Primary Teachers' Diploma

Language Module One

Literacy and Language Education Departments

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Acknowledgements

Contents

Icons in this module

Icons in this module were developed to visually separate different sections within each chapter of the module and for the reader to easily understand the function of the different sections.

Below are the icons and their meanings.

Learning outcomes

This icon notes the learning outcomes for each chapter.

Key terms

This icon notes the chapter key terms and definitions.

Assessment of learning

This icon notes where there is an assessment of learning for the chapter.

Activity

This icon notes where there is an activity within the chapter.

Sample text

This icon notes where sample text has been included in the chapter.

Teacher educator guidance

Teacher educator guidance is noted by a dotted border.

Introduction

Dear teacher educators and student teachers,

Recent research across Zambia has revealed that while primary school completion rates are increasing (Ministry of General Education, 2017), literacy skills of children in lower primary school continue to be low. In fact, the Early Grade Reading Assessment administered in five provinces in 2018 revealed that one-in-five lower primary school children were unable to answer questions about stories they hear, and nearly half could not identify any letters (USAID, 2019). This means that young children are not learning the basic skills necessary for developing literacy.

One of the factor contributing to these issues is the lack of sufficient teaching and learning materials in institutions that offer pre-service teacher education programmes. Based on these findings, the Ministry of Education, with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), chose to focus on improving the materials available in colleges and universities that train primary teachers. This module is one of six modules that will be developed over the next year — three focused on literacy development and three focused on language development.

These modules were written by teams consisting of lecturers from the University of Zambia, Chalimbana University, and colleges of education, with support from staff from the USAID Transforming Teacher Education activity. They are based on current knowledge about evidence-based approaches to early grade reading and primary grades teaching practices. The modules are freely available and may be shared electronically and reproduced as needed by institutions.

I hope that these modules will be used in all literacy and language education courses in pre-service primary teacher education diploma programmes nationwide and will support high-quality teaching and learning. As a teacher myself, I wish you the best in your careers in education.

Warm regards,

Mr. Joel Kamoko

Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education

Module Learning Outcomes

Chapter 1
Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.1   Meaning of language

         1.2.1.1   Define language in various ways

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1.   define language as proposed by various scholars

2.   classify the definitions as either formalist or functionalist

3.   relate the conceptualisation of language to literacy and language teaching.

Chapter 2
Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.2   Origins of language

         1.2.2.1   Demonstrate understanding of the various origins of language

1.2.3   Design features of human language

         1.2.3.1   Explain the importance of the characteristics of language

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1.   demonstrate understanding of the various theories of the origin of language

2.   distinguish between human and animal language

3.   explain the design features of language

4.   discuss the implication of the origins of language to literacy and language teaching.

Chapter 3
Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.4   Functions of language

         1.2.4.1   Explain the functions of language according to M.A.K Halliday

         1.2.4.2   Relate the functions of language to the classroom situation

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1. explain Michael Halliday's functions of language
2. explain how children learn functions in their language development according to Halliday
3. discuss the implications of the functions of language to language and literacy instruction.

Chapter 4
Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.5 Theories of language

    1.2.5.1 Analyse the theories of language acquisition and language learning

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1. distinguish between language acquisition and language learning
2. identify and describe developmental stages of language acquisition
3. compare theories of language acquisition
4. relate theories of language acquisition to the teaching of literacy and language.

Chapter 5
Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.7 Levels of linguistics

    1.2.7.1 Identify the levels of linguistics

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1. define the levels of linguistic analysis
2. analyse the structure of English and Zambian languages according to levels of linguistic analysis
3. discuss the implications of the levels of linguistic analysis to teaching and learning within the context of the language and literacy classroom.

Chapter 6
Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.6 Linguistics and its branches

    1.2.6.2 Describe the different branches of linguistics

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1. define the following branches of linguistics: discourse analysis, pragmatics, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics
2. demonstrate understanding of the branches of linguistics by providing examples of language use
3. apply the concepts of the branches of linguistics to literacy and language teaching and learning.

Chapter 7
Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.3.1 Language policy in Zambia

    1.3.1.1 Explain the language policy changes in Zambia before and after independence

1.3.2 Language and dialect

    1.3.2.1 Distinguish differences between language and dialects, language and ethnicity, language and gender, language and identity

    1.3.2.1 Explain the following terms: mono-lingualism, bi-lingualism, polyglot, multilingualism, foreign language, official language, local language, familiar language, *lingua franca*, register, diglossia, endoglossia, exoglossia, and national official language

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1. describe the relationship between language and ethnicity
2. explain the following terms: monolingualism, bilingualism, polyglot, foreign language, official language, local language, familiar language, *lingua franca*, language register, diglossia, endoglossia, exoglossia, and heteroglossia
3. distinguish between language and dialect
4. use lexical similarities to determine which of their languages are related
5. demonstrate understanding of the relationship between language and ethnicity

6. explain the number of languages spoken in the country

7. describe the language situation in Zambia using sociolinguistic terms

8. discuss the implications of the language situation on language policy and language and literacy education.

Chapter 8
Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.3   Language situation in Zambia

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1. define orthography

2. compare the orthographies of the seven regional Zambian languages

3. discuss how orthographies are developed

4. evaluate the relevance and importance of orthographies in teaching literacy.

Chapter 9
Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.15   Figures of speech

    1.15.1.1 Use figures of speech in stories or conversations

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1. define what the expression 'figures of speech' means

2. identify and classify figures of speech

3. analyse figures of speech to determine their meanings

4. demonstrate understanding of figures of speech by creating examples

Conceptualisation of Language

Conceptualisation of Language

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to think about the nature of language because it is an inseparable part of being human; it differentiates us from other animals. The fact that language is acquired in infancy almost naturally without instruction and we only find ourselves using it effortlessly in later life makes us take it for granted. It is only when we attempt to learn additional languages that we become aware of how complex and powerful language is. The possession of language has enabled humans to live in communities: to interact, entertain, and cooperate with each other, regulate their behaviour, transmit knowledge and skills that have helped humans not only survive but thrive, and produce great civilisations. We think and dream with language.

Although language is essentially speech, human beings have been able to develop written forms of language, enabling them to increase the power of language as a tool for transmitting knowledge and skills not limited in terms of time and place. Human beings have used verbal language for some 100,000 years, but the invention of written forms of language is a recent one—around 10,000 to 5,000 years ago—in the ancient civilisations of Egypt, the Middle East, and China, to name a few. This means that human beings have not had the time to develop the ability to acquire written language naturally in the same way that they acquire spoken language. Children have to be taught to read and write. It is important for teachers of language and literacy to understand that the foundation of literacy is in oral language. Written symbols represent language at the sound level, and understanding written language depends on one's knowledge of the words of that language and also the same thinking processes that we use in understanding spoken language.

This chapter aims to introduce students to the ways in which linguists have thought about language, which we will review, and in the process discuss their relevance to the teaching of language and literacy in primary schools.

Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.1   Meaning of language

    1.2.1.1   Define language in various ways

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1   define language as proposed by various scholars

2   classify the definitions as either formalist or functionalist

3   relate the conceptualisation of language to literacy and language teaching.

