected by 50 participants (54.9%). The second option was *because it simplifies communication*, which was chosen by 51 subjects (56.0%). The third option was *I do not know*. The option was selected by 8 people (8.8%). The fourth option, *because many people use it*, was chosen by 24 people (26.4%). The last option was *other*, and it was chosen by 6 people (6.6%).

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Under the option of *other*, 4 additional reasons for liking Chibrazi came up. The first one is that Chibrazi “makes speakers not shy to mention some words that people view as dirty language”. In other words, the mixed language transcends the taboo factor as explained above. The second reason is “because Chibrazi is usually taken to be fashionable, if they do not use it, they may be taken to be primitive”. The third reason is that “once people know the language, they see that it builds their self-confidence”. One participant simply stated that Chibrazi is a “native language”. The sense behind this reason is not quite clear to me, but it might imply that people like using Chibrazi because it is part of their daily interaction. The table below summarises the results in this question.

**Table 13: Reasons for liking Chibrazi**

| <b>REASON FOR LIKING CHIBRAZI</b>               | <b>YES</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>NO</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---|------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Because it is fashionable to speak the language | 50         | 54.9     | 41        | 45.1     |
| Because it simplifies communication             | 51         | 56.0     | 40        | 44.0     |
| I do not know                                   | 8          | 8.8      | 83        | 91.2     |
| Because many people use it                      | 24         | 26.4     | 67        | 73.6     |
| Other   | 6          | 6.6      | 85        | 93.4     |

The responses above show that the participants in this study thought that people like Chibrazi for various reasons. One of the main reasons is that Chibrazi simplifies communication. This also means that Chibrazi makes communication quick. The other reason why people like Chibrazi is because it is fashionable to speak the mixed language. As already mentioned above, Chibrazi is a fairly recent phenomenon in the Malaŵian society. This being the case,

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using it shows that one is in touch with the happenings of modern times. In fact, it can be argued that that might be the reason why many people use Chibrazi. This in itself is another reason why people like the mixed language. Apart from these reasons, the other reasons provided under the option of *other* are also important, especially the one about Chibrazi transcending the taboo factor. The reasons why people like Chibrazi may add to the reason why people do not want to see the mixed language die as they see it as benefiting the users in ways of different kinds.

Similar reasons were established from the oral version of the questionnaire, the follow up interviews and observation. One important addition that came up in the interviews is the fact that Chibrazi transcends ethnicity. This actually featured more prominently than the others. It brings together people of different ethnic groups, who are usually speakers of different mother tongues. In this case, Chibrazi serves as a lingua franca.

## 7.6. Reasons for not liking Chibrazi

Question 15 in the questionnaire asked participants why they thought other people dislike Chibrazi. They were also given a list of 5 options from which to choose all applicable options including the option of *other* as in the case of the 2 questions above. The first option was *because they were taught so*. The option attracted only 6 respondents (6.6%). The second option was *because they do not know it*. This option was selected by 56 people (61.5%). *I do not know* was the third option in this question. It was selected by 9 people (9.9%). Forty three participants (47.3%) chose the fourth option in this question. The option was *because of the type of people who mostly use it*. The last option was *other*. This option was selected by 11 people (12.1%).

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The option of *other* produced a whole lot of other reasons why participants thought people do not like the language. These are listed below:

- Because of their beliefs;
- Because they think it is vulgar;
- Mainly the adults take it as useless to them (informal);
- It is obvious you cannot like what you do not know;
- Because they are old fashioned;
- Because others think it is destroying the future generation and also creating a barrier to our cultural heritage;
- It is killing other languages (especially old people);
- It is seen as a source of exploitation of young men in the societies<sup>24</sup>; and
- Because it is destroying the culture.

See the table below for a breakdown of the statistics in question fifteen.

**Table 15: Reasons for not liking Chibrazi**

| <b>REASON FOR NOT LIKING CHIBRAZI</b>           | <b>YES</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>NO</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---|------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Because they were taught so                     | 6          | 6.6      | 85        | 93.4     |
| Because they do not know it                     | 56         | 61.5     | 35        | 38.5     |
| I do not know                                   | 9          | 9.9      | 82        | 90.1     |
| Because of the type of people who mostly use it | 43         | 47.3     | 48        | 52.7     |
| Other   | 11         | 12.1     | 80        | 87.9     |

It is intriguing to see that a lot of the participants think that people are not necessarily taught to dislike the language, but rather they do so of their own accord. The most popular reasons

<sup>24</sup> I am not sure what is meant by this statement. Perhaps the respondent meant that the language is destroying the young men in society.



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why participants think people dislike Chibrazi are because they do not know the mixed language and because of the type of people who mostly use the mixed language. The issue of people not liking the mixed language because they do not know it may be straight forward. It is difficult for a person to like something that they do not know. But, the issue of people not liking the mixed language because of the type of people who mostly use it is worth a little more comment. Generally, urban contact vernaculars are held to be spoken by people who can loosely be labeled as ‘not well behaved’. This point is also raised in the literature (see for example, Kiessling and Mous, 2004; Samper, 2002; just to mention some). As such, because people have a negative attitude towards people of such behaviour, they tend to also develop a negative attitude towards the mixed language that these people speak.

From the reasons given under the option *other*, the other common reason why people dislike Chibrazi is that they see it as a breach of ‘pure’ language and therefore, a killing of the ‘pure’ language, which may lead to the dying of people’s culture. Consequently, the mixed language is perceived as a destruction of the future. As can be recalled from chapter two, urban contact vernaculars are classified as anti-languages (see Kiessling and Mous, 2004 citing Halliday, 1978). This is so because the mixed languages represent the speakers’ assertion of resistance against societal norms, which they perceive as being old fashioned and which therefore need to be changed. Using this background, it can be said that the Malaŵian urban contact vernacular might be perceived as a symbol of disrespect for the Malaŵian culture in certain sections of society. For this reason, the people who speak the mixed language might, in some quarters, be considered to be disrespectful and rebellious.

### 7.7. Social differences in the use of Chibrazi

The first question in the third section of the questionnaire sought to establish participants' perceptions about social differences among speakers of the mixed language. Such differences are also relevant in the case of non-speakers of the mixed language. The differences were based on four social factors. These factors are gender, age, urbanisation and social behaviour. These are just four of the many traits that are generally used in the description of the mixed language on the basis of different people's perceptions of the mixed language. Each one of the statements in this question was formulated as a response to the question: which group of people uses the mixed language more than the other? The table below presents a summary of the findings.

*Table 15: Social differences in the use of Chibrazi*

| STATEMENT  | 1  |      | 2  |      | 3  |      | 4  |      | 5  |      | M  |      |
|--|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|
|  | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    |
| Males use the language more than females   | 10 | 11.0 | 7  | 7.7  | 8  | 8.8  | 30 | 33.0 | 25 | 27.5 | 11 | 12.1 |
| Young people use the language more than old people                                     | 5  | 5.5  | 4  | 4.4  | 0  | 0.0  | 15 | 16.5 | 57 | 62.5 | 10 | 11.0 |
| Urban people use the language more than rural people                                   | 5  | 5.5  | 10 | 11.0 | 7  | 7.7  | 30 | 33.0 | 26 | 28.6 | 13 | 14.3 |
| People who are not well behaved use the language more than people who are well behaved | 22 | 24.2 | 18 | 19.8 | 15 | 16.5 | 14 | 15.4 | 8  | 8.8  | 14 | 15.4 |

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### 7.7.1. Males versus females

The first statement in this section was *males use the language more than females*. The majority of the participants, that is 30 of them (33.0%), indicated that they agreed with this statement. Twenty five participants (27.5%) strongly agreed with the statement. On third position were 11 participants (12.0%) who did not respond to this statement. Ten respondents (11.0%) strongly disagreed with this statement. Eight people (8.8%) chose to be neutral on this matter. The last 7 participants (7.7%) chose the option *disagree*. The combined figures of the findings from this statement show that the majority of the participants (55, being 60.0%) were of the view that Chibrazi is used more by males than it is used by females.

### 7.7.2. The young versus the old

The second statement was *young people use the language more than old people*. In response to this statement, 57 respondents (63.0%) strongly agreed with the statement. Fifteen people (16.5%) agreed with the statement. Ten participants (11.0%) did not respond to this statement. Five respondents (5.5%) strongly disagreed. And, 4 respondents (4.4%) simply disagreed. There was no one who was neutral on this statement. Combining the findings from this statement shows that the majority of the participants (72; that is 79.1%) were of the view that Chibrazi is used more by young people than it is used by old people.

### 7.7.3. The urban versus the rural

The third statement said *urban people use the language more than rural people*. The majority of the respondents, which is 30 (33.0%), chose the option *agree*. This was seconded by the option *strongly agree*, which was chosen by 26 participants (28.6%). Thirteen of the participants (13.2%) did not respond to this statement. Ten respondents (11.0%) chose to disagree with this statement. Seven of them (7.7%) stayed neutral about the statement. And,

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only 5 people (5.5%) opted to strongly disagree with the statement. Again, a clear majority of the participants (56, being 61.5%) believes that Chibrazi is spoken more by people in urban areas than it is spoken by people in rural areas.

#### **7.7.4. The well behaved versus the not well behaved**

The last statement in the first question of the third section was *people who are not well behaved use the language more than those who are well behaved*. Twenty two participants (24.2%) strongly disagreed with this statement. They were seconded by a group that simply disagreed with the statement. These were 18 in total (19.8%). Then came the group that chose to remain neutral on this statement. These were 15 in total (16.5%). Fourteen participants (15.4%) agreed with this statement. Another 14 participants did not respond to this statement. The remaining 8 participants (8.8%) strongly agreed with the statement. When the data in this statement is polarised, the number of participants that were in disagreement with this statement is larger than that of participants that were in support of the statement; that is, 40 participants against 24 participants.

Four general patterns can be extrapolated from the data presented in this section. First of all, Chibrazi was perceived to be used more by males than it is used by females. Secondly, Chibrazi was perceived to be used more by young people than it is used by old people. The third general perception about Chibrazi is that the mixed language is more commonly used by urban people than it is used by rural people. Finally, Chibrazi was perceived to be not necessarily spoken more by people who are not well behaved than those who are well behaved.

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The data obtained from the oral version of the questionnaire, the follow up interviews and observation show similar patterns to those established from the data presented in this section. Although the responses were given in choral fashion in the oral questionnaire, the responses of the participants were largely similar to the ones that were obtained in the written version of the questionnaire. Through the interviews, it was obvious that both males and females used the mixed language. In fact, I personally heard both males and females using Chibrazi in the course of observation. The same is true about observations made outside of the case study.

From the data presented above, it is safe to deduce that these patterns are true to different degrees in different scenarios. There are a lot of nuances surrounding the patterns. As can be seen from the data, the numbers of participants that differ from the majority opinions are significant. This is an indication of the transcendent nature of Chibrazi with regard to the social patterns presented above. It should be stated that Chibrazi is spoken by people of different kinds. It is spoken by both males and females; the young and the old; the urban and the rural; and the well behaved and the not well behaved, notwithstanding some differences in degrees within these juxtapositions.

### **7.8. Appropriateness of using Chibrazi in terms of interlocutors**

The second question in Part C of the questionnaire sought to find out participants' perceptions about the appropriateness of using Chibrazi in conversation with different interlocutors. Respondents were given a list of possible interlocutors with whom a speaker of Chibrazi could be engaged in conversation and asked to state whether or not the use of Chibrazi was appropriate in each of these cases. The respondents were requested to state

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whether they agreed or disagreed with each of these statements on a five point scale. The findings in each of the statements are also polarised in order to establish the general trends.

Before presenting the information, it should be pointed out from the onset that some people may perceive some of the questions that were asked in this part of the questionnaire to be inappropriate for some of the participants. For example, they may argue that it is not appropriate for children to be asked whether or not it is appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with their pastor or their children. The argument would be based on the premise that children may not have the intellectual capacity to make judgements on such issues or that they do not have children themselves. However, that is a rather myopic perception because one does not necessarily have to be mature to know or at least develop some awareness of the appropriateness of a particular language in a particular context. People acquire and or learn language as a package that includes the appropriateness of using the language; they do not learn the appropriateness of the language only when they are mature. The table below illustrates the findings for this question.

**Table 16: Appropriateness of using Chibrazi in terms of interlocutors**

| STATEMENT                      | 1  |      | 2  |      | 3  |      | 4 |     | 5  |      | M  |      |
|--------------------------------|----|------|----|------|----|------|---|-----|----|------|----|------|
|                                | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F | %   | F  | %    | F  | %    |
| His or her friends             | 11 | 12.1 | 2  | 2.2  | 25 | 27.5 | 0 | 0.0 | 47 | 51.6 | 6  | 6.6  |
| His or her parents             | 32 | 35.2 | 15 | 16.5 | 12 | 13.2 | 3 | 3.3 | 4  | 4.4  | 25 | 27.5 |
| His or her teacher(s)          | 23 | 25.3 | 23 | 25.3 | 15 | 16.5 | 4 | 4.4 | 2  | 2.2  | 24 | 26.4 |
| His or her religious leader(s) | 39 | 42.9 | 16 | 17.6 | 7  | 7.7  | 1 | 1.1 | 3  | 3.3  | 25 | 27.5 |
| His or her child/ children     | 22 | 24.2 | 13 | 14.3 | 17 | 18.7 | 8 | 8.8 | 6  | 6.6  | 25 | 27.5 |

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### 7.8.1. Using Chibrazi with friends

The first statement asked participants if it was appropriate for a person to use Chibrazi with his or her friends. Forty seven participants (51.6%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement. Twenty five participants (27.5%) indicated that they agreed with the statement. Eleven subjects (12.1%) strongly disagreed with the statement. Six participants (6.6%) did not respond to this question. Only 2 people (2.2%) disagreed with the statement. Overall, this means that the majority of the participants (77, being 79.1%) thought that it was appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her friends.

### 7.8.2. Using Chibrazi with parents

The second statement asked participants whether it was appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her parents. The majority of the respondents, that is 32 (35.2%), chose the option *strongly disagree*. There were 25 people (27.5%) who did not respond to this statement. Fifteen of the participants (16.5%) chose the option *disagree*. Twelve respondents (13.2%) remained neutral on this statement. Four participants (4.4%) went with the option *strongly agree*. And, 3 people (3.3%) chose the option *agree*. Although a lot of participants did not respond to this part of the question, it is clear that the majority of the respondents; that is, 47, who make up 51.7%, considered it not to be appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her parents.

### 7.8.3. Using Chibrazi with teachers

Participants were also asked if it was appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her teachers. Twenty four participants (26.4%) did not answer this part of the question. An equal number of participants chose the options *strongly disagree* and *disagree*. There were 23 participants (25.3%) for each of these options. Fifteen participants (16.5%) remained neutral

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on this statement. Four respondents (4.4%) went with the option *agree*, while two of them (2.2%) chose *strongly agree*. There is also a clear majority of participants here against the use of Chibrazi with teachers, 46 (50.6%), although a lot of participants did not respond to this part of the question.

#### 7.8.4. Using Chibrazi with religious leaders

The fourth statement asked participants if it was appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her religious leaders. The most popular response to this question was the option *strongly disagree*. It was chosen by 39 respondents (42.9%). A total of 25 people (27.5%) did not respond to this statement. This was followed by the option *disagree*, which attracted 16 participants (17.6%). Seven people (7.7%) chose to remain neutral. Three participants (3.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement, and only one participant (1.1%) agreed with it. Again, the number of participants who did not respond to this part of the question is very big. But, it is very clear from the available data that the majority of the participants; 56 (45.5%), do not consider it to be appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her religious leaders.

#### 7.8.5. Using Chibrazi with one's child or children

In the fifth statement of question 2 of Part C of the questionnaire, participants were asked if it was appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her child or children. Just like in the previous statement, 25 people (27.5%) did not respond to this statement. Twenty two people (24.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement. Seventeen people (18.7%) chose to be neutral about this part of the question. Thirteen of the participants (14.3%) simply disagreed with the statement. Eight of them (8.8%) agreed with the statement, and another 6 (6.6%) strongly agreed with it. While the number of participants who did not respond in this part of the question is the same as in the other parts, the data clearly shows that the participants who



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thought that it was not appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her child or children are in majority. These make up a combined total of 35 (41.8%).

Based on the data presented above, five statements can be made in terms of the appropriateness of the use of Chibrazi in terms of interaction with different interlocutors. First of all, the data indicates that it is appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her friends. Secondly, the data shows that it is not appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her parents. Thirdly, the data suggests that it is not appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her teachers. Fourthly, the data suggests that it is not appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her religious leaders. And finally, the data suggests that it is not appropriate for someone to use Chibrazi with his or her child or children. The data collected from the oral version of the questionnaire, the follow up interviews, and from observation indicated these patterns.