Instructional materials

Student module

Activity 1

Written language is not just derived from spoken language, it has developed conventions (rules) of its own.

Discuss this statement by relating it to the way the two forms of language are taught.

Key terms

Literacy
The ability to read and write

Formalist linguistics
Approach to the study of language which focuses on language structures (the form) and not their meanings; often contrasted with functional linguistics below

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)
An approach to linguistics, among functional linguistics, that considers language as a social semiotic system (as a way of expressing social meanings)

Linguistics
The scientific study of language

Linguistic competence
The knowledge of grammatical rules possessed by a speaker of a language which are used to construct sentences

Functionalist linguistics
Linguists who have the view that language is used for performing various social functions (e.g. making requests, orders, apologies, etc.) and that this is more important than focusing on the form, as in formalist linguistics

Linguistic performance
The use of linguistic rules (grammar) in generating sentences in actual communication

1.4

What is language?

It is interesting to note that the word used to talk about *language* in some languages is the same as that which refers to the *tongue*. This is not surprising because language, as was noted, is essentially speech and the tongue is the most important speech organ used to produce various sounds.

Activity 2

What are the various words in your Mother Tongue that refer to 'language'?

Do the words refer to speech or the tongue?

Some of the words—for example in Nyanja, *cilankhulo* or 'language'—have a verb form *kulankhula* 'to speak'. Is this found in other languages?

The word *language* in English came from the old French word *langue*, based on the Latin word *lingua* meaning 'tongue'. We can see that language was thought of as speech. However, speech itself is not just a meaningless stream of noise, but it consists of sounds grouped together in units called words and these words are put together to make sentences that express thoughts, feelings, and so on. So, language can be thought of as consisting of various systems that work together to communicate meaning, e.g. the sound system (phonological system), the morphological system (word system), and the syntactic system (sentence system). For example, the Oxford Dictionary (2010) defines **language** as 'the method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of words in a structured and conventional way'. The 'structured and conventional way' refers to the fact that words are put together according to the grammatical rules followed in that language. Sign language is also a language in its own right, which is non-verbal as it is expressed through visual signs that are also organised or structured in ways that are acceptable to the users (that is what we mean by conventional). Children born with hearing impairments acquire sign language in very similar ways to the way the spoken language is acquired.

We often see some biases in definitions of language towards one of the systems mentioned above and also towards either an emphasis on the actual language structures or the uses to which the structures are put in communication. We discuss these issues below.

1.4.1

Meaning of language from the formalist perspective

Formalism is an approach to the study of written or spoken texts which focuses on the actual language structures (the form) rather than on what they are used for in communication. For a formalist the expression *May I leave the room?* can be looked at in terms of the parts of speech involved: verbs, pronouns, and noun phrases, and also how these are put together according to the rules of that language—for example by using the verb-subject inversion. This is when we start a question with the verb (in this case a modal verb) 'may' then followed by the subject 'I'. Thus, formalists focus on the structural aspects of language. They study language structure, or syntax, as an independent system of language without referring to meaning. They are, however, concerned with grammatical acceptableness, that is, working out which strings of words are acceptable to the native speaker or not.

Edward Bloomfield's (1914) definition of *language* is typical of this formalist approach to language study. He wrote that '[t]he totality of the utterances that can be made in a speech community is the language of that speech community'. As can be noted here, the emphasis is on the *utterances*, that is, either words, phrases, or sentences people produce without taking into consideration what they mean or the purposes for which they are produced.

This tradition of thinking about language was taken up by the most famous linguist of modern times, Noam Chomsky, whose major interest is in understanding how children acquire the knowledge of grammar and how this knowledge can be understood. Chomsky introduced what is known as transformational generative grammar. For him too, language is 'a set (finite and infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements' (Chomsky, 1957). Chomsky's claim here is that people can construct sentences of any length using a limited set of elements which we can think of as words. Language, as in the case of Bloomfield, is seen to be a set of sentences people are capable of producing. Chomsky claimed that people possess a set of grammatical rules in their brains that help them to generate (produce) an infinite (limitless) number of new, acceptable sentences. He was concerned with what is considered to be the most important design feature of language: the fact that language is a very creative (generative) thing.

Human brains are so productive that a child can produce at any time a sentence that has never been uttered or heard before. Looking at this definition of language, you notice that it considers sentences as the basis of a language and meaning is ignored. Chomsky separated knowledge of language (that is the rules that make up the grammar), which he called **linguistic competence**, from the use to which this grammar is put in communication, which

he called **linguistic performance**. His interest was in describing linguistic competence. He gave the famous sentence below to show that a sentence can be grammatically correct without being meaningful (Chomsky, 1957):

Colourless green ideas sleep furiously.

This example shows how generative or creative language is: the fact that we can dream up 'correct' sentences that do not make sense.

Later he gave further examples to underscore the importance of structure. His argument was that sentences might appear on the surface to be very similar, as can be seen in the two sentences below (Chomsky, 1965):

a.   *John is eager to please.*

b.   *John is easy to please.*

In the first one, it is John who pleases other people while in the second, it is John whom other people can please. The two sentences show the importance of *form* or structure. He argues that the two sentences have a deep structure where John can be the subject or object of the verb (that is, the one who performs the action of the verb or the one who receives the action of the verb, respectively). The implications of this thinking on the teaching of language and literacy are discussed in section 1.5 below.

Activity 3: Learning outcome 1

a.   Explain the meaning of language according to Chomsky.

b.   What are the disadvantages of viewing language from a formalist perspective?

c.   What does it mean when one says that the above definitions of language neglect meaning?

d.   How can teachers include meaning when teaching language from a formalist perspective?

Teacher educator guidance

Ensure that all student teachers participate and appreciate that while rule explanation is important, rules should be explained and practised through social situations.

1.4.2

Meaning of language from the functionalist perspective

Functional approaches take the idea that the main purpose of language is communication and that grammars have in large part been shaped to reflect communicative needs (Tomasello, 1998). In this sense, functional linguistics is deeply concerned with the purposes of language use. Functional linguists see connections between elements of a language, for example, *May I use your pen?* and their functions, for example, asking for permission. Thus, the focus is on prioritising and privileging communication (Iscan, 2007; Rifat, 2000; Varder et al., 1998). Arising from this, the following beliefs are held about language:

- Language use is functional.
- The function of language is to make meanings.
- These meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged.
- The process of using language is a semiotic process, that is, a process of making meaning.

At the heart of **functional linguistics** is the view of language as a *social semiotic system* (Halliday, 1978) or roughly, a meaning making system. To this end, it is believed that language use is functional, semantic, contextual, and semiotic. Halliday (1978) described language as a semiotic system, 'not in the sense of a system of signs, but a system of resource for meaning'. And so, for Halliday, language was 'a meaning potential'. Halliday argues that every act of language is an act of meaning and 'to mean is to act semiotically'. According to Halliday, 'the internal organisation of language is not arbitrary but embodies a positive reflection of the functions that language has evolved to serve in the life of social man'. Apart from Halliday, there are other scholars who have defined language from the functionalist point of view, which is as follows:

Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols (Sapir, 1921, p. 8).

There are two terms in this definition that call for discussion, and these terms are **human** and **non-instinctive**. Language, as Sapir rightly said, is human. It is not instinctive or involuntary, as is the case with some animal communication systems. And more importantly, language is for communicating ideas, emotions, and desires. The importance of communication is highlighted in any functionalist definition of language because language performs social functions of communication. Consider the following:

'A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group co-operates' (Bloch & Trager, 1942, p. 5).

'A system of conventional, spoken, or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, communicate' (Britannica, vol. 13).

'Language is a set of human habits, the purpose of which is to give expressions to thoughts and feelings' (Jespersen, 1919, p. 12).

'The institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral-auditory arbitrary symbols' (Hall, 1960, p. 158).

Activity 4: Learning outcomes 1–3

In pairs or in small groups:

1. Form two groups, one of functionalists and the other of formalists, to debate the advantages and disadvantages of these two approaches to language.
2. Give three definitions of language according to functional linguistics.
3. What are the advantages of teaching language using the functional perspective?
4. What are the weaknesses of solely focusing on functions when teaching language?

Teacher educator guidance

Ensure that student teachers understand language as a resource. They should be able to see language as being more than verbal and written language. More so, they should appreciate the need to teach language functionally.

Implications of conceptualisation of language to literacy and language instruction

In both language and literacy teaching, we can see influences of the two approaches to language. To begin with, let's consider the formalist approach. This has been the traditional method of teaching language, where the emphasis has been on teaching grammatical rules and ensuring that learners practise those rules by constructing isolated sentences that have very little meaning out of context. The focus is on making learners produce correct sentences and not on how to use those sentences in social interaction.

Since formalists look upon language as a construct of grammatical rules, the teacher must have knowledge of the rules in order to adequately teach literacy and language. It is these rules that must be applied to show the learner that elements in sentences are not just strung together haphazardly but with the guidance of rules. In short, language is rule governed and language teaching follows rule explanation. The examples in section 1.4.1 from Chomsky showed the importance of *form*, or the rules in sentence construction.

The criticism of this way of teaching language is that it neglects meaning. People don't just walk about uttering grammatically correct sentences that have no meaning, such as the 'colorless green ideas' one. They would be considered abnormal. Therefore, the point is that while rules are necessary, they should be explained, exemplified, and practised within a social context in which language is used. When this happens, it means that both form and function have been considered.

The focus on form is also seen in the teaching of literacy through, for example, synthetic phonics. When teachers just teach learners a list of letter sounds without showing how they blend into meaningful words, this might appear to be mechanical and meaningless. It may be boring to the learners. In the Primary Learning Programme (PLP) there is an attempt to connect the letter sounds that are learnt to meaningful units such as syllables, words, and sentences, rapidly. For example, when children learn the letter *m* they are made to form syllables with it: *ma*, *me*, and so on. Then they use these syllables to form words in their language. This links the form to meaning and gives the learners a sense of achievement that they can write real words. The language experience approach and whole language literacy teaching methods focus on meaning at the expense of form.

From the functional linguistic definitions above, language is viewed as a tool for communicating ideas and emotions. Halliday views language development in children as learning how to mean. He suggests that learning a language is learning the uses of language and the meaning potential associated with the structures, words, and sounds.

The implication of this view of language is that language teaching should be done with the aim of allowing learners to communicate, since language is viewed as communication. Thus, language teaching should be done in social contexts to enable learners to express themselves to perform different communicative functions context by context. This is sometimes done through role play or drama, where learners imagine themselves in some social contexts of communication and they learn to use appropriate language for such contexts. As you teach language, the primary focus should not be on correctness but appropriateness and expressiveness of ideas or thoughts to communicate meaning. This is important for teachers of language to bear in mind. Often teachers focus only on rule explanation and ignore the use of language in social situations. Functional linguistics is a reminder to language teachers that the goal of language use is communication, and it should be taught as such.

To facilitate learning, Schulze (2015) proposes that teachers need to hold a broad and extensive understanding of language and the specific academic language demands of their respective content areas. Interestingly, globalisation and increasingly diverse learning environments around the world have drawn attention to the need for educators to be prepared in linguistic competencies (Lucas & Villegas, 2013).

From the discussions in the two approaches to language, one would ask a question as to which approach would best be suited to create a backdrop in the teaching of literacy and language. There is no one single approach deemed as the best. Owing to this, both approaches, well understood by the teacher as to how they conceptualise language, provide a sound basis upon which to anchor the teaching of literacy and language. As explained earlier, this means that teachers should focus on both form and function when teaching language. From a literacy point of view, since language is fluid and is a resource for meaning making, this means that multilingual language practices such as translanguaging become useful. Translanguaging pedagogies help to bridge the gap between learners whose Mother Tongue (L1) is different than the language of instruction (LOI). Teachers encourage the use of learners' L1 and provide multilingual resources to support learning. Arising from discussion in this chapter, the following conclusions about language and the nature of language can be drawn:

a.   Language is multimodal.

b.   Language and language teaching is a combination of both form and function.

c.   Language use is context sensitive and must be taught within the social/cultural settings of the users of the language.

d.   The function of language is communication (meaning making) and the use of grammar helps in clarifying and specifying meaning.

e.   The goal of teaching language is to develop communicative competence, the ability to use language in interactions correctly and appropriately in different social contexts by learners.

f.   Since languages are fluid and are not bound entities, teachers should have the freedom to use multiple languages and language forms to communicate in the classroom without thinking that one language is interfering with the other.

Activity 5: Learning outcome 3

a.   Discuss why it is important to teach language by focusing on both form and function.

b.   How should teachers view language in order to respond to linguistic diversity in their classrooms?

c.   Design a lesson procedure on how you can teach a structure topic of your choice and show how you will focus on both form and function.

Teacher educator guidance

For question c, ensure that student teachers write a description of their lesson. It is more practical for them to describe a lesson than to write a lesson plan, because they may not have yet learnt how to write a lesson plan.

1.6
Chapter summary

This chapter is an introduction to the meaning of language and the various ways that language theorists or scholars have defined and approached language. Broadly, linguists view language through formalist or functionalist perspectives. With respect to both approaches, it is evident that they are both worthy and important to literacy and language teaching and learning. In the following chapters some of the topics touched upon in this chapter will be further developed.

1.7
Assessment of learning

1. What is the difference between the conceptualisation of language by the formalists and that of the functionalists?

2. How do both formal and functional linguistics affect language teaching and learning respectively?

3. In your own words, what is *language*?

4. What is the relationship between language and literacy?

5. An approach to language teaching involves an understanding of what a language is, among other issues. In what ways does this help in thinking about language teaching?