One point that this data points to is that the use of Chibrazi is appropriate during interaction whereby the power relationship between or among interlocutors is non-existent or at least reduced, while it is not appropriate in cases where the power relationship is present and/ or even pronounced. In most cases, the former tends to be informal, while the latter tends to be formal. In that regard, the use of Chibrazi is appropriate in cases where the relationship between or among interlocutors is informal, while it is not appropriate in cases where the relationship between or among interlocutors is formal. For example, a relationship between friends is informal and thus conducive for the use of Chibrazi, while a relationship between a teacher and a learner is formal and thus generally not conducive for the use of Chibrazi.

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However, as is natural, there are some overlaps between these power relationships depending on situations that interlocutors find themselves in from time to time. That being the case, people do not just rigidly follow the rules of conversation. Hence, there are times when Chibrazi may be spoken between interlocutors who are in a formal relationship as is evident in the data. As cooperative communicators (see Grice, 1989), interlocutors know exactly when the mixed language is appropriate and when it is not based on the rules that they are governed by in different interactions.

### 7.9. Appropriateness of Chibrazi in terms of domain

Question number 3 of Part C of the questionnaire is similar to the foregoing question in that it is also about the appropriateness of using Chibrazi. This question asked participants about the appropriateness of using Chibrazi in different domains. Participants were supplied with seven possible domains in which Chibrazi could be used. They were requested to state whether they agreed or disagreed with the use of the mixed language in each of these domains on a five point scale. A summary of the data obtained from this question follows in the table below.

*Table 17: Appropriateness of using Chibrazi in terms of domain*

| STATEMENT     | 1  |      | 2  |      | 3  |      | 4  |      | 5  |      | M  |      |
|---------------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|
|               | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    |
| In newspapers | 22 | 24.2 | 13 | 14.3 | 17 | 18.7 | 11 | 12.1 | 10 | 11.0 | 18 | 19.8 |
| In music      | 12 | 13.2 | 6  | 6.6  | 7  | 7.7  | 24 | 26.4 | 29 | 31.9 | 13 | 14.3 |
| In religion   | 39 | 42.9 | 17 | 18.7 | 9  | 9.9  | 5  | 5.5  | 4  | 4.4  | 17 | 18.7 |
| On the radio  | 15 | 16.5 | 14 | 15.4 | 13 | 14.3 | 20 | 22.0 | 9  | 9.9  | 20 | 22.0 |

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|                      |    |      |    |      |    |      |    |      |    |      |    |      |
|----------------------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|
| On television        | 16 | 17.6 | 16 | 17.6 | 13 | 14.3 | 16 | 17.6 | 10 | 11.0 | 20 | 22.0 |
| In politics          | 27 | 29.7 | 20 | 22.0 | 13 | 14.3 | 5  | 5.5  | 6  | 6.6  | 20 | 22.0 |
| In education circles | 26 | 28.6 | 15 | 16.5 | 9  | 9.9  | 15 | 16.5 | 7  | 7.7  | 19 | 20.9 |

### 7.9.1. Using Chibrazi in newspapers

The participants were first asked to state whether or not it was appropriate to use Chibrazi in newspapers. Twenty two participants (24.2%) strongly disagreed with the use of Chibrazi in newspapers. Eighteen subjects (19.8%) stayed away from answering this part of the question. Seventeen of them (18.7%) chose to remain neutral about this domain. Thirteen participants (14.3%) went with the option *disagree*. The option *agree* was chosen by eleven participants (12.1%), while the option *strongly agree* was chosen by 10 participants (11.0%). When the responses are polarised, the indication is that there are more participants against the use of Chibrazi in newspapers than those in support of it; 35 against 21 respectively.

### 7.9.2. Using Chibrazi in music

The second statement asked participants if it was appropriate to use Chibrazi in music. The majority of respondents, that is 29 of the total population (31.9%), indicated that they strongly agreed with the use of Chibrazi in music. They were followed by a group of 24 subjects (26.4%) who chose the option *agree*. Thirteen participants (14.3%) did not respond to this part of the question. Twelve participants (13.2%) chose to strongly disagree with the use of Chibrazi in music. Seven people (7.7%) opted to remain neutral on this part of the question. Six participants (6.6%) stated that they disagreed with the use of Chibrazi in music. The participants in agreement with the use of Chibrazi in music are clearly in majority compared to those who are opposed to it; 53 against 18 respectively.

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### 7.9.3. Using Chibrazi in religion

Religion was the third domain that participants were asked about in this question. A majority of 39 participants (42.9%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the use of Chibrazi in religion. Seventeen participants (18.7%) simply disagreed with it. Another seventeen participants did not answer this part of question 3. Nine participants (9.9%) chose to be neutral on this statement. Five of them (5.5%) said they agreed with the use of Chibrazi in religion, while four (4.4%), strongly agreed with the use of Chibrazi in religion. There is a big gap between the number of participants who agreed with the statement in this question (9, being 9.9%) and that of participants who disagreed with the statement (56, who are 61.6%). The participants who disagreed with the use of Chibrazi in religion are clearly in majority.

### 7.9.4. Using Chibrazi on the radio

The radio was the next domain. While 20 participants (22.0%) did not respond to this part of the question, another 20 participants agreed with the statement in this part of the question. Fifteen participants (16.5%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the use of Chibrazi on the radio. Fourteen of them (15.4%) indicated that they disagreed with the statement. Thirteen participants (14.3%) decided to remain neutral on this statement. Nine participants (9.9%) chose the option *agree*. The results from this domain are very interesting. First of all, the number of the participants who did not respond to this part of the question is equal to the number of those that agreed with the statement in this part of the question. Secondly, when the data on this domain is polarised, the number of participants who agreed with the use of Chibrazi in this domain is equal to the number of those who disagreed with the use of it. There are 29 participants in each case.

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#### **7.9.5. Using Chibrazi on television**

The same number of participants as in the foregoing domain did not respond in this part of the question, which was on the domain of television. That is, 20 participants (22.0%). The next majority populations were registered under the options *strongly disagree*, *disagree* and *strongly agree*. Each of these options was chosen by 16 participants (17.6%). Thirteen participants (14.3%) chose to remain neutral about television as a domain of use of Chibrazi. The last group of participants, 10 of them (11.0%) stated that they agreed with the statement. When the data on this domain is polarised, there are more participants who disagreed with the use of Chibrazi on television than those who agreed with it, although there is only a difference of 6 participants between the two groups.

#### **7.9.6. Using Chibrazi in politics**

The sixth statement asked participants about the use of Chibrazi in politics. The majority of the participants strongly disagreed with the use of Chibrazi in politics. Twenty seven participants (29.7%) were in this category. Twenty participants (22.0%) simply disagreed with this statement. There were 20 participants who did not respond to this statement. Thirteen participants (14.3%) chose to be neutral about this statement. Only 6 participants (6.6%) strongly agreed with the use of Chibrazi in the domain of politics. Another 5 of them (5.5%) agreed with the use of Chibrazi in politics. Here, there is a very clear majority of participants who disagreed with the use of Chibrazi in politics when the data is polarised; that is, 47 (51.7%).

#### **7.9.7. Using Chibrazi in education**

The last domain in question 3 of Part C of the questionnaire was education. Here too, the number of participants who did not respond to this statement is quite significant. Nineteen

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participants (20.9%) did not respond to this statement. Twenty six participants (28.6%) chose the option *strongly disagree*. Fifteen of them (16.5%) chose the option *disagree*. The same number of participants stated that they agreed with this statement. Nine of the participants (9.9%) chose to remain neutral. Only 7 participants (7.7%) strongly agreed with the use of Chibrazi in education. When the data obtained from this statement is polarised, there is a clear majority against the use of Chibrazi in education, that is, 41 (45%).

From the foregoing data, it can be seen that the use of Chibrazi was considered to be appropriate in certain domains, while it was considered to be not appropriate in other domains. Out of the seven domains that were given to the participants, the use of Chibrazi is found to be considered to be inappropriate in five domains. That is, newspapers, religion, television, politics and education. It is only in the domain of music that the use of Chibrazi is found to be appropriate. There is a fifty-fifty split with regard to the use of Chibrazi on the radio.

A similar rule that operates regarding the appropriateness of Chibrazi in terms of interlocutors to the one mentioned in the foregoing section seems to be in operation here. That is, the use of Chibrazi is appropriate in informal situations, but it is inappropriate in formal situations. However, just as it is observed about the appropriateness of using Chibrazi in terms of interlocutors, speakers of the mixed language do not just rigidly follow the rules that are revealed in the foregoing paragraphs. As cooperative communicators, speakers of the mixed language are able to adjust the rules in accordance with the dynamics that operate in the different situations within these domains.

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The data that was obtained from the oral version of the questionnaire showed similar patterns to the ones highlighted above, although it was difficult to discern the specific numbers involved. Data that came from the follow up interviews, observation and corpus analysis also confirms this. For example, some of the teachers who were interviewed explained that they did speak with their learners using Chibrazi provided they were in an informal set up.

To put the issue of the appropriateness of using Chibrazi in a nutshell both in terms of interlocutors and domain, the present research proposes the following principle: *Chibrazi is appropriate for use in informal situations between interlocutors that are closely related.* By informal situations the present research implies situations wherein the interaction between the interlocutors is conversational rather than for some formal purpose. And, by closely related, the present research implies that there are no power relations between interlocutors, or the power relations between interlocutors are partially or completely suspended. In other words, Chibrazi is appropriate for use in conversational discourse rather than formal discourse. Kamanga (2008) has provided further discussion of the concept of conversational discourse using Cook (1989).

It is enough for purposes of the current discussion to simply state that Cook (1989) outlines five conditions that make talk to qualify as conversation. Firstly, talk qualifies as conversation when it is not primarily necessitated by a practical task. That is, the talk is merely for the sake of the interlocutors. Secondly, talk qualifies as conversation when any power differences of interlocutors are partially suspended. That is, when people interact as social equals. Thirdly, talk qualifies as conversation when the number of participants is small.

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The fourth condition is that talk qualifies as conversation when the turns in the talk are quite short. That is, interlocutors do not hold the floor for very long times. Finally, talk qualifies as conversation when the talk is for the interlocutors and not for an outside audience.

### 7.10. The impact of Chibrazi

Question 4 is the last question in Part C, which is actually the last question of the questionnaire. This question was asked to participants to determine their thoughts about the impact that Chibrazi has. The question included 3 statements that subjects were required to respond by indicating whether they were in agreement or disagreement with on a five point scale. The following table presents the data obtained in the last question of the questionnaire.

**Table 18: The impact of Chibrazi**

| STATEMENT   | 1  |      | 2  |      | 3  |      | 4  |      | 5  |      | M  |      |
|---|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|
|   | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    | F  | %    |
| This language is a negative influence on other languages                          | 14 | 15.4 | 18 | 19.8 | 16 | 17.6 | 19 | 20.9 | 14 | 15.4 | 10 | 11.0 |
| This language does not influence other languages in any way                       | 13 | 14.3 | 26 | 28.6 | 13 | 14.3 | 11 | 12.1 | 10 | 11.0 | 18 | 19.8 |
| This language positively contributes towards socio-economic development in Malaŵi | 25 | 27.5 | 15 | 16.5 | 14 | 15.4 | 10 | 11.0 | 9  | 9.9  | 18 | 19.8 |

#### 7.10.1. Whether Chibrazi is a negative influence on other languages

The first statement was *this language is a negative influence on other languages*. Nineteen participants (20.9%) chose the option *agree*. Eighteen of them (19.7%) chose the option *disagree*. Sixteen participants (17.6%) opted to remain neutral on this statement. The two



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options on the extremes, that is *strongly agree* and *strongly disagree*, were chosen by 14 people each (15.4%). Ten people (11.0%) did not respond to this statement. When the data on this statement is polarised, it is clear that there is almost a tie between the participants who agreed with this statement and those who disagreed with it. There is only a difference of 1 person with those who agreed that the mixed language is a negative influence on other language having an upper hand.

### **7.10.2. Whether Chibrazi does not influence other languages in any way**

The second statement in this question was *this language does not influence other languages in any way*. Twenty six participants (28.6%) disagreed with this statement. Thirteen of them (14.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement, while another 13 chose to remain neutral on this statement. Eleven participants (12.1%) chose the option *agree*. Ten participants (11.0%) chose the option *strongly agree*. There were 18 people (19.8%) who did not respond to this statement. Here, when the data is polarised, there is a clear majority in disagreement with the statement that Chibrazi does not influence other languages in any way; that is, 39, making 42.9 of the population%.

### **7.10.3. Whether Chibrazi contributes positively towards socioeconomic development**

The last statement in this question was *the language contributes positively towards socioeconomic development in Malawî*. Twenty five participants (27.5%) responded with *strongly disagree*. Fifteen of the respondents (16.5%) chose to disagree with the statement. Fourteen of the respondents (15.4%) chose to be neutral on this statement. Ten participants (11.0%) strongly agreed with the statement. Nine participants (9.9%) chose the option *strongly agree*. Eighteen participants (19.8%) did not respond to this statement. Combining the results from this question shows that there are more participants who disagreed that

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Chibrazi contributes positively to socioeconomic development in Malaŵi than the participants who agreed with the statement, 40 against 19 respectively.

Three broad statements can be made regarding the data obtained from this question. Firstly, while some participants believed that Chibrazi is a negative influence on other languages, others believed that the mixed language is not a negative influence on other languages. Secondly however, while a clear majority of the participants thought that Chibrazi did not influence other languages in any way, others believed it did. Thirdly, the majority of the participants in the case study did not think that Chibrazi contributed positively to the socioeconomic development of Malaŵi, while other participants believed it did contribute to socioeconomic development in the country.

There seems to be a confusion emanating from the responses to the statements in this last question of the questionnaire. If Chibrazi is a negative influence on other languages as per the first statement, then surely it must be affecting other languages in some way. That is, negatively, as per the majority responses to the second statement. However, the results from the first two statements contradict each other. Considering that the two statements are almost paraphrases of each other, one would expect roughly similar results from the two statements. There is also confusion regarding the issue of socioeconomic development in comparison to what is said in the first two. Whatever the case in the first two statements, there is an indication that Chibrazi affects other languages of the country.

### 7.11. Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the participants in this research have various opinions about a number of issues pertaining to the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi. In other words, the chapter has provided some indicators in terms of the attitude that the participants in the case study of this research have towards Chibrazi. The participants' attitudes have been examined in terms of eight factors. Generally, while for some of these items some clear indicators have been established, in other cases, there are no conclusive indicators. For the latter, there is a need to quantify the measures on which the indications should be based in order to get more clarity.

The fact that Chibrazi was not mentioned by many participants as one of their languages might be interpreted as being an indication of the kind of perception that people generally have of Chibrazi as a language phenomenon. For instance, it might indicate that the participants did not perceive Chibrazi as a language in its own right, but a different kind of language phenomenon. The second chapter has alluded to a number of scenarios relating to this. The participants' omission of Chibrazi from their linguistic repertoires may also be indicative of the attitude that people have of the mixed language. There might be a number of scenarios with regard to the issue of people's attitude towards Chibrazi.

For instance, it may be argued that although participants were aware that they possessed Chibrazi as part of their linguistic repertoire, they were not confident enough to openly declare that that was the case because they were also aware of the fact that the language did not sit very well in the minds of other people in their society. Thus, people may have been uncomfortable to mention that they spoke the language because of the associations that

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people made between the mixed language and the perceptions that were held about its speakers. Another scenario might be that although some participants spoke Chibrazi, they were not aware that they did so because they did so subconsciously.

Another complication about the question of language is the fact that in some instances, people interpret their first language on the basis of their tribe rather than their linguistic repertoire. The complication is also mentioned in the second chapter of this thesis. This is so because each of the languages represents a particular tribe of people. Hence, people identify themselves on the basis of the language of their tribe regardless of their competence in the language in question. Because Chibrazi is not attached to any tribe, it might be difficult for people to see it as part of their linguistic (which is actually tribal) identity, even though they possess it.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CHARACTERISTICS THAT CHIBRAZI SHARES WITH OTHER AFRICAN URBAN CONTACT VERNACULAR LANGUAGES

#### 8.1. Introduction

This chapter demonstrates that there are certain characteristics that Chibrazi shares with other African urban contact vernacular languages. In order to do that, the chapter presents examples of other African urban contact vernaculars based on the definition of the term that is provided in chapter two above. The following are included as the examples: Town Bemba and Nyanja Slang in Zambia; Chiharare and Scamtho in Zimbabwe; Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho in South Africa; Sheng and Engsh in Kenya; Camfranglais in Cameroon; and Dakar Wolof in Senegal.