CHAPTER 2

Origins and the Design Features of Language

Origins and the Design Features of Language

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented two broad views of what language is and the implications of these views to language teaching. In this chapter, we move backwards and consider how human language evolved and spread and what makes it different from other systems of communication such as animal communication. For the purposes of this chapter, the origins of language have been discussed from two broad viewpoints: the **nonlinguistic evidence** (myths, religion, and scientific inquiry) and the **linguistic evidence** (comparative linguistics, language typology). It is important that student teachers demonstrate understanding of the origins of language to have the necessary working knowledge of the evidence pointing to how language evolved and continues to evolve today. The information discussed herein will shed more light on how languages are organised and compared and how language families are created. Arising from this evidence, the student teachers will be able to generalise about the structure of language and formulate possible pedagogical (instructional) approaches that would enhance language and literary teaching and learning.
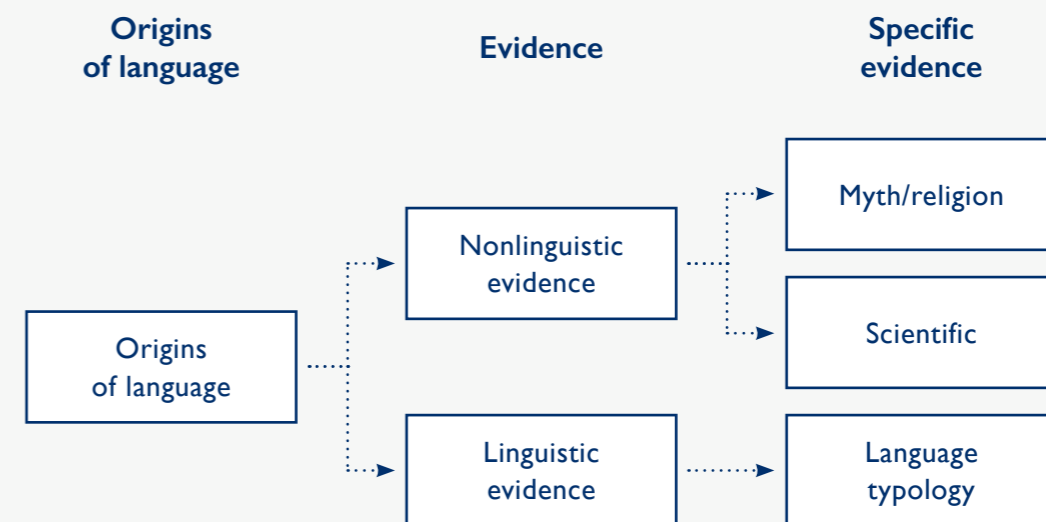
2.1
Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.2   Origins of language

    1.2.2.1   Demonstrate understanding of the various origins of language

1.2.3   Design features of human language

    1.2.3.1   Explain the importance of the characteristics of language

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1   demonstrate understanding of the various theories of the origin of language

2   distinguish between human and animal language

3   explain the design features of language

4   discuss the implication of the origins of language to literacy and language teaching.

2.2
Instructional materials

Student module

2.3
Key terms

Nonlinguistic evidence
Evidence on the origin of language not based on linguistics such as myths, religion, anthropology, archaeology, etc.

Divine Source Theory
A belief that language comes from a divine (a God or gods) source

Linguistic evidence
Evidence of the origins of language that comes from considering similarities in language structures across languages (typology)and comparative linguistics

Monogenesis
The position that language has one (mono) origin (genesis)

Polygenesis
The view that language has many (poly) origins (genesis)

Comparative linguistics
A field of linguistics which studies the similarities and differences between languages and their possible origins

Design features of language
Features of human language that make it unique, i.e. differentiates human language from other forms of communication

Activity 1: Learning outcome 2

For what purposes do animals, including humans, communicate with each other?

What are the similarities and differences between the ways animals and humans communicate?

Teacher educator guidance

Teachers should brainstorm the ways in which human communication is different from animal communication. This can be done in an oral discussion or by using a graphic organiser.

2.4

Origins of language

Most animals communicate in some way or fashion whether that is through vocal communication, tactile, chemical, or visual signaling (Tallerman & Gibson, 2012). Yet, what sets humans apart from all other animal species is that they have the capacity for language; possessing a 'vocal-auditory channel' that is 'characterized by voluntary control and is a culturally shared system for communicating within a population' (Fedurek & Slocombe, 2011, p. 154). Humans communicate through language that is verbal, gestural, and written. Knowing that all animals communicate but that humans do so in a distinctly unique way, has led scholars to investigate the origins of language and its relationship with animal communication.

Yet, there is no consensus on the origins of language. This has much to do with the nature of spoken language. Unless it is recorded, it disappears the instant it is uttered. Lack of written records which are only available from approximately 10,000 to 5,000 years ago means that we cannot tell how long before man had been able to use verbal or spoken language. However, by evaluating fossil evidence of early man in archaeology, particularly with respect to the study of the sizes of cranial cavities (bones that host the brain) and reconstructions of vocal tracts of hominids or primitive man and comparing them to modern man (homo sapiens), scholars are able to suggest that the earliest forms of human language could have emerged around 160,000 years ago (White et al., 2003). This is the period when early man appears to have similar vocal tracts and brain capacity to modern man, which suggests that that was the time when early man started using articulatory language.

Scholars have also turned to other sources of evidence apart from archeology to suggest the origin of language. In the sections below, two sources of evidence are discussed: the nonlinguistic evidence and the linguistic evidence. The conclusion from the synthesised evidence of both the nonlinguistic and the linguistic evidence points to two positions: **monogenesis** *(single origin)* and **polygenesis** *(multiple origins)* of language.

2.4.1

Nonlinguistic evidence: Theological and mythical

As it is extremely difficult to be sure about the origins of language, societies have turned to other ways of explaining how language may have come about: religious or mythical explanations. Since the origins of language are befogged in mystery, discussions on language origins are not bereft of religious accounts and myths, and these (religious accounts and myths) have contributed to the growth and expansion of the scholarship on the subject. They are regarded as available alternative explanations, however inconclusive they seem. In what follows, some of the religious accounts and myths are discussed. Generally, theological and mythical accounts of the origins of language are that all human articulated languages developed from a single source as a divine gift from a deity (a god); this is a monogenetic perspective. Such accounts are also referred to as Divine Source Theory (Linguisticsunimet, 2009). Some of these stories or myths of the origin of language are presented below:

a. *Garden of Eden: A creation story in the Bible, which holds that God handed down language to Adam when he instructed him to name all creatures immediately after creation.*

b. *Tower of Babel: A story based on the book of Genesis which believes that humans spoke one language from creation until God was displeased with humans who had embarked on building a tower that would reach heaven. God confounded humans by giving them many languages, and they decided to disperse in language groups across the globe. That, it is argued, was the beginning of multilingualism.*

c. *Thoth: An Egyptian belief that a god named Thoth created language which was then handed down to mankind.*

d. *Nebu: A Babylonian belief that a god named Nebu created language and handed it down to mankind.*

e. *Brahma: A Hindu belief that a god named Brahma created language and handed it down to mankind.*

While myths or theological explanations regarding the origins of language may be inconclusive, it is interesting to consider how cultures in different parts of the world have all tried to make sense of the phenomena of language and that many cultures do believe language to be divinely sourced. This underscores the importance of language to human beings. Next, we'll review other theories of the origins of language that are not theologically or mythically based.

In pairs or in a small group:

Are you familiar with any of the divine source beliefs about the origins of language in your culture? If so, share your background knowledge with your peer(s).

Can you see any similarities in the stories from different language groups?

Teacher educator guidance

This activity is meant to engage student teachers on the topic and determine what their prior knowledge is about the origins of language.

2.4.2
Other theories on the origins of language

A number of theories by linguists have been proposed to explain the origins of language. In what follows, six different theories and their criticisms are discussed: 1) Ding-Dong Theory; 2) Sing-Song Theory; Bow-Wow Theory; 4) Pooh-Pooh Theory; 5) Yo-He-Ho Theory; and 6) Ta-Ta Theory.

2.4.2.1
Ding-Dong theory

In this theory, first proposed but later abandoned by a linguist named Max Müller (Jespersen, 1922) language originated from a primitive man naming objects. It is argued that there is a natural link between words and what they mean or refer to in the real word. For example, some words resemble sounds made by objects or living things in the environment. Such words are called onomatopoeic words. As the name presupposes, 'ding-dong' is an imitation of the sound of a bell. Words such as *splash* mimic the action of splashed water. While this is true for such words, the theory has been criticised. Critics argue that there are far too few words in the real word which show any association between their sound and their meaning. Words such as *go, come, walk* etc. do not show any natural links with their meaning.

2.4.2.2
Sing-Song theory

It is held that language developed from the inarticulate chants of primitive man (Jespersen, 1922). In other words, language need not have started with saying words; it could have begun with whole melodies arising from emotions and feelings. Jespersen (1922) noted that when a young heart was moved in love, the outbursts of emotion could have led to verbalisation. He said, 'Out of the full heart the mouth sings!' (p. 434). Similarly, pent up feelings of hate from oppression could have easily resulted in song-like expressions and eventually into speech, especially when repelling an unjust aggressor. In the environment such as this, it was easy to see that nature dictates accents, cries, and lamentations. Which is why, Jespersen remarks that earlier forms of language were singable and passionate before they became simple and methodical. However plausible the argument, scholars have levelled criticisms against this theory. They argue that language is not restricted to the suggested topics of expressions of feelings of love and hate despite the evidence from the power of music in information transfer. While modern man uses song to communicate ideas, feelings, and attitudes, it is not entirely convincing to reduce the complex subject of language to mere song and feelings.

2.4.2.3
Bow-Wow theory

Like the ding-dong theory, proponents of this theory see language as having developed from primitive man imitating natural sounds in the environment, like hearing dogs bark (*bow-wow* is the English onomatopoeic word for imitating a barking dog) (Jespersen, 1922). Thus, primitive man made sense of his environment based on imitation and transferred this to his communicative needs. This suggests again that the earliest forms of speech were built on onomatopoeic words. However, as mentioned before, the critics believe that imitation of natural environments could not have possibly given rise to language as we know it today.

2.4.2.4
Pooh-Pooh theory

Also referred to as the interjectional theory, this theory believes that language emanated from interjections expressing emotions (Jespersen, 1922). These are instinctive cries of pain or joy—*Ooh! Eh! Ah! Ouch! Bingo!* However, critics argue that the vocabulary available

in languages we know today is too complex to have been derived from such a limited set of interjections. Besides, the class of interjections remains small and fossilised, meaning that they are learnt just like other words.

2.4.2.5
Yo-He-Ho theory

In this theory, set forth by Ludwig Noiré, language is believed to have been derived from instinctive sounds from communal work (D'Alonzo, 2016) like what is heard in the involuntary grunts during heaving and hauling. That the 'unique sociability of humans implies cooperation, and in turn cooperation involves language' (D'Alonzo, 2016, para. 3). The criticism here, however, is that for people to work together, they possibly already have a language to bring them together. Besides, it is highly improbable that the complex language structure we know today could have emerged from mere involuntary grunts, as there are few such words in natural language.

2.4.2.6
Ta-Ta theory

The proponents of this theory, most often associated with Richard Paget, hold that language developed from man's use of gestures (Adamu, 2015). As man began to use tools, his hands became occupied; as a result, man began gesturing with lips, tongue, teeth and visible parts of the body that form the speech sounds of language. Put differently, the theory assumes that man first spoke because his hands were full and was forced to communicate through means other than gestures. Again, as has been said about the other theories, the explanation offered here is not conclusive as language is more complex than a mere shift from gestures to verbalisation.

Activity 3

In pairs or in a small group:

What do the above theories on the origins of language have in common?

What questions do you have about the origins of language?

Teacher educator guidance

Have student teachers reflect on their answers together and then choose volunteers to share their thoughts.

2.4.3
Summary of nonlinguistic theories on the origins of language

Humans have been interested in language's origins for thousands and thousands of years. In this pursuit, there have been many who have relied on myths and theology to guide their beliefs while there have also been some language theorists who have drawn a connection between language and its primitive purposes in expressing the human experience. In the following section, linguistic evidence emanating from the field of linguistics itself is explored.

2.5

Linguistic evidence

Linguistic evidence of the possible origins of language comes from **comparative linguistics**. Comparative linguists try to reconstruct the original or ancestral language(s) (known as proto-language) that existing languages may have evolved from. They look for similarities and differences among language structures such as cognate words (similar words), morphological and syntactic features. This evidence can be used to decide whether languages developed from a single proto-language (monogenesis) or from multiple proto-languages (polygenesis). Languages with similar words and morphological and syntactic features can be grouped into language families, and may be said to have come from a common ancestor. Such language families have been reconstructed as the Indo-European, Afro-Asiatic, Niger-Congo (in which a sub-family of Bantu languages is found), Nilo-Saharan, Sino-Tibetan and so on. According to Nichols (2012), monogenesis is plausible 'if, at some very early stage in the evolution of language, the communicative system was not even pre-language but a set of innate calls that were not learnt but instinctive; in this case the entire species uses the same set of calls' (p. 6). With time, the language users within this population may have 'reached a critical mass' with the set calls developing into a pre-language and consequently dialects and 'mutually unintelligible pre-languages' (Nichols, 2012, p. 6).

However, polygenesis is more widely accepted. From what is described above, comparative linguists have reconstructed from the 7,139 languages spoken in the world (Ethnologue, 2021) a number of language families connected to different protolanguages. This has led to the belief that monogenesis is unlikely (Ke & Holland, 2006; Nichols, 2012), and the evidence from fields such as archaeology, psychology, evolutionary biology, anatomy and physiology, anthropology, and ethology supports the theory of polygenesis. The table below summarises some of what these fields have contributed to our understanding of the origins of language.