Before presenting the characteristics, a number of studies in which each of these mixed languages appears are summarised in order to provide some insight into what the mixed languages are like. As already indicated in chapter two, while this study considers all these mixed languages as urban contact vernaculars, the studies in which they appear perceive them in other ways. The present study does this because the mixed languages are similar in a number of ways, which are highlighted further below.

The information that is presented in this chapter was generated through a review of the literature. This chapter simply highlights other mixed languages that are similar to Chibrazi. As already indicated, the purpose of doing that is to show that Chibrazi shares certain

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characteristics with the other mixed languages that are spoken in Africa. Various studies are included in the presentation of each of the other African urban contact vernaculars in order to demonstrate that the mixed languages are perceived in various ways by different scholars depending on the aspects of the mixed languages that the scholars dwell on.

## **8.2. Town Bemba and Nyanja Slang in Zambia**

Two scholars are cited on the Zambian urban contact vernacular situation in this research. The first one is Spiltunik (1999) who describes the linguistic variety that she calls Town Bemba, a language variety that is spoken in Zambia. She considers its implications for the study of heteroglossia and the experience of modernity. In this article, Spiltunik proposes that Town Bemba should be understood as a cover term for a set of Bemba-based multilingual practices that exemplify urbanity, but which need not be tied to urban locales.

She examines the structural, ideological and sociocultural features of Town Bemba using data drawn from naturally occurring discourse collected in Zambia. She defines Town Bemba as a variety of Bemba, as a case of code switching or code mixing, and as a case of a hybrid code in formation. In another breath, she defines the language variety as a countercode, articulated in relation to what are perceived as the other, more stabilised codes that define Zambia's multilingual landscape.

Mutunda (2007) discusses the various linguistic structures and lexical patterns of what is referred to as Nyanja Slang in the Zambian capital Lusaka. The article focuses on the younger population, peddlers and call boys at bus stations, although it also includes school boys and

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girls. Mutunda's study illustrates that slang is unconventional and nonstandard, and that it generally follows the grammatical pattern of the languages from which it stems, but it reflects on an alternate lexicon with connotations of informality. Among the topics tackled by this article are the definition of slang; reasons for the use of slang; linguistic patterns of Nyanja slang; modes of address; lexical borrowing; metaphorical extension; use of metonymy; and phonological innovation. In its conclusion, the article states that Nyanja slang is partly an outcome of language contact.

Debra Spiltunik and Sylvester Mutunda describe two different language varieties (Town Bemba and Nyanja slang respectively), but the present study considers them to be dealing with the same language phenomenon. That is, the concept of urban contact vernacular, as adapted in the present research. It is important to note that other names such as ChiCopperBelt and ChiTown, both with varying renditions, have also been encountered on the social media such as Facebook as part of the Zambian urban contact vernacular phenomenon.

### **8.3. ChiHarare and Sncamtho in Zimbabwe**

Three studies on Zimbabwe are included in this study. The first study looks at the use of "indigenous" and urban vernaculars in Zimbabwe (Makoni, Brutt-Griffler and Mashiri, 2007). This article analyses the reasons for and the effects of the language shift in Zimbabwe represented by the increasing use of pan-ethnic lingua francas, or urban vernaculars of local origin. It suggests that essentialist or primordialist assumptions about "indigenous" languages that feature prominently in current accounts of language endangerment should be made more complex by understanding their historical and social origins. This, the article observes, for

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Zimbabwe, means understanding the origins of Shona and Ndebele during the colonial period as the product of a two-stage process: the codification of dialects by missionaries, and the creation of a unified standard by the colonial regime.

Thus, the article traces the history of “indigenous” and urban vernaculars in Zimbabwe, from colonial times to postcolonial times, which are represented by Chishona and ChiHarare respectively. The study concludes, among other things, that language use in many parts of Africa is undergoing a process of transformation from a function of ethnic affiliation to one determined more by degree of urbanisation. The study also concludes that the urban/rural divide needs to be seen as a continuum. The latter conclusion talks about something that perhaps applies to all African urban contact vernaculars.

Mashiri (2002) writes about Shona-English code-mixing in the speech of students at the University of Zimbabwe. This study focuses on one of the common aspects of urban contact vernaculars; that is, code-mixing. Mashiri points out the fact that code-mixing is a worldwide communicative phenomenon that obtains in language contact situations. The article describes code-mixing as employed by students at the University of Zimbabwe who are bilingual in Shona and English, the former being their mother tongue, and the latter their second language. The article explores how Shona morphosyntactic structure constrains and integrates English lexical items and phrases to form Shona-English constructions. There are two major observations in the article. The first one is that for Shona-English code-mixed structure to be acceptable, the morphosyntactic structure of English must conform to the morphosyntactic structure of Shona. Secondly, the English that the students use is of considerable lexical and



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syntactic complexity and retains much of its semantic and syntactic integrity when it appears in mixed utterances.

Sambulo Ndlovu, in a paper presented at the African Urban and Youth Language Conference of July 2013 reported about the existence of another urban contact vernacular in Zimbabwe. Ndlovu described the mixed language, which is referred to as Sncamtho, as a Ndebele inclined slang that originated as an exclusively youth variety, but is now used by almost everyone in different contexts. The mixed language is closely related to South Africa's Iscamtho partly because Ndebele, the grammatical base of Zimbabwe's Sncamtho, is closely related to Zulu, the grammatical base of South Africa's Iscamtho. The close relationship between the two urban contact vernaculars is also partly due to the fact that Zimbabwe remains in close contact with South Africa in terms of migration. Ndlovu also reported that there is a diglossic situation that is developing between Ndebele and Sncamtho with the former as the high variety and the latter as the low variety.

These three studies on the Zimbabwean situation explore three issues that are also investigated in the present study. While the first article is concerned with the origins of the indigenous and urban vernaculars that are spoken in Zimbabwe, the second one focuses on one of the characteristic processes in urban contact vernaculars; that is, code mixing, which is prevalent in Chibrazi. The third study explores a phenomenon that is perhaps only starting to receive attention in studies of African urban contact vernaculars; that is, diglossia. The next sub section provides further details on this development.

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#### 8.4. Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho in South Africa

South Africa is one of the countries in which the topic of urban contact vernacular has been widely researched. Perhaps the two most popular names in as far as the South African urban contact vernacular phenomenon is concerned are Tsotsitaal, which is also referred to as Flaaitaal or Fly Taal, and isiTsotsi, on the one hand, and Iscamtho, on the other. These mixed languages are reported to be spoken in various urban centers of the country and they appear in many studies. Some of the studies in which these two mixed languages appear are summarised here. Although the studies seem to present divergent perceptions of the mixed languages, this study perceives them as essentially being about the urban contact vernacular phenomenon in the country.

The first study to be summarised investigates the structure of the urban contact vernaculars, Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho. According to the authors of the study, the two mixed languages are spoken by men in Black townships of South Africa (Slabbert and Myers-Scotton, 1997). The study disputes the argument that the two mixed languages lack predictable structure, saying that the mixed languages follow the same type of morphosyntactic constraints that play a part in other language contact circumstances. The article reports that the one similarity between the two varieties is that they are both marked by high incidence of slang and lexical variation. However, while Tsotsitaal is considered as a set of versions possessing a nonstandard form of Afrikaans as the matrix language, versions of Iscamtho have a South African Bantu language, generally isiZulu, as the matrix form. This implies that the two mixed languages are considered as instances of code switching and code mixing in this study.

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Makhudu (1995) describes Flaaitaal as a South African township argot. The argot is said to be used mainly, but not exclusively, by black males in various urban areas. The paper posits that Flaaitaal probably owes its origins to language contact in a multilingual setting in nineteenth century South Africa and to the rise of the urban township communities. Makhudu further describes Flaaitaal as a mixed code in so far as it seems to have been initially reliant on Afrikaans for structure and a variety of languages for its lexis. As such, Makhudu says that although it might sound as a variety of Afrikaans to the uninitiated, this kind of conclusion would overlook its robust Bantu language texture. The paper explores five aspects of Flaaitaal: its origins, its speech community, its contexts of use, and metaphorical processes involved in the mixed language.

Iscamtho also features in Ntshangase (1993 and 1995) in which it is described as cutting across all linguistic, political and ethnic barriers created by the apartheid state, even though it also reflects other barriers. It is also said to form a very important marker of identity, particularly a Soweto identity. This identity is said to reflect a number of social phenomena, including the social barriers between its speakers and non-speakers. In these studies, Ntshangase attempts to prove that Iscamtho is a distinct variety from Tsotsitaal, and that its descendant is Shalambombo, an argot spoken by criminal gangs in the Witwatersrand from the 1980s; and not Tsotsitaal.

Ntshangase explains that while Iscamtho draws its structural base from Zulu and Sotho, Tsotsitaal draws its structural base from Afrikaans; thereby rejecting Mfenyane's (1977, 1981; cited by Ntshangase, 1993 and 1995) proposition that Iscamtho is a variety of Tsotsitaal. He however, observes that the two language varieties have close functional

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parallels. He also investigates the features that characterise Iscamtho and its speakers using a historical and sociolinguistic perspective. In the conclusion of his dissertation, Ntshangase advises that in the analysis of ephemeral and peripheral language varieties, it is necessary to ensure that one's analysis is detailed enough to tease apart what may seem to be only variants of the same language variety.

Rudwick (2005) studies what she calls isiTsotsi, which she describes as an urban mixed-code that is spoken in the Umlazi Township of KwaZulu-Natal. She points out the fact that she refers to the mixed language as such because that is what it is referred to by its speakers. In this study, the mixed language is perceived to be similar to Tsotsitaal. Rudwick analyses the mixed language in the framework of diglossia by exploring the potential of isiTsotsi as the Low variety and standard Zulu as the High variety in the township domain. The study treats diglossia in a different manner from the traditional way of holding a colonial language; for example, English, as the High variety with an indigenous language as the Low variety.

The kind of diglossia that exists in the case of isiTsotsi involves the urban contact vernacular as the Low variety and isiZulu as the High variety. During communication, speakers of isiTsotsi tend to choose between the urban contact vernacular and isiZulu as demanded by the different domains and situations in which they are found. For example, they would use isiZulu with the elders, while they would use the urban contact vernacular with friends. This study points to the fact that although isiTsotsi is not officially recognised, it is an important element in the High versus Low divide especially in the area where it is prevalent.

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From this short discussion, it can be seen that the basic difference between Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho is, in the sense of code switching and code mixing, that while the former uses Afrikaans as its matrix language, the latter uses an African language or African languages as its matrix. The studies on Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho highlighted herein point to a number of important concepts that are commonly discussed in the realm of urban contact vernaculars, especially with regard to the basis of such varieties. These include argot, slang, lexical variation, mixed code, and identity. While these concepts are applied differently by different authors, it is clear that they are integral elements of urban contact vernaculars.

Apart from the above publications, the present research notes other studies that have been conducted on the South African urban contact vernaculars. Three of these appear in Mesthrie (1995): Buthelezi: South African Black English: Lexical and syntactic characteristics; DeKlerk: Slang in South African English; and Stone: The lexicon and sociolinguistic codes of the working-class Afrikaans-speaking Cape Peninsula coloured community. Other studies that are cited in this research on the South African urban contact vernacular phenomenon include Finlayson, Calteaux and Myers-Scotton (2009); Bembe (2007, 2006); Motshega (2005; Ntshangase (2004); McComick (2002); Buthelezi (1995); De Klerk (1995); Slabbert (1994); and Msimang (1987). There are also dictionaries on the South African urban contact vernaculars. Two of these are identified here: *Township talk: The language, the culture, the people: The A-Z dictionary of South African township lingo* (Motshega, 2005); and *Tsotsitaal: A dictionary of the language of Sophiatown* (Molamu, 2003).

Several other scholars presented papers on work that is being done on the South African urban contact vernacular at the African Urban and Youth Language Conference of 2013.

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Among these, Thabo Ditsele's paper deserves special mention because it introduces a topic that might be said to be relatively new on the South African urban contact vernacular scene. Ditsele's paper is entitled *Sepitori: A Pretoria NSV* that could do more than enrich the vocabularies of Setswana and Sepedi. The paper explores *Sepitori* or Pretoria Sotho, a variety that he says has developed from the interaction between the Dutch settlers on the one hand, and speakers of the mutually intelligible indigenous languages Setswana and Sepedi, in the city of Pretoria. *Sepitori* is reported to have spread beyond the boundaries of Pretoria into the neighbouring local municipalities of Madibeng in the North West Province and Bela-Bela in Limpopo Province. Ditsele believes that *Sepitori* could do more than enrich the vocabularies of Setswana and Sepedi.

### **8.5. Sheng and Engsh in Kenya**

Kenya has its own urban contact vernaculars in the names *Sheng* and *Engsh*. These two names are coinages that epitomise the traditional code switching between Swahili and English that is generally accepted in the literature to be the root of the two mixed languages. These two mixed languages also appear in a number of studies that focus on different aspects of the mixed languages.

The first study on *Sheng* that is summarised in the present research is Bosire (2006). The study starts off by observing that *Sheng* has become the basic urban contact vernacular for the youth in Kenya today. It adds however, that there are indications that young people in the rural areas now also commonly use the mixed language, including a sizeable population of adults, who grew up with "old school" *Sheng*. The study also states that sections of the electronic and print media and popular music feature *Sheng* as a language of choice.

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Bosire traces some prominent arguments in the literature about the origins and linguistic as well as other characteristics of Sheng, with a view to present the most probable profile of the mixed language. The conclusion that is drawn is that

The hybrid languages of Africa are contact outcomes that have evolved at a time when African communities are coming to terms with the colonial and postcolonial situation that included rapid urbanisation and bringing together of different ethnic communities and cultures with a concomitant exposure to different ways of being (192).

As a result of this, “the youth are caught up in the transition; they are children of two worlds and want a way to express this duality, this new ethnicity”. That they do through the use of Sheng.

In another study on Sheng, Bosire (2009) grapples with the question of what makes a Sheng word unique. In this study, Bosire argues that Sheng utilises lexical manipulation strategies that go beyond classic code switching and that these strategies form part of the uniqueness and appeal that the mixed language has over other codes in the speakers’ repertoire. The study explores lexical manipulation in mixed languages and it comes as a response to two other positions about Sheng’s origin: one by Mufwene (2003), which attributes Sheng’s origin to code switching; and another by scholars like Mazrui (1995), who equate Sheng to Swahili-English code switching (Bosire, 2009).

Another study on Sheng that is highlighted in this research is Githiora (2002). The study asks the question of whether Sheng is a Swahili dialect or an emerging Creole. This article sheds light on the social and linguistic factors that affect language choice and use in the complex multilingual setting of Nairobi City. The paper is based on data collected during a research

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trip. It provides the sociolinguistic background of the backdrop of Nairobi, addressing issues of language choice among the city residents, the general language distribution profile of Kenyan languages in the city, and functional use of the languages; with a focus on the widely used mixed code, Sheng.

Githiora describes Sheng as a dynamic mixed code based on Swahili grammar that uses resources from other Kenyan languages, and which is mainly used by the youth. The study consists of quantitative information drawn from a written questionnaire and raw speech data collected through open ended interviews. The study also contrasts the morphosyntax of Sheng with that of Kenyan standard Swahili, English and other languages spoken in the city. It also highlights the present and future implication of the use and spread of Sheng, which raises questions about the impact of the mixed language in primary and secondary school; on the growth of standard Swahili; and on the (lack of) language policy in Kenya.

Samper has studied Sheng in the context of the role of the hybrid language in the construction of identity and youth culture in Nairobi, Kenya (Samper, 2002). This dissertation explores how young people in Nairobi use Sheng to forge a new hybrid identity. He describes Sheng as an urban youth sociolect that mixes English, Kiswahili and ethnic languages, and that shares many features with slang. The study explores the different possible identities that different institutions (that is, the family, the church, the school, and the popular media) present the Kenyan youth; each of which represents a particular ideology of living in the world, and to which the youth respond through language. Samper posits that Sheng gives the youth the wherewithal to question and challenge the third space between the global,



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represented by a transnational African diasporic culture, and the local, represented by tradition.

The dissertation focuses on two groups of culture brokers that are helping to shape Sheng, and as a consequence, shape identity. These are rap musicians and Manambas. Manambas are described as young men who work on Kenya's privately owned public service vehicles popularly known as Matatus. The dissertation asserts that on the one hand, Kenyan rappers feel a sense of responsibility towards the youth; and as the voices of their generation, they feel an obligation to promote the importance of African heritage in young people's definition of self. On the other hand, the Manambas, who are the master innovators of Sheng, do not have a sense of responsibility nor a coherent social agenda for young people.