Table 2.1 Contributions of scientific fields to the origins of language

Scientific field	Description	Contribution
Archaeology	the study of ancient remains	The size of the human skull (cranial cavity), may indicate the development of the human brain and the capacity for primitive man to handle complex forms of language over time.
Psychology	the study of the human mind	Man has evolved from a primitive man to a more developed being and can acquire language.
Evolutionary Biology	the study of the origins of species and their evolution because of needing to adapt to their environment	This view holds that humans communicate with language as a need, that it's necessary for survival.
Anatomy and Physiology	the study of the parts of the body and how the body works	Humans possess the organs of speech, and there are specific areas of the brain associated with language.
Ethology	the study of animal behaviour	Man, as an animal, is a social being, necessitating the need to communicate with language.
Anthropology	the study of human societies and their culture	Since the existence of man, culture has been an integral part of society transmitted through language.

Activity 4: Learning outcome 1

What is the key difference between the two broad theories on the origins of language—monogenesis and polygenesis?

Why do most language theorists support polygenesis?

Teacher educator guidance

After student teachers share with each other, have volunteers share their answers.

2.6

Design features of language: What differentiates human communication from animal communication

In this section, we'll investigate the **design features of language**. In other words, features of the way human language works or is organised that makes it different from other forms of communication. First, we'll look at the design features as put forth by Charles Hockett. His original list included thirteen design features which he believed were universal features of all the world's languages (Hockett, 1960). Later, he expanded this list to include sixteen features; these are included in Table 2.2 with the final three features at the end of the list. After this, we'll explore the work of a more recent comparative linguist, Ray Jackendoff.

Teacher educator guidance

Help students consider whether each of the design features in Table 2.2 also applies to animal communication systems. For example, one essential feature of human language is productivity/creativity. Do we find this feature in animal communication?

Table 2.2 Hockett's design features of human language

Feature	Description
Vocal-Auditory Channel	Language allows us to speak and listen freely without necessarily using other means of communication like gestures or body language.
Rapid Fading	Language disappears after it is spoken, thus making writing an important tool for making language permanent.
Broadcast Transmission and Directional Reception	Sound is omnidirectional; we have no control over the sound of our speech in terms of the extent of the broadcast and direction. However, speech can be traced back to the speaker unidirectionally.
Interchangeability	We can reproduce language if we can understand it.
Total/Complete Feedback	We can hear what we are saying when we say it and are able to correct our speech as needed.
Specialisation	The essential nature of language is that it is meant to mean something, to provide a signal.
Semanticity	Words have meanings which are tied to things in the real world.
Arbitrariness	Words in a language have no direct association with their referents (the objects/people they refer to in the real or imaginary world); words are simply agreed upon by language users.
Discreteness	Words in a language are separable, they do not blend into each other; they tend to have discernible boundaries.
Displacement	Language allows humans to talk about things not present at the time of speaking or place.
Productivity/ Creativity	Language uses a limited (finite) number of elements, e.g. sounds, words to talk about an unlimited (infinite) number of ideas, emotions, etc.
Traditional/Cultural Transmission	Learning of language is transmitted through language from generation to generation, but language can change over time.
Duality of Patterning	Human language can be analysed at two levels: sound level (meaningless units) and word level (meaningful units). For example, the words here consist of letters (sounds) that individually don't make sense but when patterned together (e.g. *cat*) we have a meaningful word.
Prevarication	Language doesn't always convey truth; we can use language to lie or make hypothetical statements.
Learnability	Languages are learnable. They, of course, are learnt easier in childhood.
Reflexiveness	We can use language to talk about language (*metalanguage: words like verb, noun, subject, etc. are metalinguistic words as they enable us to talk about language*).

Teacher educator guidance

Interchangeability: Some animals have distinct ways of communicating that are gender specific. In other words, female animals may not be able to mimic the same communication that male animals do because their communication may serve a gender-specific purpose.

Traditional/cultural transmission: If we take English as a case in point, we notice the historical development of language (Old English—thou, thee, thine; Modern English—you, yours).

Duality of Patterning: In English, there are 44 phonemes which can then be manipulated to form syllables, morphemes, and sentences. In many Bantu languages, the phonemes are fewer.

Although some of the design features are shared with other forms of animal communication, they may be different qualitatively; other features such as productivity, duality of patterning, etc. may not be found in animal communication. Certainly, humans' ability to communicate with language is extraordinary.

Jackendoff (2002) has conceived of these design features as innovations. His articulation of the innovations is slightly different in that they're presented through a series of eight stages, adding more depth to the topic for a more comprehensive understanding (see Table 2.3 below) (Jackendoff, 2002; Zuidema & Verhagen, 2010). An explanation of the table follows the table.

Table 2.3 Jackendoff's innovative features of language through stages

Stage	Innovation
I	The use of symbols in a non-situation-specific manner
II	The ability to use and acquire an open, unlimited class of symbols
III	A generative, combinatorial phonological system (like Hockett's Productivity/Creature feature)
IV	The ability to build larger utterances from a 'concatenation' or series of symbols
V	The beginnings of a phase structure/word order: *horse white eat hay*
VI	A hierarchical phase structure with more elaboration: *tall horse with white mane eat yellow hay*
VII	Developed vocabulary for relational concepts (i.e. adverbs, prepositions)
VIII	Development of inflectional morphology and grammatical functions

Jackendoff's (2002) stages of innovation demonstrate language in a developmental way while also showing that language has unique features. The stages originate from the use of symbols which further evolve into a larger and open class of symbols and then into a system of sounds that are capable of combination and regeneration. This leads to the construction of larger utterances of speech, resulting in 'protolanguage'. Language then continues to evolve its word structure until a more complex word structure develops along with vocabulary that can relate aspects of time and space. The final stage adds inflectional morphology and grammatical functions resulting in the modern language we have today (Jackendoff, 2002; Zuidema & Verhagen, 2010).

Activity 5: Learning outcomes 3 and 4

Review the design features as outlined by Hockett (1960) and Jackendoff (2002). How have these comparative linguists contributed uniquely to what we understand about language?

At this point, how do you think this information applies to literacy and language teaching and learning?

Teacher educator guidance

Student teachers should be engaged in this discussion with their peers. Ask students to share their thoughts before moving on.

2.6.1
Implications of the design features of language to literacy and language

As a general principle, knowledge about the design features of language helps us to appreciate that language is a special form of communication unlike the communication systems of other animals. Moreover, these features of human language are universal. Regardless of ethnicity or culture, we all possess the ability to learn and use language to interact with the world. For the purposes of this section, the following design features have a direct bearing on classroom activities and uptake of language. First, the interchangeability and learnability of language entails that irrespective of the learners' linguistic background, when exposed to the medium of instruction, whether English or any local language, such learners can learn said language. Similarly, the design feature of reflexiveness provide us with a metalanguage, a language to talk about language. Having a metalanguage gives us the tools to develop metalinguistic awareness. We are able to step aside and study language as an object. As briefly discussed in the first chapter, systemic functional linguists

study how the form of a language relates to its meaning. Systemic functional linguistics has direct application for the classroom, which will be made more evident in the next chapter on the functions of language. Yet, human language is even more complex than this. Other manifestations of language are discussed next.