Mazrui (1995) critiques the different ways in which Sheng has been perceived, especially by scholars as represented in the monthly magazine, *Men Only*, towards the end of 1984. It presents two distinct, but closely related ways in which Sheng can be perceived sociolinguistically speaking: firstly, as slang; and secondly, as an instance of code switching. The article concludes that Sheng is a slang based primarily on Swahili-English code switching, which serves as a para-code of mainly lower class youth. Mazrui starts off by presenting the extralinguistic factors that come into play in order for a mixed language like Sheng to come into existence. Mazrui describes Sheng as a language of people, who are in the process of establishing independent community links and bounds thereby giving this a distinctive linguistic expression, which not only serves as a symbol of solidarity and positive social divergence from other groups, but also as a functional code for expressing valued feelings, attitudes and loyalties.

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The sixth study on Sheng that this research highlights is Ogechi (2005). The study examines the type of language and linguistic expression that the Kenyan youth use when talking about sex and the HIV and AIDS pandemic. This study contends that in order to effectively fight against the HIV and AIDS pandemic, it is important to realise that young people throughout the world have a unique language that they use when talking among peers. The study concludes that there is indeed a special code that is used by the youth of Kenya, which it identifies as Sheng. The study further argues that therefore, the youth need to be mainstreamed in this fight so that the fight includes Sheng.

Ogechi explores two main processes through which the mixed language comes about. The first process is lexicalisation. This is the according of meaning to words. The second process is lexification. This is the source and process of creating the words. The language of the youth is thus seen to be a unique code that comes about through the lexemes and expressions that have been lexicalised, though they have sources in Kiswahili, English, Kiswahili-English code switching and Sheng. It also concludes that society needs to involve the youth in all its endeavours to deal with the HIV and AIDS pandemic if its efforts are to succeed, and that the campaign against it must incorporate and understand the code, otherwise it will fail.

Another study on Sheng highlighted in the present research is Momanyi (2009). The study explores the effects of Sheng in the education institutions of Kenya, and provides a general overview of its development at the expense of the official languages, Kiswahili and English. Two rather contradicting scenarios are presented in the study. That is, while some people have advocated the growth of Sheng as an indication of societal growth in Kenya, others are of the opinion that the spread of this code impacts negatively on the learners in Kenyan

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schools and colleges. The author herself seems to embed her own sentiment about this issue in the statement, “Indeed according to some, this code should be left to hip hop musicians, public transport touts, drug peddlers and school drop outs”. She recommends specific researches to be done on the language situation in Kenya, especially as far as the spread of Sheng and its impacts on education are concerned. However, it is important to bear in mind the fact that there are other factors that affect education. These include socioeconomic background, the quality of teachers, and resources, just to mention some.

Githinji (2003) examines the mixed attitude that different people have towards Sheng, which he refers to as a formerly stigmatised speech variety. The article attributes the perceptual ambivalence of Sheng and its speakers to what is called raters’ co-membership of overlapping communities that inhibits strict adherence to the norms of a single social category. The study observes, citing Tajfel (1982) and Hornsey and Hogg (2000), that studies in intergroup relations have pointed out that people engage in social comparisons to cultivate self-esteem and preserve their distinctiveness. In turn, this comparison and subsequent categorisation become the basis for positive self-evaluation and biased evaluation of others. Therefore, language, as one of the key markers of social categorisation, becomes a key target of subjective attitudes and stereotype towards the unlike others or the out-group.

Abdulaziz and Osinde (1997) have studied both Sheng and Engsh in an article entitled Sheng and Engsh: Development of mixed codes among the urban youth in Kenya. The article refers to Sheng and Engsh as mixed codes used by the youth, which have developed in the complex multilingual and multicultural setting of Nairobi and other big towns in Kenya. On the one hand, Sheng is said to have developed in the less affluent and slum areas of the Eastlands of

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Nairobi, and to be primarily based on Swahili structure, with its lexicon drawn from Swahili, English and the various indigenous languages. On the other hand, Engsh is said to have developed in the Westlands of Nairobi, and is based on English structure and vocabulary, but contains words from Swahili and other local languages.

Abdulaziz and Osinde further say that while these mixed codes, having started as secret codes, were initially unstable, random and fluid, they have gradually developed more systematic patterns of usage at the phonological, morphological and syntactic levels. They attribute the youth's creation of these languages to various degrees and manners of exposure to both English and Swahili, including over forty local languages and to the cosmopolitan urban culture, which depend on the youth's social background and geographical location.

The last study that is summarised herein on Kenya's urban contact vernaculars is Jwan and Ogechi (2004). This study argues the case for bilingual education in the rehabilitation of street children in Kenya. It demonstrates that it is possible to achieve literacy in the street children through using the children's 'home' language, which is a mixture of Kiswahili and English. The mixture of Kiswahili and English that Jwan and Ogechi refer to is what the other scholars that have studied the situation regarding Kenya's urban contact vernacular as presented above refer to as Sheng.

Apart from research on the two urban contact vernaculars of Kenya; that is, Sheng and Engsh, dictionaries of the mixed languages have also been produced. One example is *Sheng Dictionary* (Moga and Fee, 1993, 2000, 2004). Another example is *Sheng-English dictionary*:

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*Deciphering East Africa's underworld language* (Mbaabu and Nzuga, 2003). A number of other studies on the urban contact vernaculars of Kenya are noted, although they have not been summarised in the present research. These are Rudd (2008); Githinji (2006); Fink (2005); Ogechi (2005); Githinji (2003); Spyropoulos (1987); and Osinde (1986).

The studies highlighted on the Kenyan urban contact vernaculars clearly indicate that there are a lot of issues surrounding urban contact vernaculars. All these issues have serious implications for linguistic enquiry. From these studies, it is seen that code switching and code mixing are two very important elements in urban contact vernaculars. The studies cover most of the areas of focus of the present research. For instance, origins, linguistic characteristics, the speech community; and people's attitudes towards African urban contact vernaculars.

### **8.6. Dakar Wolof in Senegal**

The next African urban contact vernacular to be looked at is Dakar Wolof. Two articles on the mixed language are summarised in the present research. The mixed language is found in an essay by Fiona McLaughlin who describes it as a language variety that has significantly diverged from the more conservative dialects spoken in the rural areas of Senegal, primarily by incorporating massive lexical borrowing from French, and that plays a central role in the notion of urban identity (McLaughlin, 2001). The essay discusses the hybrid nature of Dakar Wolof and its depiction in two comics: *Boy Dakar* by Ibou Fall and Aziz Bâ, and *Ass et Oussou* by Omar Diakité.

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According to the essay, Dakar Wolof is an outcome of the recreation of the city of Dakar. The mixed language came out of the historical imagination of the youth as a result of the turbulent period of political and social unrest at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. They gave rise to the Set-Setal movement. The essay argues that the Set-Setal movement coincided with the emergence of a self-conscious urban identity among the Dakar population, evidenced by a variety of artistic expression that focuses on and exalts the culture of the city. Hence, Dakar Wolof has had a profound effect on ethnicity in Senegal and has contributed to the emergence of a de-ethnicised urban identity.

The other study in which Dakar Wolof features is Swigart (2008). The mixed language is also referred to as Dakar French in the article. This article tackles one contentious issue regarding urban contact vernaculars across the world. That is, the issue of legitimacy. The article observes that current sociolinguistic patterns in Dakar, Senegal, suggest that Dakar Wolof shares with the French language the position of legitimate language, even though it does not enjoy official recognition. The article explores the contradiction by examining a historic public speech that is said to have been delivered by Senegal's president in 1988 and the ideologies that the various reactions to this speech represent. Through this article, Swigart demonstrates that the growing use of what he calls "Urban Wolof" during the last decade in the informal sector, the mass media, and advertising both reflects and reinforces the emergence of a new ideology. This ideology, he continues, attributes what he calls an "alternative legitimacy" to this hybrid language.

These two articles on the Senegalese urban contact vernacular phenomenon highlight two important aspects of the African urban contact vernacular that are explored in the present

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research in general. The first aspect is the spread and the agents of the spread of the urban contact vernacular. The second aspect is the legitimacy of the mixed language. Similar situations surround urban contact vernaculars from other parts of Africa as demonstrated in the first chapter of this thesis in the statement of the problem. It is important to note however, that the situations differ from country to country. In addition to that, the situations in the different countries are changing with the passing of time and with the increase in awareness about the mixed languages.

### **8.7. Camfranglais in Cameroon**

Also highlighted in this study are papers on Camfranglais that is reported to be spoken in Cameroon. The first paper explores the pidginisation of the French language in Cameroon. In reaction to the assertion that Pidgin French is a reality in Cameroon, this paper posits that Cameroon Popular French and Camfranglais are two pidginised local varieties that have developed in Cameroon (Echu, 2006). The former, the paper says, has developed out of the necessity to communicate among people from heterogeneous backgrounds. This is an involuntary process. The latter has developed as a secret code among young people. This is a voluntary process.

Further, the paper says that in spite of these basic differences, the two varieties have much in common in terms of their linguistic structure and speech communities. The pidginisation processes operational in the two varieties are regarded as an illustration of the relationship between language contact and cultural dynamism; hence they are an expression of the culture of the highly multicultural Cameroon setting. However, the paper notes that the two varieties may not be aptly considered as pidgins as they are still undergoing pidginisation.

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The second paper on Camfranglais presents an overview of the mixed language. In this article, the mixed language is described as a highly hybrid sociolect of the youth in Cameroon's big cities, Yaoundé and Douala (Kiessling, 2005). Using Castells (1997), the article states that the mixed language serves its adolescent speakers as an icon of 'resistance identity', and that it seems to be growing into an icon of the emerging new 'project identity' of urban Cameroonian modernity. The article states that the speakers consciously create and constantly transform this sociolect by manipulating lexical items from various Cameroonian and European sources. It further notes that the youth do this in an effort to mark off their identity as a new social group in opposition to established norms of 'la francophonie'. Thus, the mixed language sets the youth apart from the rest of the people as the modern Cameroonian urban youth.

Some of the strategies that are used in the manipulation of lexemes are phonological truncation, morphological hybridization, hyperbolic and dysphemistic extension, all of which are said to reflect the provocative attitude of its speakers and their jocular disrespect of linguistic norms and purity. This, according to Kiessling, clearly reveals the mixed language's function as an anti-language as per Halliday (1978). Kiessling further says that from a socio-political point of view, Camfranglais represents the appropriation of an imported language, French. This has come about due to strong pressure of the exoglossic language policy that has excluded the majority of the population from national discourse and upward social mobility (Kiessling, 2005).

Jean-Paul Kouega describes Camfranglais as a newly created language, a composite slang used by pupils in secondary schools in Cameroon (Kouega, 2003). According to Kouega, the



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mixed language draws its lexicon from French, English, West African Pidgin, various Cameroonian indigenous languages, Latin and Spanish. It is used by secondary school pupils to talk about matters of adolescent interest such as food, drinks, money, sex and physical looks. The article describes Cameroon's education system. Then it defines Camfranglais before analysing a sample text in the mixed language; and then it describes the semantic domains of the mixed language.

In another study, Kouega (2003) focuses on the processes through which words are formed in Camfranglais. In this study, Camfranglais is described as a composite language that was developed by Cameroon secondary school pupils to communicate among themselves to the exclusion of non-members. The pupils are said to render the mixed language mysterious and reinforce its incomprehensibility by using various techniques of word formation. These include borrowing, coinage, shortening, affixation, inversion, idiomatic formation and reduplication.

The studies on Cameroon bring to the fore two key issues. The first issue is the question of whether or not African urban contact vernaculars are pidgins. The second issue is that of interpreting urban contact vernaculars as antilanguages. The present research highlights both of these issues as part of the exploration of the possible interpretation of the mixed language under study. This is presented in chapter ten of this thesis.

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## **8.8. Common features of African urban contact vernaculars**

Whatever description one may ascribe to the other African urban contact vernaculars that are presented above, from the descriptions that are provided in the studies cited in this chapter, one point is very clear. The African urban contact vernaculars have much in common, despite the individual contextual differences that exist. These common features are also shared by Chibrazi, the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi. This study presents the commonality that Chibrazi shares with the other African urban contact vernaculars in terms of six aspects that are discussed below. The common features that are presented below are what are used to justify the interpretation of the mixed languages that is advanced in the present research.

### **8.8.1. Origins**

Firstly, Chibrazi shares commonality with other African urban contact vernaculars in terms of origins. Generally speaking, African urban contact vernaculars have their origins in language contact within urban centers that have developed as a result of industrialisation. Studies such as Beck (2010), Bosirle (2006), Kiessling and Mous (2004), and Msimang (1987) provide good discussion of this issue. Such centers have created environments that are conducive for the development of these mixed languages because of multilingualism and multiculturalism. These two elements are ‘prelquisites’ to the development of new contact languages. Depending on their geographical locations and social backgrounds, people within these industrial centers are exposed (to different degrees and in different manners) to both colonial and indigenous languages as well as cosmopolitan urban cultures that necessitate the creation of these new languages.

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This implies that there is a transition from the original indigenous set up to the cosmopolitan set up, which imposes a different kind of ethnicity in the areas where urbanisation and industrialisation take place. With regard to this transition, Bosire (2006) observes that the youth, who are the master crafters of urban contact vernaculars, are caught up in this transition whereby they find themselves belonging to two worlds. Therefore, urban contact vernaculars are a way of expressing this duality, which is a new kind of ethnicity in its own right. As it has been explained in chapter two above, whenever people of different origins come together, they seek means of breaking any communication barriers that may exist among them. With the passing of time, people have flocked from their original geographical locations to the urbanized and industrialised centers for different reasons. In the communities where African urban contact vernaculars have evolved, some of the barriers to communication are created by colonialism and post colonialism. The barriers are complicated by the urbanisation and industrialisation of the communities.

### **8.8.2. Speech community**

Secondly, Chibrazi is similar to other African urban contact vernaculars in terms of speech community especially in what can be referred to as ‘the pioneer stages of the mixed languages’. It is generally accepted in the literature that these mixed languages emerge among the male youth of the respective societies of the mixed languages. Consequently, in the early stages of their development, the African urban contact vernaculars are mainly spoken by the male urban youth of their respective communities.

Different scholars describe the pioneer speech communities of different African urban contact vernaculars in different ways. One common characteristic of the pioneer members of

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the speech communities is involvement in crime or other forms of mischief. For example, in describing the pioneer speech community of Tsotsitaal, Msimang (1987: 82) says that

If one considers the fact that most of the members of this community were orphans and illegitimate youth, it is not surprising that many of them were semi-literate or well nigh illiterate. Lacking both education and profession, they fared badly on the labour market and consequently resorted to thuggery for survival. The result is that they were regarded as social misfits and unwanted outcasts.

This is, in fact, one of the reasons why languages of this nature have been perceived in hostile light. Because the people who represent the prototypical speech communities of the mixed languages are engaged in crime and other forms of mischief, the languages themselves are perceived as criminal and mischievous. The prototypical speech communities of African urban contact vernaculars are part of the root of the negative perception of the speech communities as well as their languages. Hence, the mainstream society reacts by embracing an attitude that is conceivably protective of societal norms and values that are perceived to be pure. This is part of what is referred to as language purism.

However, as the mixed languages develop with the passing of time, they develop in terms of their speech communities as well. As such, the mixed languages spread across gender thereby covering both males and females; they spread across age thereby covering both the young and the old; and they spread across geographical location thereby covering both the urban and the rural. This trend is reported by several scholars in the literature on African urban contact vernaculars. For example, Bosire (2006), who writes about Sheng in Kenya, reports that while the mixed language has become the basic urban vernacular for the youth in Kenya

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today, there are indications that young people in rural areas also commonly use the language, including a sizeable population of adults, who grew up speaking “old school Sheng”, and that sections of the electronic and print media, and popular music feature Sheng as a language of choice.

The electronic media and popular music are actually some of the most significant agents of the spread of African urban contact vernaculars today. Because of the widespread and powerful nature of such agents, the mixed languages have made very significant inroads in as far as speech community is concerned. The social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter are good examples in this regard.

### 8.8.3. Linguistic structure

The third aspect of commonality that Chibrazi shares with other African urban contact vernaculars is linguistic structure. Generally speaking, in terms of structure, African urban contact vernaculars comprise mixtures of elements from different languages. The position of the present research is that African urban contact vernaculars generally comprise two components.

The first component of African urban contact vernaculars is what in the present research is referred to as the *grammatical base component*. This component mainly comprises the grammatical structure of the language on which an urban contact vernacular is based. But, it also includes vocabulary and other structural elements that come from the language that is used as a grammatical base. The second component of African urban contact vernaculars is

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referred to as the *source language component*. This component includes vocabulary and other linguistic elements that are transferred or imported from other languages rather than the grammatical base. From the point of view of code switching and code mixing, the grammatical base component can be seen as the matrix language, while the source language component can be seen as the embedded languages. However, in as far as this study is concerned, referring to African urban contact vernaculars as code switching or code mixing is problematic because these mixed languages are not instances of speakers' choices between elements of one language and those from another during communication. Rather, the mixture of the elements from the different languages is the nature of speaking or style of speech; hence, the nature of the mixed languages.

That being the case African urban contact vernaculars can be argued to have a third component that could be referred to as the *core urban contact vernacular component*. This includes lexemes that are typically products of the mixing of the elements from the grammatical base and the source languages. This component should be seen as a body of new vocabulary (linguistic inventions or innovations) that can be inserted into the grammars of different existing languages within a given society. The vocabulary is perceived as new in as far as the 'original' linguistic landscapes of the localities of these mixed languages are concerned. That is to say that the core urban contact vernacular component refers to features of an urban contact vernacular that are unique to the speech style of using elements from different languages that goes beyond code switching and code mixing. Different processes are employed in order to produce these new lexemes. Some of these processes are highlighted in chapter four.

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The donor languages of any African urban contact vernacular are to a large extent representative of the linguistic profile of the contact environment in which the African urban contact vernacular is born. To put it differently, any African urban contact vernacular largely represents the sum total of the languages that come into contact in the course of its development. For example, on the one hand, Sheng has Kiswahili as the grammatical base and English and other Kenyan indigenous languages as source languages. On the other hand, Engsh has English as the grammatical base and Kiswahili and other Kenyan indigenous languages as source languages (see Abdulaziz and Osinde, 1997). Chibrazi has an indigenous Malaŵian language as a grammatical base and core Chibrazi. This indicates that these are some of the languages that are involved in the language contact situation in Kenya in as far as the two urban contact vernaculars, Sheng and Engsh, are concerned.

It is important to note that the linguistic structures of African urban contact vernaculars develop from basic to more elaborate as time passes. See for example, Abdulaziz and Osinde (1997) who, in describing Sheng and Engsh, state that while these mixed codes were initially unstable, random and fluid (having started as secret codes), they gradually developed more systematic patterns of usage at the phonological, morphological and syntactic levels. As such, they have become more elaborate in their structures with the passing of time.

### **8.8.4. Strategies used in creating the lexicon**

Chibrazi and other African urban contact vernaculars are also similar in terms of the strategies that are employed in creating their lexicons. Different scholars present different linguistic strategies that are used in the creation of urban contact vernaculars. All of these strategies can be said to be generally typical of what Kiessling and Mous (2004) refer to as

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*conscious language manipulation processes*. According to Kiessling and Mous, these strategies reflect the provocative attitude of the speakers and their jocular disrespect of linguistic norms and purity. The linguistic strategies are divided into five categories.

The first category comprises the strategy of coining new lexical items, which includes borrowing from other languages or dialects. The second category involves what is called loan translation. The third category includes morphological manipulations such as dummy affixation and the use of borrowed affixes. The fourth category involves phonotactic manipulations such as truncation and metathesis. The last category of conscious language manipulation that is employed in urban contact vernaculars is semantic manipulation. This includes far-fetched semantic extensions and the extensive use of hyperbole and dysphemism. It is important to note that Kiessling and Mous (2004) are simply used here to provide a general overview of the strategies. The discussion of the creation of the lexicon of Chibrazi has demonstrated the specific strategies that are used in its creation.

Kiessling and Mous also categorise languages that arise through lexical manipulation into four types according to their function and use. Using Halliday (1978), Kiessling and Mous categorise African urban contact vernaculars. It should be remembered that Kiessling and Mous refer to African urban contact vernaculars as urban youth languages, as antilanguages. Kiessling and Mous say that the mixed languages differ from other instances of language manipulation such as argot, taboo, jargon, secret languages, and in-law respect languages.



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### 8.8.5. Function

The fifth aspect of commonality among African urban contact vernaculars is in terms of function. The major function of these mixed languages, it is observed, is to create a powerful icon of identity, which establishes through the reversal of norms, and which develops from an underdog type of identity to one aimed at reforming society (Kiessling and Mous, 2004). The youth in urban areas across the world tend to create a unique language in order to assert a unique identity. As a social group, they use language to assert resistance against societal norms, which they usually look at as old-fashioned and oppressive (see for example, Kiessling and Mous 2004; Kiessling, 2005; Molamu, 2003; Moto, 2001; and Msimang, 1987 for further discussion).

According to Castells (1997: 6- 7; cited by Kiessling and Mous, 2004: 312), identity is

people's source of meaning and experience, ... (whereby meaning is) the symbolic identification by a social actor of the purpose of her/his action, ... (which is constructed) on the basis of a cultural attribute, or related set of cultural attributes, that is/are given priority over other sources of meaning.

In line with this observation, Pavlenko (2004) says that generally, languages supply the terms and other linguistic means with which identities are constructed and negotiated; and the ideologies of language and identity thereby created, guide ways in which individuals use linguistic resources to index their identities. This point is echoed in Androutsopoulos and Georgakopoulou (2003), but they sound a word of warning regarding the creation of the identities by quoting Wyn and White (1997: 25) who say that “young people do share in common their age, but the social, economic and cultural significance of this physical reality are far from common” (2).

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This means that identity should not be viewed as a fixed property of individuals or society, but rather something that differs from individual to individual and from society to society as dictated by different conditions that abound in different situations. In addition to that, language provides speakers an opportunity to continuously negotiate their identity in accordance with the situation in which they are. Hence, the urban youth identity is only one among a myriad of identities that the speakers of urban contact vernaculars have at their disposal.

It has been observed that wherever language contact occurs, the language differences that abound in the contact situation tend to represent different kinds of division among the people involved in the contact. This is however, unlike the situation in African urban contact vernaculars. Instead of mirroring cleavages between or among contact groups, African urban contact vernaculars tend to bridge the gaps between or among different groups in contact; especially the ethnic gap (see for example, Swiggart, 2009; McLaughlin, 2001; Ntshangase, 1995, 1993; Msimang, 1987). For this reason, urban contact vernaculars have a lot of potential for becoming languages of wider communication. In fact, some urban contact vernaculars have been recorded to function as lingua francas.

By definition, “a lingua franca is a language used by common agreement in areas populated by people who speak different languages, yet they desire social or commercial communication” (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993: 276). Nouchi in Ivory Coast and Iscamtho in South Africa (Kiessling and Mous, 2004: 334 citing Kube, 2003: 15 and Childs, 1997 respectively) are reported as having reached the stage of lingua franca already. Sheng of Kenya is said to be on its way to attaining this status (see for example, Abdulaziz and Osinde,

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1997). In line with the point about African urban contact vernaculars functioning as lingua francas, Kiessling and Mous (2004: 334) say that “these sociolects ... become established as norms themselves, and might be on their way to becoming new national languages”.

It is important to note that the general trend that has been observed in the literature on urban contact vernaculars with regard to function is that while the mixed language phenomenon starts off as a youth language phenomenon, with time, it tends to shed off this status and begins to embrace a more cross cutting status. As time passes, African urban contact vernaculars are embraced by more and more members of the mainstream community. That being the case, the mixed languages do not exclusively represent youth identity, although the youth continue to claim particular interest in the mixed languages as a means of setting themselves apart from the mainstream society. Hence, the mixed languages transform from a specialised function to a more generalised one.

African urban contact vernaculars are also generally understood to serve as secret codes for their users. Kiessling and Mous (2004) and Msimang (1987) are some of the scholars that support this proposition. The members of the speech communities of these mixed languages (the in group) are able to cut out other people (the out group) from their conversation using these mixed languages. Traditionally, the need for the members of the in group to cut other people out of their conversations arises from the situations surrounding crime or other forms of mischief. Members of the speech communities use the mixed languages in order to keep their criminal or mischievous activities secret. It is important to note however, that as the African urban contact vernaculars become more and more popular, the function of the mixed languages as secret codes tends to shift from the crime or mischief factor because more and

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more people, who are not engaged in criminal or mischievous activities, embrace the mixed languages.

It can thus be said that outside of criminal or other mischievous activities, one of the needs to use the mixed language as a secret code arises from the fact that the members of the speech communities of the mixed languages wish to talk about topics that may generally be said to be taboo in as far as societal norms are concerned. One very good example of such topics is sex. The need for maintaining secrecy through the use of African urban contact vernaculars is one of the reasons behind the instability of the languages. Members of the in group continually create new forms in order to keep members of the out group at bay. As soon as members of the out group catch up with the members of the in group in terms of a particular form, the members of the in group create another form.

This discussion shows that African urban contact vernaculars serve different functions for different groups of members of their speech communities. These functions differ from individual speaker to individual speaker, from speech community to speech community, and from situation to situation. And, the mixed languages assume different functions as they develop. As the mixed languages become more elaborate and as more people embrace them, the mixed languages tend to serve more and more of the ordinary and even conventional function of communication like other languages and they are not only used for specialised or marked functions. The mixed languages transcend the typical functions for which they are created in the first place

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#### 8.8.6. Socioeconomic significance

The other factor that makes African urban contact vernaculars similar is socioeconomic significance. These mixed languages tend to carry special socioeconomic significance in their respective societies because of widespread use especially among the youth. This can be seen in terms of two aspects that are isolated for purposes of this discussion. Firstly, the socioeconomic significance of African urban contact vernaculars can be seen in terms of the impact of these mixed languages in education (see for example, Momanyi, 2009; Nkosi, 2008; and Githiora, 2002). These mixed languages generally affect learners' achievement in language subjects, especially indigenous languages. For instance, while Sheng affects learners' achievement in Swahili (Momanyi, 2009), Tsotsitaal affects learners' achievement in Sesotho sa Leboa (Nkosi, 2008).

The impact that urban contact vernaculars exert on other languages in education emanates from the fact that these mixed languages contain attributes of different languages including standard indigenous languages that are taught in school. In other words, African urban contact vernaculars permeate the indigenous languages. Learners tend to use the African urban contact vernaculars. This is deemed to be inappropriate because the mixed languages are informal in the context of formal education. It is important to note however, that learners' achievement of educational outcomes is affected by several other factors apart from language. Examples of such factors are sociolinguistic background, socioeconomic status, resourcing of schools, and the quality of teachers. Therefore, the influence that African urban contact vernaculars exert on learners' achievement of educational outcomes should be interpreted with caution.

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Secondly, the socioeconomic significance of African urban contact vernaculars can be seen in terms of the use that can be made of these mixed languages especially in the realm of mass education. One area in which the mixed languages can be used in this way is in sex and HIV and AIDS education programmes. Undie, Crichton and Zulu (2007, 2006) and Ogechi (2005) are two good examples in this regard. The former refer to eighty three evaluations of sex and HIV and AIDS education interventions from around the world, which found that the most effective sex and HIV and AIDS education programmes tended to be carefully designed to fit the youth's socio-cultural contexts. However, they note that researchers have tended to overlook the significance of language as an important aspect of culture. The latter observe that in mainstreaming the youth in the fight against the HIV and AIDS pandemic, the youth's language needs to be used.

It is a widely accepted position in the literature that HIV and AIDS awareness campaigns, especially among the youth, are more effective when the youth's own languages are used as mediums of transmission than if only the standard languages are used (see for example, Undie, Crichton and Zulu, 2007, 2006; and Ogechi, 2005). Two important points need to be raised with regard to this fact. Firstly, the youth are arguably the most infected and affected population by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. For example, in the case of Malaŵi, Ntata, Muula, Siziya and Kayambazinthu (2008) bear witness to this assertion. Secondly, for the countries that are highlighted here, urban contact vernaculars form part of what is referred to as the youth's own language here.

The two papers by Undie, Crichton and Zulu (2007, 2006) are based on a study conducted by the Africa Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC) in 2006, which sought to gain

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insight into how the youth in Malaŵi think about sex and sexual relationships. This was done by analysing their language, especially the metaphors that they use to talk about such issues. Undie, Crichton and Zulu observe that analysing the metaphors that young people use while talking about sex can provide valuable insights into the ways in which they understand sex, sexual behaviour and sexual relationships. It was discovered through the study that young people conceptualise sex as utilitarian, as pleasurable, and as passionate.

The papers propose that the insights gained from such a study may have untapped potential for enhancing the effectiveness of sexuality education intervention. They thus advise that interventions need to incorporate young people's own language in order to raise their knowledge and awareness and to influence their attitudes and behaviour. Undie, Crichton and Zulu's study reveals one of the most important functions of the urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi. According to the authors of these two articles, the subjects of the study explained that speaking in the 'cover language' allows them to keep their knowledge of sexuality hidden from parents, other adults and younger children. It is important to note, in this regard, that Chibrazi forms part of the 'cover language'.

There is a very interesting development in South Africa regarding the socioeconomic significance of urban contact vernaculars of the country. The South African Netherlands Research Programme on Alternatives Development (SANPAD) is currently funding a project that is aimed at identifying the current status of South African urban linguistic varieties in order to ascertain the feasibility of recent appeals to make Tsotsitaal a national language and to identify barriers to prevent Tsotsitaal achieving legitimacy (Professor Vic Webb, personal communication). Recently (July 2013), the African Urban Youth Languages Conference was

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held in Cape Town, South Africa, as part of this project. Scholars from different parts of the continent presented findings of researches on different aspects of the mixed languages, all of which strongly demonstrate that African urban contact vernaculars have special sociolinguistic significance in their respective countries of origin. The SANPAD study will shed a lot of light on the South African language situation. It would actually be very enlightening if comprehensive studies such as this would be replicated in other countries because similar situations abound.

In order for one to appreciate the socioeconomic significance of urban contact vernaculars in the modern world, one just has to listen to and look at the print and electronic media. Within the media, the advertising industry is one good example of the niche for urban contact vernaculars. Advertisers often utilise coinages from these mixed languages to make their advertisements more appealing to the public. The social media, like Facebook and Twitter are also good manifestations of the significance of urban contact vernaculars. African urban contact vernacular are part of the language that is used on such platforms in as far as Africa is concerned.

## **8.9. Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated that there are certain characteristics that Chibrazi shares with other African urban contact vernaculars. The chapter has done that presenting examples of other African urban contact vernaculars based on the definition of the term that is provided in chapter two above. In this regard, the chapter has included mixed languages that are spoken in Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Kenya, Cameroon and Senegal. A number of studies in



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which each of these mixed languages appears have been summarised in order to provide some insight into what the mixed languages are like.

It has been reiterated that while this study considers all these mixed languages as urban contact vernaculars, the studies in which they appear perceive them in other ways. The present study does this because the mixed languages are similar in a number of ways, which are highlighted further below. This can be interpreted as an indication that although a lot of research has been done in the subfield of contact linguistics in general, and the creation of new contact languages in particular, there is still more research that needs to be done in the latter, especially in the area of African urban contact vernaculars.

## CHAPTER NINE

### INTERPRETING CHIBRAZI AS A LANGUAGE PHENOMENON

#### 9.1. Introduction

Following the identification of Chibrazi as a new contact language, throughout this thesis, this mixed language has been referred to as an urban contact vernacular. It has been explained that this is one type of new contact language. It has also been explained that the present research adapts the term urban contact vernacular from Mark Sebba's typology of pidgin, even though the mixed language under study is not a pidgin. However, this research argues that the term urban contact vernacular encompasses several other terms that can be used to interpret the mixed language. There are other alternative interpretations that different people may accord the mixed language under study based on the various aspects of the mixed language.

This chapter presents a summary of the alternative ways in which Chibrazi may be interpreted in terms of what each one of them basically entails. These interpretations are drawn from the review of the literature on African urban contact vernaculars that are reported in chapter nine and from the perceptions of participants in the case study, which are presented in chapter seven. Put in a different way, this chapter presents different ways in which mixed languages that are similar to Chibrazi are interpreted by different scholars and it discusses whether or not the interpretations fit Chibrazi. This study suggests that these interpretations can also be applied to Chibrazi by virtue of the fact that Chibrazi shares traits with these other mixed languages as discussed in chapter nine. It is important to note however, that this

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chapter does not necessarily critique these alternative interpretations as they relate to Chibrazi because that enterprise is outside the scope of this research. Such an enterprise would require a different study altogether. Seven different ways in which Chibrazi may be interpreted are presented.