2.7
Other manifestations of language

Building on the discussion about the design features of language, in this section we wish to show the different ways in which language appears or manifests in the real world. The essence of this is to demonstrate that spoken language is not the only mode of communication. There are other ways language takes form. This is because 'when we study human language, we are approaching what some might call the 'human essence', the distinctive qualities of mind that are, so far as we know, unique to man' (Chomsky, 2006). This means that part of what a student teacher must know about language is its manifestation, as well as having the linguistic knowledge about the languages concerned. Linguistic knowledge entails, among other things, having the capacity:

- *to produce sounds that signify certain meanings*
- *to understand or interpret the sounds produced by others*
- *to appreciate both contextual and non-contextual utterances in communication*
- *to know which sounds are found in that language and which sounds are not*

The above is what speakers of a language know although they might not explain it; it is tacit knowledge. This tacit knowledge of both the phonetic and phonemic systems of a particular language is dealt with in chapter 5 on the levels of linguistic analysis.

In thinking about language, we turn to Crystal's (1997) classification of the various manifestations of language. Crystal (1997) lists five different manifestations of language as shown below.

Auditory-vocal	Visual	Tactile	Olfactory	Gustatory
(hearing/sound-based)	(sight-based)	(touch-based)	(smell-based)	(taste-based)

For the purposes of this module, only the first three are discussed.

2.7.1

Auditory-vocal channel

As one of the major ways in which language manifests, the auditory-vocal system permits humans to use speech, which is transmitted by sound using the organs of speech. In this respect, language manifests as linguistic signals/signs such as words and utterances. From chapter 1 through chapter 5, the definition of language has been offered and the majority of the definitions see language as the spoken mode. Similarly, in the module, especially the chapter on the origins of language, most of the theories are skewed towards the spoken mode. The point to underscore here is that even if a learner cannot read or write, at least he or she can use the spoken mode of communication, as long as such a learner has no hearing impairment. Thus, most children come to the classroom with some linguistic resource, which the teacher should use as a stepping-stone for teaching and learning.

2.7.2

Sign language

The second known manifestation of language visually is sign language. Linguists agree that sign language is a language par excellence, which, in the absence of the spoken mode, becomes a communicative tool. For, sign language has the capacity to express the same complex and highly structured messages as speech. In fact, Crystal (1997) reminds us that sign language has its own grammar: all levels of linguistic analysis, e.g. syntax, morphology, or the lexicon. There are even different dialects of sign language: American Sign Language (ASL), British Sign Language (BSL), and Zambian Sign Language (ZSL). The acquisition of sign language is also very similar in terms of stages to verbal languages. The essence of recognising sign language as a legitimate language type lies in the effort to call for inclusivity by inviting teachers to exploit other available semiotic resources for meaning making within the classroom.

2.7.3

Written system

We note that while this is arguably a language skill which is learnt as a literacy skill, it has some biological foundation, as evidenced from dyslexics (see chapter 5, Psycholinguistics and the module on literacy). Suffice it to say that the written language system is another manifestation of language which has developed its own conventions, as noted in chapter 1. In chapter 8, we will also learn that there are different writing systems based on different levels of linguistic analysis: word, syllable, and phoneme. Learners connect what they know about the spoken language to the graphic or written form.

2.7.4

Tactile mode

Also referred to as Deaf-blind language system, tactile is another important manifestation of language. In this chapter we restrict the discussion to braille. Braille is a sophisticated writing system which requires touch to read off the messages. Like sign language, braille can be used to convey any message on any topic. Thus, braille has the capability to convey highly complex and detailed messages, provided the language (or code) used is known by all in the community of practice. This includes the capacity to communicate in detail about the past, future, here and now, there and then (see the design feature of displacement in this chapter).

Activity 6: Learning outcome 4

In what ways are some of the manifestations of language used in literacy teaching? Ask students if they have come across literacy methods that employ, for example, some signing, e.g. Jolly phonics, where children associate some gestures of hands with letter sounds. What are the advantages or disadvantages of doing this?

Teacher educator guidance

Ensure you emphasise the point that oral language is not the only meaning-making resource in the classroom. Instead, all language forms co-work to create meaning both by the teacher and the learner. Also ensure that you discuss the advantages of doing so.

2.8
Chapter summary

In this chapter, we have built on our knowledge about language by exploring what language theorists and linguists have discovered so far about the origins of language and the design features of language, including the many other manifestations of language. One could argue that the answer to the origins of language remains inconclusive because there is much that we cannot know about how and when language emerged. Some rely on myths and theological hypotheses grounded in monogenesis, whereas others contend that there is no possible way other than polygenesis. Regardless of the claims on the origins of language, human language is unique compared to other forms of animal communication. The evidence from both nonlinguistics and linguistics shows that for humankind to adapt to this ever-changing environment, they needed to develop the ability to use language. Furthermore, the evidence from human anatomy and physiology, especially the presence of organs of speech and the brain areas of language, affirms the claim that man was and is indeed a *homo loquens*—a speaking man.

2.9
Assessment of learning

1. Describe the two opposing perspectives on the origins of language.

2. Explain at least three other nonlinguistic theories on the origins of language.

3. What makes human language different from animal language? Provide examples from the text to support your answer.

4. Reflection: What new information have you learnt about language, and how will you use this information to inform your teaching?

CHAPTER 3

Functions of Language

Functions of Language

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters we have referred in one way or another to functions of language. We have seen that language has been used by human beings to cooperate, regulate behaviour, entertain and so on. In short, it can be said that language has enabled human beings to reach the technological and social advances that they have attained because they have been able to communicate and pass on ideas, skills, express emotions and so on with each other. In this chapter we focus on the functions that language performs in the social life of people. By function we mean the uses to which stretches of language are put in communication. We also saw that in language teaching, the focus should be on both form and function so that learners are able to see how they can express various language functions with different forms of language.

Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.4   Functions of language

1.2.4.1   Explain the functions of language according to M.A.K. Halliday

1.2.4.2   Relate the functions of language to the classroom situation

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1   explain Michael Halliday's functions of language

2   explain how children learn functions in their language development according to Halliday

3   discuss the implications of the functions of language to language and literacy instruction.

Instructional materials

Student module

Key terms

Systemic functional linguistics

Systemic-Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory of language centred around the notion of language function. SFL places the function of language as central in terms of what language does and how it does it.

Systemic functional grammar

This is a type of grammar concerned with the social and pragmatic functions of language, relating these to both formal syntactic properties and prosodic properties.

Metalanguage

Metalanguage refers to any language or symbolic system used to discuss, describe, or analyse another language. This is different from object language, which is the language being discussed by metalanguage.

Ideational metafunction

A function of language that interprets our *material* experiences (external world), *mental* experiences (inner world), and *relational* experiences (identification and classification of experiences) (Schleppegrell, 2013). In other words, the ideational metafunction refers to what is being talked about.

Interpersonal metafunction

An appraisal system from which attitudes are represented according to their *polarity* (positive, negative, neutral) and *force* (intensely, softly). Put differently, the interpersonal metafunction refers to the relationships that exist between the speaker and his addressee as well as between the speaker and his own message.

Textual metafunction

The textual metafunction is that part of the meaning potential which makes a text into a text and involves phenomena such as thematic structure, information structure, and coherence.