## 9.2. Chibrazi as a hybrid or mixed language

Firstly, Chibrazi may be interpreted as a hybrid language or a mixed language. This kind of interpretation is based on the hybrid or mixed nature of the urban contact vernacular in terms of structure. The mixed language is created by bringing together elements from different languages. As a new contact language, Chibrazi is a hybrid or mixture of Malaŵian languages and other languages from outside the country. As illustrated in chapter four, Chibrazi comprises lexemes that are coined from indigenous Malaŵian languages and a vernacularisation of words from languages outside the country. These lexemes are built into the grammars of the indigenous languages. In addition to that, Chibrazi draws a lot from other urban contact vernaculars that are spoken in other parts of the world, especially the countries neighbouring Malaŵi.

The basic operation in the mixture of the languages is that while one language functions as the grammatical base, several other languages provide the vocabulary component of the mixed language. Chapter four has also presented different linguistic strategies that are employed in the creation of the mixed language. The processes also demonstrate that the urban contact vernacular is a mixture of elements from different languages. It is on the basis of this mixture that this research claims that Chibrazi is a mixed or hybrid language that caricatures the general linguistic phenomenon of language contact in Malaŵi; and that the

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mixed language is described as a conglomeration of elements from all its donor languages and the new inventions.

### 9.3. Chibrazi as a youth language

Secondly, Chibrazi may be interpreted as a youth language. This interpretation is based on three points. The first point is that the mixed language emerged among the youth. The second point is that the mixed language is mostly created by the youth. Another reason for labeling Chibrazi as a youth language is that it is the youth that tend to use the mixed language more than any other group in the Malaŵian society. In other words, the mixed language is perpetuated by the youth. It has been pointed out that this is one of the common ways in which the mixed language is perceived by people. The term *Chilankhulo cha achinyamata* “the language of the youth”, which is one of the terms that are generally used to refer to the mixed language, bears witness to that. As an example, chapter seven has demonstrated the popularity of Chibrazi among the male youths at Viphya Schools. However, it is important to remember that the mixed language is also used by members of other groups at the institution. Hence, the term youth language ought to be interpreted with caution.

The literature on African urban contact vernaculars cited in this research demonstrates that although mixed languages like Chibrazi are mostly associated with the youth, they are not necessarily restricted to the youth (see for example, Kiessling and Mous, 2004; Moto 2001; and Samper, 2001). It has been pointed out that while Chibrazi might have started off as a youth language, with the passing of time, the population of its speakers has grown thereby transcending the age factor. This is partly because some of the speakers of the mixed language speak it even beyond their youth as shown in chapter seven. On the basis of that,

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this thesis has proposed that there are two varieties of Chibrazi: Old school Chibrazi, and Contemporary Chibrazi. However, it is important to remember in this regard, that Chibrazi is dynamic. That implies that these two varieties of the mixed language are relative to time.

#### 9.4. Chibrazi as an urban language

The third way in which Chibrazi may be interpreted is as an urban language. On the basis of this, it can be referred to using a variety of terminology as is done by different scholars in the literature. Some of the common terms that appear in the literature are *urban vernacular*, *urban variety*, *urban sociolect*, and *urban mixed code*. Chibrazi could be interpreted in this manner based on the fact that the mixed language was born and made popular in urban areas. In fact, urbanity is one of the defining factors of the mixed language. It has been explained that urban communities in Malaŵi have provided (and they continue to provide) the necessary conditions for the development of the mixed language by virtue of their multilingual and multicultural profiles. The studies cited above in this section demonstrate the urbanity of other mixed languages that are referred to as urban contact vernaculars in this research. The studies have shown that these mixed languages are not necessarily restricted to urban localities.

This study maintains that Chibrazi is also not restricted to urban localities, although the research focuses on one case in the urban set up. As it has been pointed out in the opening chapter of this thesis, I have encountered and used the mixed language in both rural and urban areas of Malaŵi. It has also been observed that Chibrazi actually transcends ethnicity. On this note, it is important to remember that ethnicity is embedded with connotations of ruralness unlike urbanity, which tends to be embedded with connotations of dissociation from

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ethnic associations as Kiessling and Mous (2004: 316) say about African youth languages in general. It is also important to remember in this regard, that what Kiessling and Mous (2004) refer to as African youth languages are referred to as African urban contact vernaculars in the present research.

### **9.5. Chibrazi as code switching or code mixing**

Chibrazi may also be interpreted to be an instance of code switching or code mixing. Chibrazi would be interpreted as either code switching or code mixing based on the fact that it combines elements from different languages. As such, when the speakers use the mixed language, they sound as if they are switching between or among languages.

There are several examples of studies in which urban contact vernaculars are perceived as cases of code switching or code mixing. Finlayson, Calteaux and Myers-Scotton (2009); Mashiri (2002); Abdulaziz and Osinde (1997); Slabbert and Myers-Scotton (1997); Makhudu (1995) and Mazrui (1995) are some of the notable ones. These studies present urban contact vernaculars not as languages on their own, but rather as the embedding of one or more languages within another language. This is also based on the fact that the mixed languages incorporate features that belong to different languages whereby one language is used as a matrix language and the other(s) as embedded language(s).

If Chibrazi is interpreted as an instance of code switching or code mixing, the theories that have been advanced to explain the phenomena may be used to interpret the mixed language. For example, using the matrix language model (Myers-Scotton, 1993a), the two components

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of Chibrazi would be allocated roles according to the classification of languages in the model. The grammatical base component would be said to be the matrix language (ML), while the core Chibrazi component would be said to be the embedded languages.

In this regard, the Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, Coupland and Coupland, 1991) may also be used to explain Chibrazi as an instance of code switching. The mixed language would thus be interpreted as a strategy that is employed by interlocutors for either emphasising or minimising their social differences. The Markedness Model (Myers-Scotton, 1993a), which is related to the Communication Accommodation Theory, may also be used in this regard. These two theories would be used to explain the fact that Chibrazi is sometimes used as a means for including some people in communication and excluding others from it. The functions of Chibrazi that have been presented in this thesis illustrate this point more clearly.

It should be reiterated that with respect to the concepts code switching and code mixing, the literature raises the question of whether African urban contact vernaculars are manifestations of one or the other. Different scholars answer this question in different ways. For example, Msimang (1987), in his examination of South Africa's Tsotsitaal, concludes that the mixed language might be more akin to code mixing than code switching, even though he notes that it is not precisely that. This question can also be raised with regard to Chibrazi and people may have different opinions as to which one is the best interpretation.

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In answering this question, the present research considers Chibrazi to be more akin to code mixing than code switching. However, it is important to note a very important point that makes Chibrazi different from both of these phenomena. In code switching and code mixing, languages are combined as and when the need arises; depending on the situations in which interlocutors are engaged. On the contrary, it is the nature of Chibrazi that elements from different languages are combined. In Chibrazi, the combination of languages is the norm. It can therefore be observed that while code-switching and code mixing appear to be extensively used in Chibrazi and to play a significant role, neither of these phenomena in itself is sufficient to describe and explain the mixed language. Kiessling and Mous (2004) make the same assertion about African urban youth languages in general.

This study believes that code-switching and code mixing take place at a different level when it comes to Chibrazi. On the one hand, speakers of Chibrazi may switch from one variety of Chibrazi to another variety of Chibrazi. For instance, from Chicheŵa based Chibrazi to Chitumbuka based Chibrazi. On the other hand, speakers of Chibrazi may switch between Chibrazi and other languages.

### **9.6. Chibrazi as slang**

Chibrazi may also be interpreted as slang in as far as indigenous Malaŵian languages are concerned. As already indicated, “slang refers to words and phrases that are often ‘invented’ in keeping with the new ideas and customs; often by recombining old words into new meanings” (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993: 276). Recombination of words or parts thereof into new meanings is a norm in Chibrazi as explicated through the different language manipulation processes explained in this thesis.



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The one outstanding feature of slang, which may be used as the basis for interpreting Chibrazi as slang, is that it spreads from a small group until it becomes common among a large part of a population. This is also the case with Chibrazi. When a new trend crops up, it does so through an individual or a small group of people, but with the passing of time, the trend spreads to a wider populace thereby becoming part of the norm in the mixed language. In fact, that is how the mixed language as a whole came to be what it presently is. The mixed language started with a small group of people, but it has, over the years, spread across geographical, social and even ethnic boundaries. To some extent, Chibrazi does represent its speakers' need to keep up with new ideas and customs. The speakers always strive to use the latest trends in the mixed language or to employ unique trends, which might be done in order for them to be seen to be up to date in as far as the mixed language is concerned. In this regard, the mixed language might be interpreted as a mark of fashionability.

The interpretation of Chibrazi as a slang might evoke other related terms that are used in the literature to refer to mixed languages that are similar to Chibrazi. Such terms include *jargon*, *argot* and *street language* (see for example, Mutunda, 2007; Echu, 2006; Kouega, 2003; Msimang, 1987; and Spyropoulos, 1987; where these are used). The term *jargon* refers to profession-specific language. In the literature, when urban contact vernaculars are interpreted as *jargon*, the profession with which they are mainly associated is criminality. They are interpreted as either entirely criminal or having a very strong inkling to criminality (see for example, Msimang, 1987). The term *criminal argot* is more commonly used in this regard. The term *street language* is generally used loosely to mean the language of the street. Chibrazi would be interpreted as a street language based on the fact that it is most commonly used in informal settings (which are epitomised by the word "street") than in formal settings. This point evokes one general characteristic of urban contact vernaculars, regardless of the

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perception that they are ascribed; that is, the mixed languages are mainly used in informal settings.

While each of the terms that are mentioned in this subsection has some bearing on Chibrazi, none of them represents the mixed language in its entirety. Chibrazi may actually be argued to be a combination of different slangs and jargons that develop in different sections of the Chibrazi speech community as explained under the section on variation in Chibrazi. In addition to that, Chibrazi is not necessarily a criminal argot, although criminal elements also have a bearing on the language.

### **9.7. Chibrazi as an antilanguage**

The seventh way that Chibrazi may be interpreted is as an antilanguage. The term antilanguage is used to denote a sociolect that expresses conscious social and linguistic opposition, putting emphasis on the interpersonal function at the expense of the referential function of language (Halliday, 1978: 164). The term emanates from the concept of antisociety, which is used to denote a society within a society, which expresses rebellion against existing societal norms, language being one of the norms. That implies that an antilanguage is a language that is used to express the antisociety's rebellion against the linguistic norms of the mainstream society.

The basis for interpreting Chibrazi as an antilanguage would be the juxtaposition of the mixed language with other indigenous Malaŵian languages and ultimately judging Chibrazi as an aberration of the norms in the indigenous languages. The first chapter of this thesis has

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illustrated how mixed languages in general, contact languages in particular, and most particularly Chibrazi, have been treated on the basis of disobedience of what is perceived to be the norm. The inappropriateness of Chibrazi in formal contexts like the classroom can be said to be linked to the fact that it is interpreted as an antilanguage by nature and therefore inappropriate in such situations

It is important to note that as an antilanguage, Chibrazi is generally agile, dynamic and volatile just like other urban contact vernaculars. It is also important to note that some scholars interpret the agility, dynamism and volatility of urban contact vernaculars as representing lack of linguistic norm. However, other scholars believe that the agility, dynamism and volatility of urban contact vernaculars do not represent lack of linguistic norm, but that on the contrary, they are an indication that the linguistic norms in these mixed languages are very strong. For instance, Kiessling and Mous (2004: 314) argue that

the variation that is found (in these mixed languages) is the result of rapid change of these strong linguistic norms because of the inherent need to follow the newest norms and ... to the fact that the deviant language usages find their way into the dominant language of the outside world, which in turn, creates the need for new deviations from the societal norm.

Two points can be raised in respect of Chibrazi being referred to as an antilanguage. The first point is that the mixed language is deliberately chosen by its speakers as an alternative to another language. The second point is that the linguistic norms that are employed in the mixed language are violations of the linguistic norms that are used in the mainstream languages. However, the selection of Chibrazi over other languages transcends the confines of the concept of antilanguage. In addition to that and as already stated, Chibrazi can only be

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read as a violation of rules in other mainstream languages if it is perceived as a variety of other Malaŵian languages.

### 9.8. Chibrazi as a pidgin

Chibrazi may also be interpreted as a pidgin. A number of scholars have evoked the concepts of *pidgin* and *pidginisation* in their explorations of urban contact vernaculars. One good example is Echu (2009) who studies Camfranglais in Cameroon. However, Echu is quick to caution that because Camfranglais is still undergoing pidginisation, it may not be aptly considered as a pidgin in its own right. Chibrazi may be interpreted as a pidgin on the basis of two points that subsume many others. The first basis would be that both pidgins and urban contact vernaculars involve the restructuring and mixture of languages; that is, the source languages. In addition to that, both pidgins and urban contact vernaculars are instances of new contact languages. The definitions of the terms pidgin and pidginisation that are presented in chapter two of this thesis provide very vital information that can be used in determining whether or not Chibrazi is a pidgin.

However, it is important to note that while Chibrazi might be interpreted as a pidgin, there is a substantial amount of difference between Chibrazi on the one hand, and pidgins on the other hand. Therefore, the concept pidgin (and even pidginisation) may not be applied to Chibrazi without modification. In fact, the literature on pidgins does point to the existence of some controversy regarding the scope of reference of the term. In order to minimise the controversy over the scope of reference of the term pidgin, the literature on pidgins distinguishes between prototypical pidgins and other instances of pidgin. This is because “the range of reduction in structures as well as range of functions (which are two of the key

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defining elements of pidgins) may differ significantly from one case to another” (Winford, 2002: 20). The basic feature of prototypical pidgins is that they are “severely restricted in terms of their social functions, and clearly reduced in form and structure, containing a minimal lexicon and a rudimentary grammar” (Winford, 2002: 20).

The literature agrees in describing prototypical pidgins as generally lacking inflectional morphology, tense/mood/aspect systems, movement rules, embedding strategies, and other structural characteristics that are associated with ‘fully fledged’ languages. To elaborate this difference, the four basic characteristics of pidgins (see, Winford, 2002; Holm, 2000; Sebba, 1997; Püitz, 1994; Thomason and Kaufman, 1988; and Appel and Muysken, 1987) are presented here.

The first characteristic of pidgins is that they lack surface grammatical complexity. By this, it is meant that pidgins have a small number of grammatical categories (for instance, they have a small number of tenses, no plural and no gender) and lack movement rules and embedded sentences. Secondly, pidgins lack morphological complexity, which shows through lack of inflection and a tendency to have one morpheme per word. The third characteristic of pidgins is semantic transparency. This is shown through, among others, the preference for semantically transparent compounds in the lexicon. Semantically transparent words are words whose meanings can be relatively easily determined from their component morphemes (Sebba, 1997). For example, *female dog* is semantically transparent, hence easier to decipher than its counterpart *bitch*. Finally, pidgins tend to have reduced vocabulary. This means that

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pidgins have small overall word stocks and a small number of grammatical function words like pronouns and prepositions.

Chibrazi can be seen to be different from prototypical pidgins on the basis of a number of factors. Firstly, Chibrazi did not come into existence “... by way of natural interference or imperfect second language acquisition ...,” but, like all other urban contact vernaculars, “by a conscious effort on the part of speakers, who try to distort the underlying language or languages to create a medium for distancing”, what China and Gerbault (1991: 226) call “artificial” and “distorsion délibéréé” (Kiessling and Mous, 2004: 306).

Secondly, Chibrazi is different from prototypical pidgins on the basis of linguistic structure: structural reduction in Chibrazi is not as extensive as it is in prototypical pidgins. Chibrazi is more elaborate in grammatical structure because it essentially utilises the grammars of its base languages. One might say that Chibrazi is necessarily “Malaŵian ethnic languages embedded with new contact vocabulary and other structural features”.

Thirdly, Chibrazi is different from prototypical pidgins on the basis of the range of social functions for which it is used. Chibrazi is not restricted in terms of social function, even though it is more popularly used in informal situations than in formal ones. The mixed language is used for a whole range of social functions and not just for business; for instance; as is the case with prototypical pidgins.

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Finally, Chibrazi has a very large stock of vocabulary; arguably even larger than the stocks of its donor languages. Chibrazi has, at its disposal, the vocabularies of its donor languages as well as the innovations that the speakers of the mixed language continually come up with. For example, Chicheŵa Chibrazi has the vocabulary of Chicheŵa as well as the core Chibrazi vocabulary.

Clearly, Chibrazi is not a prototypical pidgin. If anything, it is a pidgin of a different kind. Therefore, the concepts pidgin and pidginisation ought to be modified if they are to be applied to Chibrazi. Perhaps it may be referred to as a Creole as other scholars call some of the African urban contact vernaculars. However, even that term would have to be modified in order to accommodate Chibrazi.

### **9.9. Chibrazi as a manifestation of language shift**

The last way in which Chibrazi may be interpreted is as a manifestation of language shift in Malaŵi. As already explained in the literature review, language shift is a situation whereby speakers of one language or language variety tend to stop using their own language in some or all domains of communication and start to replace it with another (Winford, 2002; Wardaugh, 1986). In other words, language shift refers to a speech community's partial or total abandonment of their language in favour of another language.

One example study in which an urban contact vernacular is interpreted in the context of diglossia is Rudwick (2005). The study is an investigation of isiTsotsi, an urban mixed-code

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that is spoken in the Umlazi Township of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. She explores the potential of isiTsotsi as the Low variety and standard Zulu as the High variety in the township domain. One important point that Rudwick mentions about the concept of diglossia is that it is not an unproblematic concept. That is to say that there is some variation across scholars in terms of how the concept is interpreted and applied.

As already indicated in the literature review, a diglossic situation exists in a society when the society has two distinct codes that show clear functional separation. That is, one code is employed in one set of circumstances, while the other is used in another set of circumstances. In more straight forward terms, “diglossia is a situation in which two languages, one High (H) and the other Low (L), fulfill complementary functions in the community” (Winford, 2002: 26). The two languages are kept apart based on the functions for which they are used, and each is viewed differently by the people who are aware of both. Generally, the H variety has higher prestige, is more beautiful, more logical and more expressive than the L variety, and it shows a tendency to borrow words from the H variety (Wardagh, 1986). It should be noted however, that function is only one feature that is used in explaining diglossia and it is only used as an example for purposes of this study. Other features include prestige, literary heritage, acquisition, standardisation, stability and lexicon (Rudwick, 2005).

Traditionally, the kind of diglossia that exists in Malaŵi involves English as the High variety and the indigenous languages as the Low varieties. However, apart from this traditional type of diglossia, there is a different kind of diglossia that exists between the ‘standard’ indigenous Malaŵian languages on the one hand and Chibrazi on the other, although Chibrazi is not officially recognised. In this case, Chibrazi functions as the Low variety, while the



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‘standard’ indigenous Malaŵian languages function as the High varieties. Chapter five has demonstrated that during communication, speakers of Chibrazi tend to choose between the urban contact vernacular and the ‘standard’ languages as demanded by the different domains and situations in which they find themselves. For example, the youth would use the ‘standard’ varieties with the elders, while they would use the urban contact vernacular with their fellow youth. In the latter situations, the speakers could use ‘standard’ languages, but they choose to use Chibrazi. This is typical of diglossia. Therefore, Chibrazi is an important element in the High versus Low divide in Malaŵi. Thus, Chibrazi can be interpreted as an instance of language shift on the basis of diglossia.

On the basis of the discussion in the paragraph above, this study proposes that there are three types of diglossia in Malaŵi. The first type of diglossia involves English as the H language and ‘standard’ indigenous Malaŵian languages as the L languages. The second type of diglossia involves English as the H language and a combination of ‘standard’ indigenous Malaŵian languages and Chibrazi as the L languages. The third type of diglossia involves ‘standard’ indigenous Malaŵian languages as the H languages and Chibrazi as the L language. These three types of diglossia are evidence of the fact that the language profile of Malaŵi has over the years transformed from a purist orientation to a hybrid orientation.

It is important to note that interpreting Chibrazi as an instance of diglossia raises a number of questions with regard to the issues of language maintenance, language shift and even language death. The questionnaire that was administered in the case study in this research included the question of whether or not Chibrazi is killing other ‘standard’ indigenous Malaŵian languages. The responses of the participants clearly indicate that Chibrazi impacts

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on other languages. While some participants see the impact as positive, others see it as negative. In fact, some participants hold the opinion that Chibrazi is killing other indigenous languages. Chapter seven has explicated the participants' responses to this question.

In this regard, it is important to note what Mufwene (2007, 2006, and 2001) proposes about this issue. Mufwene proposes that some indigenous languages in Africa are not necessarily threatened by the existence of the so called colonial languages, but rather by the springing up and popularisation of contact languages such as urban contact vernaculars. The diglossic situation that is developing around Chibrazi as presented here seems to agree with Mufwene's proposition. However, that topic is not discussed any further in the present research apart from simply flagging it.

### **9.10. Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated that Chibrazi does not fit neatly into the various interpretations of African urban contact vernaculars that are advanced in various studies of other similar mixed languages. The chapter has done so by examining eight different ways in which Chibrazi can be interpreted as a language phenomenon depending on the element of the language that one focuses on. This has been done following the common interpretations of other African urban contact vernaculars. The chapter has noted that because Chibrazi is so agile, dynamic and versatile in nature, none of the interpretations of the other African urban contact vernaculars that are provided in this chapter suffices to explicate the mixed language succinctly in isolation.

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For this reason, the present research does not confine the mixed language to any one of these interpretations in particular. Although the study refers to Chibrazi as an urban contact vernacular, it presents the mixed language as a linguistic entity that cuts across the various interpretations provided. The present research considers the different interpretations of the other African urban contact vernaculars that are described in this chapter as representing integral and closely interrelated elements or components of the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi.

## CHAPTER TEN

### SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

#### 10.1. Introduction

The aim of this research was to provide a descriptive analysis of Chibrazi, the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi thereby demonstrating that there is a mixed language that is emerging in Malaŵi. The research was designed as a triangulated study that was both theoretical and empirical in nature and which employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of enquiry. The research utilised the mixed method approach in order to gather as much information as possible about the mixed language under study and in order to allow for corroboration of the information gathered through the different methods. The research utilised both linguistic and sociolinguistic data, which was analysed statistically and or thematically in line with the specific objectives of the research based on its nature. The specific objectives of the research were:

- To define Chibrazi;
- To explore the possible origins of Chibrazi;
- To provide examples of Chibrazi;
- To describe the semantic manipulation strategies that are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi;
- To determine who speaks Chibrazi;
- To describe people's perceptions of Chibrazi;
- To describe the characteristics that Chibrazi shares with other languages of similar nature; and

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- To describe how Chibrazi can be interpreted as a language phenomenon.

In order to achieve the aim and the specific objectives of this research, the present study asked the following questions:

- What is Chibrazi?
- What are the possible origins of Chibrazi?
- What are some of the examples of Chibrazi?
- What semantic manipulation strategies are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi?
- Who speaks Chibrazi?
- What are some of the people's perceptions of Chibrazi?
- What characteristics does Chibrazi share with other languages of similar nature?
- How can Chibrazi be interpreted as a language phenomenon?

This chapter presents a summary of the most important conclusions that were reached in this research according to the aim and the specific objectives that this research sought to achieve as well as the questions that the research sought to provide answers to. The conclusions are presented according to the specific objectives and the questions of the research. The summary is presented in line with the questions that the research sought to provide answers to.

### **10.2. What is Chibrazi?**

Chibrazi can be defined as an emerging mixed language that has evolved in Malaŵian urban settings among linguistically and ethnically diverse communities as a result of large scale migration from the countryside to the urban areas. It is a language practice or speech style in which meaning is encoded by inserting vocabulary drawn from a unique body of lexical items

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into the grammatical structures of the traditional ethnic languages of Malaŵi. The language practice or speech style is thus generally characterised by the mixing of elements from different languages of the country as well as those from outside. Put differently, Chibrazi is a mixed language or a hybrid language that epitomises and caricatures language contact and contact induced language change in the country.

Chibrazi can further be described as a mixed language with a unique linguistic structure and history. While the mixed language is a customary mode of communication for a significant number of Malaŵians in some communities of the country, it is not commonly used by the mainstream of Malaŵian society. In addition to that, Chibrazi is not a readily acceptable mode of communication in formal domains, although it appears therein sometimes. The mixed language may be seen as a distinct and definable version of Malaŵian languages, which is different from the Malaŵian languages mainly on the basis of vocabulary. It is important to note that the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi is equipped with all the elements that are required for communication to take place, although it draws on other languages in order to achieve that purpose. While the mixed language is very popular, there has not been any report of Chibrazi having any mother tongue speakers yet.

Put differently, this study demonstrates that Malaŵi has its own urban contact vernacular language, which in this study is referred to as Chibrazi. In addition to that, this study demonstrates that Chibrazi is a complete language system with its own unique linguistic structure that is exploited in the same ways as the linguistic structures of other languages for communication purposes. To borrow the words of Whiteman (1980: v), the mixed language is a rule-governed language system, which is “different from, but not deficient in respect to”

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Malaŵian languages from which it grows, although it is not legitimised. In other words, Chibrazi contains all the elements that are required for communication to take place. The mixed language is not substandard, although it has been marginalised on the basis of the circumstances of its origin and the attitudes that some people have towards it.

This study concludes that the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi is a unique and complete language system in its own right, even though it relies on other languages for its grammatical structure and vocabulary. Therefore, the mixed language is not necessarily a dialect of Chicheŵa or any other Malaŵian language. The mixed language is an instance of language change, especially that which occurs as a result of contact between people that speak different languages. In this regard, Chibrazi is classified as a new contact language. Within the realm of new contact languages, Chibrazi belongs to the category that is referred to as bilingual mixed language, but considering that Chibrazi uses numerous languages as its sources, it is more accurate to refer to it as a multilingual mixed language.

There is a considerable amount of variation within Chibrazi on the basis of different factors. These include geographical location, grammatical base, occupation, gender and age. In this regard, Chibrazi can be said to be a general cover term for different language practices in contemporary Malaŵi that encompass different phenomena within the realm of language change in general and the creation of new languages in particular. One may argue that such variations are tantamount to the existence of different varieties or dialects of Chibrazi. However, it is difficult to come up with a clear demarcation of the varieties or dialects of Chibrazi because there is always crossing among speakers of the different varieties to the extent that they always share information. The one type of variation that is most obvious is

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that which is caused by differences in grammatical base. This thesis has presented three varieties on this basis: Chicheŵa Chibrazi, Chitonga Chibrazi, and Chitumbuka Chibrazi.

### **10.3. What are the possible origins of Chibrazi?**

This research has indicated that the origins of Chibrazi have not been documented through research. As a result of that, the research has advanced a hypothesis that can be used in explaining the possible origins of the mixed language. The hypothesis that has been advanced is that Chibrazi has emerged among communities that are linguistically and ethnically diverse due to a number of factors and it has spread to other parts of the country due to a number of factors as well. The major factor among the factors is large scale migration from the countryside into the urbanised and industrialised areas of the country especially the cities of Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba. Malaŵians have migrated into these urbanised and industrialised areas for two main reasons. Firstly, Malaŵians have migrated into the cities in search of employment. Secondly, Malaŵians have migrated into the cities in search of better quality education.

The large scale migration has created an environment that is conducive for the development of Chibrazi by rendering the cities as convergence zones for the various languages and cultures of the country; notwithstanding the languages of other countries that Malaŵians have come into contact with. This has been coupled with resentment against the language policy, which has played a significant role in the development of Chibrazi. This research has also looked at various factors that have facilitated the spread of the mixed language. On the basis of the spread of the mixed language, the research has given an indication of what the future might hold for the mixed language. It has been indicated that the mixed language may not die



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like other youth language phenomena that have come and gone, but rather it is most likely to continue developing.

#### **10.4. What semantic manipulation strategies are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi?**

This research has provided a lot of examples of lexical items that are only part of over two thousand words that are recognised as belonging to the Chibrazi lexicon, which were collected in the course of this research. Different linguistic strategies are employed in the creation of the lexicon of Chibrazi, but this research focuses on semantic manipulation processes. Through the presentation of the examples, this research has provided a more detailed description of some of the common semantic manipulation strategies that are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi. The study has demonstrated that there are many semantic manipulation strategies that are used in creating the lexicon of Chibrazi. The strategies are typical of what Kiessling and Mous (2004) describe as deliberate language manipulations. The strategies are classified into the following: semantic maintenance, semantic shift, semantic extension or semantic broadening, and semantic narrowing. However, a few other morphophonotactic manipulation processes are also included in the discussion. These include compounding, pluralisation, duplication, truncation and metathesis.

Naturally, in the course of presenting the examples of Chibrazi, this research touched on the question of the basic linguistic structure of Chibrazi. In terms of linguistic structure, the present research finds that Chibrazi is a fusion of elements from different languages that originate from both within and outside the borders of Malaŵi. This is consistent with the fact that the mixed language is a multilingual mixed language. The mixed language has two basic

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components: the grammatical base component and the core Chibrazi component. The grammatical base component of Chibrazi comprises the language that supplies the grammatical structure on which Chibrazi is based depending on the variety of Chibrazi in question. This component also includes vocabulary and other structural elements that come from the language that is used as a grammatical base of Chibrazi. Core Chibrazi includes vocabulary and other linguistic innovations that are created by the speakers of the mixed language using different language manipulation processes. These can be seen as new linguistic inventions in as far as the Malaŵian linguistic landscape is concerned. In other words, the core Chibrazi component is used to manipulate any of the grammatical bases to produce the mixed language.

This shows that the linguistic structure of Chibrazi is a conglomeration of elements from all its donor languages and the new inventions. To this end, it can be argued that Chibrazi represents the sum total of the languages that are involved in Malaŵi's language contact situation, which manifests in different ways in different parts of the country. However, the linguistic structure of Chibrazi oscillates between the linguistic structures of its donor languages and the new inventions that are unique to the mixed language. Hence, it is difficult to establish a clear demarcation between Chibrazi, on the one hand and its donor languages on the other, in terms of linguistic structure.

This research also touched on the questions of what makes Chibrazi different from other Malaŵian languages. Although Chibrazi draws a lot from other languages that are spoken around it, there are certain linguistic characteristics of the mixed language that make Chibrazi unique in its own right. While it might be difficult to tell the difference between Chibrazi and

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other Malaŵian languages on the basis of any other component of the mixed language, it is much easier to do so on the basis of its lexicon. This is the component of the mixed language that is referred to as core Chibrazi. It is these features that make the mixed language to appear to be ‘new’ on the Malaŵian language scene. Another feature that makes Chibrazi unique is that it is not necessarily mutually intelligible with other traditional Malaŵian ethnic languages, although some people do not agree with this. And, there are some unique syntactic innovations in Chibrazi that do not exist in traditional Malaŵian ethnic languages.

### **10.5. Who speaks Chibrazi?**

The general conclusion that this research draws from the case study that was undertaken as part of it with regard to this question is that Chibrazi is spoken by people of different categories at Viphya Schools. It is spoken by both males and females; the young and the old; learners and teachers; and members of the support staff of the institution. However, the young people at the institution tend to speak and understand Chibrazi better and more than the old. The males among these speak and understand Chibrazi more and better than the females. In addition to that, the type of Chibrazi that is spoken and known by these groups of people is different across their groupings. The old tend to know and speak more of Old school Chibrazi, while the young people know and speak more Contemporary Chibrazi. There are also differences between the Chibrazi that males speak and the Chibrazi that the females speak. Generally, the Chibrazi that is spoken by males is more offensive than the Chibrazi that is spoken by the females of the schools.

Further to that, this research finds that different people encounter Chibrazi in different contexts because the mixed language is present in different contexts, especially places where

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different people converge. The research also finds that Chibrazi is mainly used between and among people that are close to each other, especially friends. However, the mixed language is only used in contexts that the friends find it to be appropriate.

Another thing that the research demonstrates is that Chibrazi is not limited to only a few people with unacceptable character as it might be regarded to be. In addition to that, the mixed language is not limited to a few contexts of use. However, speakers of the mixed language use the mixed language selectively; in contexts where it is deemed to be appropriate, mainly on the basis of the relationships of interlocutors.

#### **10.6. What are some of the people's perceptions of Chibrazi?**

This research concludes that the participants in the case study of this research have varying opinions about a number of issues pertaining to the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi. In other words, the participants in the case study of this research have varying attitudes towards Chibrazi. Generally, the participants' perceptions about Chibrazi can be summarised as follows: while some participants perceive Chibrazi in positive light, other participants perceive Chibrazi in negative light. The participants' perceptions of the mixed language are informed by various factors.

#### **10.7. What characteristics does Chibrazi share with other languages of similar nature?**

This research has concluded that there are certain characteristics that Chibrazi shares with other African urban contact vernaculars, even though the other mixed languages are not held in the same way as they are held in this thesis. The thesis has presented examples of other

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African urban contact vernaculars based on the definition of the term that is provided in chapter two of the thesis. The thesis has included mixed languages that are spoken in Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Kenya, Cameroon and Senegal. A number of studies in which each of these mixed languages appears have been summarised in order to provide some insight into what the mixed languages are like. The following are the characteristics that Chibrazi shares with other African urban contact vernaculars: origins, speech community, linguistic structure, strategies for creating their lexicon, function, and socioeconomic significance.

### **10.8. How can Chibrazi be interpreted as a language phenomenon?**

Chibrazi can be interpreted in different ways based on its nature that is described here. It could be interpreted as a hybrid or mixed language; as an urban language; as a youth language, as a slang or conglomeration of slangs; as an instance of code switching or code mixing; as an antilanguage; or even as a pidgin; depending on the aspect of the mixed language that one chooses to focus on. This shows that Chibrazi is so agile, dynamic and versatile in nature that none of these interpretations suffices to explicate the mixed language succinctly in isolation. For this reason, it is more plausible not to confine the mixed language to any one of these interpretations in particular than to do so. It is clear that Chibrazi is a linguistic entity that cuts across the various interpretations provided above; which are representative of integral and closely interrelated elements or components of the mixed language.

### **10.9. Conclusion**

Looking at the current linguistic situation in Malaŵi, it is clear that Chibrazi is part and parcel of the country's language profile and that it has gained currency and developed in structure. Currently, it is commonplace to hear or see Chibrazi in many domains where it was

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not present before. Some of these are politics, the music industry, the print and electronic media, education and religion. Chibrazi is no longer restricted to urban locations; or just to the youth; it has now penetrated almost all spheres of life in the country. Since its emergence, the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi has continued to spread to the extent that it can now be said to transcend not only the bounds of sociolectal classification, but also geographical and socio-economic classification. This strongly suggests that Chibrazi might play some socio-economic part in the country.

All in all, this study unravels some of the fundamental processes that are at the core of language development both at individual level and at societal level. The study provides very important information, which demonstrates that indeed, as pointed out by Wardaugh (1992), contact languages are central to scholars' understanding of language in general and language genesis in particular.

#### **10.10. The need for further research**

While the present research unravels a lot of information about urban contact vernaculars in general, and the urban contact vernacular language of Malaŵi in particular, it simply presents an exposition of the mixed language. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done in order to clarify so many issues. In fact, with particular reference to Chibrazi, it is important to note that the present study raises a lot of controversial issues that will most likely lead to heated contestation. However, while that is the case, the essence of my undertaking of the study dwells in that very controversy that might ensue because the answers to the many mysteries surrounding the language under study lie in such controversies. It is plausible to state that whether or not common grounds are established about such controversies, there will still be a

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language called Chibrazi or whatever other name that will be used, eating deeper into the confines of the Malaŵian society, waiting to be dealt with by people of all sectors of the nation and by its populace. Some of the areas that require further studies are listed below.

First of all, there is a need for a research that will establish a clear national picture of Chibrazi. That is a kind of research that cannot be carried out at the level of one doctoral thesis or by any one individual in any other form of research. Secondly, there is a need for further enquiry into topics such as the following:

- The origins of Chibrazi;
- The etymology of the lexicon of Chibrazi;
- People's attitudes towards Chibrazi;
- The dialectology of Chibrazi; and the syntax of Chibrazi.
- Chibrazi and the contemporary language policy;
- The socioeconomic significance or ethnolinguistic vitality of Chibrazi;
- The convergence of Malaŵian languages as manifested through Chibrazi;
- Chibrazi in the diaspora; and
- Chibrazi and education or Chibrazi in education.

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## APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

### A QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE URBAN CONTACT VERNACULAR OF MALAŴI

Please provide the relevant information by marking the item that best suits you with a cross (x) or by writing short responses where appropriate. You are also free to add any relevant information that you feel is required for any item. Thank you for your kind assistance.

Respondent number

For office use only

V0

#### PART A : PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Gender :

|           |                          |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| 1. Male   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Female | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A1

2. Occupation::

|                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Learner: Kindergarten School | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Learner: Primary School      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Learner: Secondary School    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Teacher                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Other (specify)              |                          |

A2

3. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ years

A3

4. Home district: \_\_\_\_\_

A4

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5. Your first language: \_\_\_\_\_

**A5**

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|--|--|

6. Other languages you speak:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**A6.1**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**A6.2**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**A6.3**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**A6.4**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**A6.5**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

7. Where do you stay when attending school or working at the school?

**A7**

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|--|--|

**PART B: EXPOSURE TO THE LANGUAGE**

**For office use only**

The urban contact vernacular of Malaŵi is the language that includes words like *nyatwa, ada, shuwa, shapu, boo, kuvaya, zangide, mandede, madala, masteni.*

1. Are you aware of the existence of this language?

|        |  |       |  |
|--------|--|-------|--|
| 1. Yes |  | 2. No |  |
|--------|--|-------|--|

**B1**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

2. What name do you personally use to refer to this language?

**B2**

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|--|--|

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3. What name(s) do other people use to refer to this language? Mention two.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**B3.1**

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|  |  |

**B3.2**

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which statement best describes you in regard to this language? Mark only one option.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. I speak and understand the language fluently               |  |
| 2. I can speak the language, but I do not understand it well  |  |
| 3. I can understand the language, but I do not speak it well. |  |
| 4. I only speak and understand the language a little.         |  |
| 5. _____ Other  |  |
| (specify)_____  |  |

**B4**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

5. Choose **one** of the following in description of your pattern of use of the language:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. I speak the language most of the times                 |  |
| 2. I only speak the language some times.                  |  |
| 3. I have spoken the language before, but I no longer do. |  |
| 4. I have never spoken the language at all.               |  |
| 5. _____ Other  |  |
| (specify)_____  |  |

**B5**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

6. Give **five** examples of words, phrases or sentences in this language that you know or like.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**B6.1**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**B6.2**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

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|       |             |                          |
|-------|-------------|--------------------------|
| _____ | <b>B6.3</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| _____ | <b>B6.4</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| _____ | <b>B6.5</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|  |  |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
|--|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
|  |  | <b>For office use only</b>  |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 7  | Where did you first come across the language? Mark only one option.  |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
|  | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>1. At school</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. At home</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. At the play ground (<i>kosewela</i>)</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. On radio</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5. On television</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>6. Other<br/>(specify)_____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> | 1. At school                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. At home | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. At the play ground ( <i>kosewela</i> ) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. On radio  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. On television | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Other<br>(specify)_____   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>B7</b> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1. At school   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 2. At home   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 3. At the play ground ( <i>kosewela</i> )            | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 4. On radio  | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 5. On television                                     | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 6. Other<br>(specify)_____                           | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 8.   | If you speak the language or if you have ever spoken the language, in what contexts do you speak or have you ever spoken the language? (Mark all applicable)   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
|  | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>1. Anywhere with my friends</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. At home</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. At school with my teachers</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. At church or the mosque with my religious leaders</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5. Other</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>   | 1. Anywhere with my friends | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. At home | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. At school with my teachers             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. At church or the mosque with my religious leaders | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Other         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>B8.1</b> <input type="checkbox"/><br><b>B8.2</b> <input type="checkbox"/><br><b>B8.3</b> <input type="checkbox"/><br><b>B8.4</b> <input type="checkbox"/><br><b>B8.5</b> <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                                    |
| 1. Anywhere with my friends                          | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 2. At home   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 3. At school with my teachers                        | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 4. At church or the mosque with my religious leaders | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |
| 5. Other   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                             |                          |            |                          |   |                          |  |                          |                  |                          |  |                          |                                    |

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|  |  |             |
|--|--|-------------|
| <p>(specify) _____</p>   |  | <b>B8.6</b> |
| <p>9. In what contexts have you ever heard other people speak or do other people speak the language? (Mark all applicable)</p> |  |             |
| 1. Anywhere with their friends   |  | <b>B9.1</b> |
| 2. At their homes  |  | <b>B9.2</b> |
| 3. At school with their teachers   |  | <b>B9.3</b> |
| 4. At church or the mosque with their religious leaders  |  | <b>B9.4</b> |
| 5. Other   |  | <b>B9.5</b> |
| (specify) _____  |  | <b>B9.6</b> |
| _____  |  | <b>B9.7</b> |

|   |  |                            |
|---|--|----------------------------|
|   |  | <b>For office use only</b> |
| <p>10. What are the sources of your knowledge of this language at the present time? (Mark all applicable responses)</p> |  |                            |
| 1. Television   |  | <b>B10.1</b>               |
| 2. Radio  |  | <b>B10.2</b>               |
| 3. Music  |  | <b>B10.3</b>               |
| 4. Friends  |  | <b>B10.4</b>               |
| 5. Other  |  | <b>B10.5</b>               |
| (specify) _____   |  | <b>B10.6</b>               |
| _____   |  |                            |

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11. Which one of the following statements best describes the language?  
(Mark only one)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. <i>Chilankhulo cha achinyamata</i> (A language of the youth)                   |  |
| 2. <i>Chilankhulo cha masiku ano</i> (Modern days' language)                      |  |
| 3. <i>Chilankhulo cha anthu a chamba</i> (The language of smokers of Indian hemp) |  |
| 4. <i>Chilankhulo cha anthu osazindikila</i> (The language of the 'uncivilised')  |  |
| 5. Other  |  |
| (specify) _____   |  |

**B11**

12. Please indicate to which extent you agree or disagree with each one of the following statements:

|  | 1. Strongly disagree | 2. Disagree | 3. Neutral | 4. Agree | 5. Strongly agree |
|--|----------------------|-------------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. This language is "killing" other languages  |                      |             |            |          |                   |
| 2. The language is spreading   |                      |             |            |          |                   |
| 3. People should be allowed to continue using the language                                     |                      |             |            |          |                   |
| 4. I would support a policy that tries to stop or minimize the use and spread of this language |                      |             |            |          |                   |
| 5. The language should be banned   |                      |             |            |          |                   |
| 6. I like the language   |                      |             |            |          |                   |

**B12.1**

**B12.2**

**B12.3**

**B12.4**

**B12.5**

**B12.6**

13. Why do people use this language? (Mark all applicable options.)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. To cut other people out of conversation.        |  |
| 2. In order to assert certain authority or status. |  |
| 3. To hide information from others.                |  |
| 4. Other   |  |
| Specify  |  |
| _____  |  |

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**B13.1**

**B13.2**

**B13.3**

**B13.4**

**B13.5**

14. Why do you think some people like this language? (Mark all applicable reasons.)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Because it is fashionable to speak the language. |  |
| 2. Because it simplifies communication              |  |
| 3. I do not know                                    |  |
| 4. Because many people use it.                      |  |
| 5. Other  |  |
| (specify)   |  |
| _____   |  |

**B14.1**

**B14.2**

**B14.3**

**B14.4**

**B14.5**

**B14.6**

15. Why do you think other people dislike the language? (Mark all applicable reasons)



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|   |  |              |                          |
|---|--|--------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Because they were taught so.                     |  | <b>B15.1</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Because they do not know it.                     |  | <b>B15.2</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I do not know.                                   |  | <b>B15.3</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Because of the type of people who mostly use it. |  | <b>B15.4</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Other<br>(specify)                               |  | <b>B15.5</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   |  | <b>B15.6</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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**PART C : PERCEPTIONS REGARDING THE LANGUAGE**

For each of the statements listed below, please indicate your response by marking one of the options given, that is, strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.

|   | 1<br>Strongly<br>Disagree | 2<br>Disagree | 3<br>Neutral | 4<br>Agree | 5<br>Strongly<br>agree |             |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------------------|-------------|
| 1. 1. Males use the language more than females  |                           |               |              |            |                        | <b>C1.1</b> |
| 2. 2 Young people use the language more than old people                                     |                           |               |              |            |                        | <b>C1.2</b> |
| 3. 3 Urban people use the language more than rural people                                   |                           |               |              |            |                        | <b>C1.3</b> |
| 4. 4 People who are not well behaved use the language more than people who are well behaved |                           |               |              |            |                        | <b>C1.4</b> |

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|    |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |      |                          |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------|--------------------------|
| 2. | It is appropriate for someone to use the language with:                              |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          | C2.1                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |      |                          |
|    | 1. His or her friends  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
|    | 2. His or her parents  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
|    | 3. His or her teacher(s)   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
|    | 4. His or her religious leader(s)  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
|    | 5. His or her child/ children  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | C2.5                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |      |                          |
| 3. | It is appropriate for the language to be used:                                       |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          | C3.1                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |      |                          |
|    | 1. In newspapers   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
|    | 2. In music  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
|    | 3. In religion   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
|    | 4. On the radio  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
|    | 5. On television   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
|    | 6. In politics   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
|    | 7. In education circles  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |      |                          |
| 4. | 1. This language is a negative influence on other languages                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          | C4.1                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |      |                          |
|    | 2. This language does not influence other languages in any way                       |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          | C4.2 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | 3. This language positively contributes towards socio-economic development in Malawi |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          | C4.3 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## **APPENDIX 2: GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR THE FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS**

1. Why do you like the language?
2. Why do you not like the language?
3. Why do you say the language impacts on other languages?/ What is the impact of the language on other languages?
4. Why do you say the language does not impact on other languages?
5. Why do you say the language is killing other languages?
6. Why do you say the language is not killing other languages?
7. Why do you say the language should be allowed to continue spreading?
8. Why do you say the language is spreading?
9. Why do you say the language is not spreading?
10. Why would you support a policy that tries to stop or minimise the language?
11. Why would you not support a policy that tries to minimise the language?
12. Would you like to make any comment about this language?

### APPENDIX 3: EXAMPLES OF GREETINGS IN CHIBRAZI

**Table 21: Greetings in Chibrazi**

| Greeting   | Origin  | Example   |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Banya</i>   | I am not sure about its origin  | A: <i>Banya?</i> “Fine”<br>B: <i>Banya.</i> “Fine”  |
| <i>Shuwa</i> or its equivalent <i>shuwadi</i>  | The English word “sure”.  | A: <i>Shuwa amwene.</i> “Sure my friend”<br>B: <i>Shuwa.</i> “Hullo”  |
| <i>Inde</i>  | Chicheŵa <i>inde</i> “yes”  | A: <i>Inde mani.</i> “Yes my friend”<br>B: <i>Indetu.</i> “Yes”   |
| <i>Yamani</i>  | Jamaican greeting “Yeah man”  | A: <i>Mystic mana.</i> “Hullo Mystic”<br>B: <i>Yamani.</i> “Yeah man”   |
| <i>Aire</i>  | Jamaican “Ire”  | A: <i>Aire Rasta.</i> “Ire Rasta”<br>B: <i>Aire Rasta.</i> “Ire Rasta”  |
| <i>Wawa</i> or its variant <i>wawā</i>   | Chicheŵa or Chitumbuka <i>wawa</i> or <i>wawā</i> “Hullo”, which is normally just used to announce one’s presence among other people. | A: <i>Wawa angoni.</i> “Hullo Ngoni”.<br>B: <i>Wawani madala.</i> “Hullo old man”   |
| <i>Kagunde</i> (accompanied with a hand shake or other forms of physical contact greeting) | Chicheŵa <i>kagunde</i> “touch it”  | A: <i>Kagunde mwana</i> (with a hand stretched). “Touch it my friend”<br>B: <i>Aka</i> (shaking the stretched hand). “Here” |
| <i>Yes/ yesi</i> or its variant <i>yes yes/ yesi yesi</i>                                  | English “yes”   | A: <i>Yes aya.</i> “Yes Rasta”<br>B: <i>Zoonadi Rsta.</i> “True indeed Rasta”   |
| <i>Zabwino</i>   | Chicheŵa <i>zabwino</i> “good ones”   | A: <i>Zabwino nkulu wanga?</i> “Good ones my brother?”<br>B: <i>Yonse.</i> “The whole of it”                                |
| <i>Ziwemi</i>  | Chitumbuka <i>viwemi</i> “good ones”  | A: <i>Ziwemi?</i> “Good ones?”<br>B: <i>Wemi spaisi.</i> “Good ones”  |
| <i>Bo</i> , or its variants <i>boobo</i> , <i>zaboo</i> , <i>zawobo</i> and others         | Chishona <i>bo</i> or French <i>bon</i> .   | A: <i>Zaboo munthu wankulu?</i> “Are you fine big person”<br>B: <i>Boobo amwene.</i> “Fine my friend”                       |
| <i>Zangide</i> or its variants <i>zangidengide</i> and <i>zangriiii</i>                    | I am not sure where this word comes from, but the word is another Chibrazi word for “good ones”.                                      | A: <i>Zangide?</i> “Fine ones?”<br>B: <i>Zangriiii.</i> “Fine ones”   |
| <i>Zakunte</i> or its variant <i>zakuntra</i>  | I am not sure where this word comes from, but the word is yet another Chibrazi word for “good ones”.                                  | A: <i>Zakunte mani?</i> “Fine ones?”<br>B: <i>Zakuntra.</i> “Fine ones”   |