Register

Register refers to how a language user varies his or her speech according to local or situational aspects such as where the language is being used, for what purposes, how it's organised or presented, and whether there is interaction between a speaker and an audience.

Genre

How language is organised to express various social purposes in such forms as poetry, essays, stories and so on.

Tenor

Tenor refers to the participants in a particular discourse, how they relate to each other and their purposes in discourse.

Field

Field denotes the subject matter or content being discussed in written and spoken discourse. In other words, field refers to the presentation of ideas as they are represented through the grammar of language (e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions and other parts of speech) (Schleppegrell, 2004) and how this grammar reflects the participants, processes, circumstances, and connections within language (Humphrey, 2020).

Mode

Mode refers to the channel of communication, such as monologic/dialogic or spoken/written, including visual contact.

3.4

Children's language development

Whole grammars have been developed to capture the way language is used to express various social functions, taking into consideration social-cultural contexts. In this chapter, we will consider how functions are classified and explained in one such grammar called **systemic functional grammar**. In particular, we present Michael Halliday's work on the functions of language. We will not, however, discuss how the grammar works because that is outside the scope of this chapter. You may consult the references if you want to delve deeper into this topic.

Systemic functional linguists view language as a social semiotic system, which means that language is a meaning-making system understood through its relationship with its environment or sociocultural context (Halliday, 2014). Michael Halliday's greatest contributions are seen in his proposal of functions of language and how they relate to children's language development, for instance how they learn how to mean.

According to Halliday (1978), although infants are unable to speak in the sense of not using words, they have a linguistic system. From a functional perspective, Halliday claimed that any consistent use of vocal noises and/or gestures by infants, if they can consistently be interpreted, can be considered to be instances of language. When a child produces a sound for the purpose of practising its articulation, this is not language, but if the sound produced is meant to attract the caregiver's attention—to communicate a meaning—this is language (Halliday, 1978: 19). Of course, a child will eventually acquire a mother tongue.

Halliday (1978) studied his own infant child, Nigel, and based on his findings, proposed three phases of language development. Phase one was the child's initial functional linguistic system from 6 to 18 months. This was the phase where the child produced vocal noises and gestures, some of which were interpretable. The second phase was the transition from the child's first language to the adult language (the mother tongue) which lasted from 18 to 24 months. The third phase, which was the learning of the mother tongue, followed from 2 years onwards (Thwaite, 2019). Halliday was able to formulate a list of the functions of his child's language. He called these micro-functions to differentiate them from the macro-functions, the category into which he later proposed to classify language functions in general. Table 3.1 below gives the full list of the functions. Halliday claimed that these functions did not all appear at once in the child's 'language' but grew from at first just two functions (and one or two meanings) for example at 9 months, to four at 10 and a half months (with at least 12 meanings). At the beginning of the second phase, around 16 and a half months, Nigel had six functions and could express 50 meanings. Therefore, the use of functions and the ability to express meaning increased with age—or as Halliday put it, as the child learnt how to mean.

Table 3.1 Phase 1: Seven microfunctions of children's language development

Language function	Definition	Meaning
Instrumental	used to have his/her needs met	'I want/I would like...'
Regulatory	used to get caregivers to attend to her/him	Do this
Interactional	used to develop social relationships, desire to interact	Me and you
Personal	child's awareness of how language forms his/her individuality, a process of self-awareness	Here I am
Heuristic	used for exploring and learning about the world; knows the difference between a question and an answer	'How does...?' 'What is...?'
Imaginative	language used for the creation of one's environment	'Let's pretend/play...' hides behind his/her palm
Representational/ Informative	awareness of how language is used to convey a message that may include the 'processes, persons, objects, abstractions, qualities, state, and relations of the real world' (Halliday, 2004, p. 276)	I want to show/tell you...

Although these functions follow a developmental sequence, the sequence is not entirely linear. Halliday found that the instrumental, regulatory, interactional, and personal functions appeared before the heuristic function, and all the preceding functions came before the informative/representational. In Phase II of children's language development, grammar emerges when children acquire the vocabulary of the language. This leads to increased complexity in the previous functions, including the combination of functions and the ability to interact through dialogue. Thwaite (2019) described this phase as transitioning towards 'multifunctional utterances' that are 'organised into macrofunctions' (p. 46). When a child has mastered grammar and dialogue, they move to Phase III, the adult system of language. This will be discussed below. Some important implications of Halliday's ideas about language development are that children acquire what Halliday referred to as meaning

potential. Even in the pre-linguistic stage, before they can use words, children are motivated to convey some meaning or intension through the vocal noises they make. Later language development builds on this foundation of meaning making. They start using it to learn, as in the heuristic function: children ask questions insensately as soon as they start speaking the mother tongue. Teachers in early grades can exploit this natural curiosity children have to learn by making them ask and express their ideas and experiences in speech and later in writing instead of always being subjected to listening to the teacher. Children have also to learn how to interact appropriately with peers and adults.

Activity 1: Learning outcomes 2 and 3

1. Summarise children's language development by using the descriptions of the seven microfunctions.
2. Compare your summary with a partner and add to your summary if needed.
3. Then reflect and share your answers to the following questions:
   a. What are the implications of weak language skills upon entering the primary grades?
   b. What are the implications of children who enter the classroom having a different mother tongue (MT) than most of the children in class?

3.4.1

Metafunctions of language

In the third phase of language development, children enter the realm of adult language. To understand the macro (big) functions of language Halliday used to classify how adults mean or use language to perform social functions, we should introduce a few terms from **systemic functional linguistics (SFL)**. The context in which language occurs can be the situational context, for example one where people are physically present talking to each other (say a sitting room) or it can be the wider cultural context. We will come back to the latter in the discussion of genre. The situational context has the following three features: what is happening, who is taking part, and what role language is playing in this. These three features determine the meanings intended and how those meanings are expressed. This is what is called **register**. For example, a group of teachers meeting to discuss literacy teaching will certainly use the type of language (vocabulary or even phrasing) that is in keeping with literacy education. If the context was a court room, one would expect to hear more legal language and so on. Language varies according to these contexts of use: register is the connection between the situational factors and language forms.

The three features of the context: what is happening, who are taking part, and what is the role of language are referred to as the *field*, the *tenor* and the *mode*, in systemic functional grammar, respectively. These same features can be associated individually with the way language functions at a global level. Language that focuses on representing what is happening, or the **field**, the subject matter of the discussion, for example, is referred to as the **ideational metafunction** of language. That which is used to refer to the contextual feature of **tenor**, the participants who are interacting, is called the **interpersonal metafunction**. And finally, the function related to the role of language, how it is organised, is related to the **mode** and is the **textual metafunction**.

Figure 3.1 provides a conceptual representation of what has been discussed here. It shows the relationships of the three features of register: *field*, *tenor*, and *mode* to the metafunctions of language: ideational, interpersonal, and textual, respectively. These are shown to be part of the situational context, the inner ring. In the outer ring we have the cultural context in which genre is found. We discuss below the metafunctions and the related concepts in Figure 3.1.
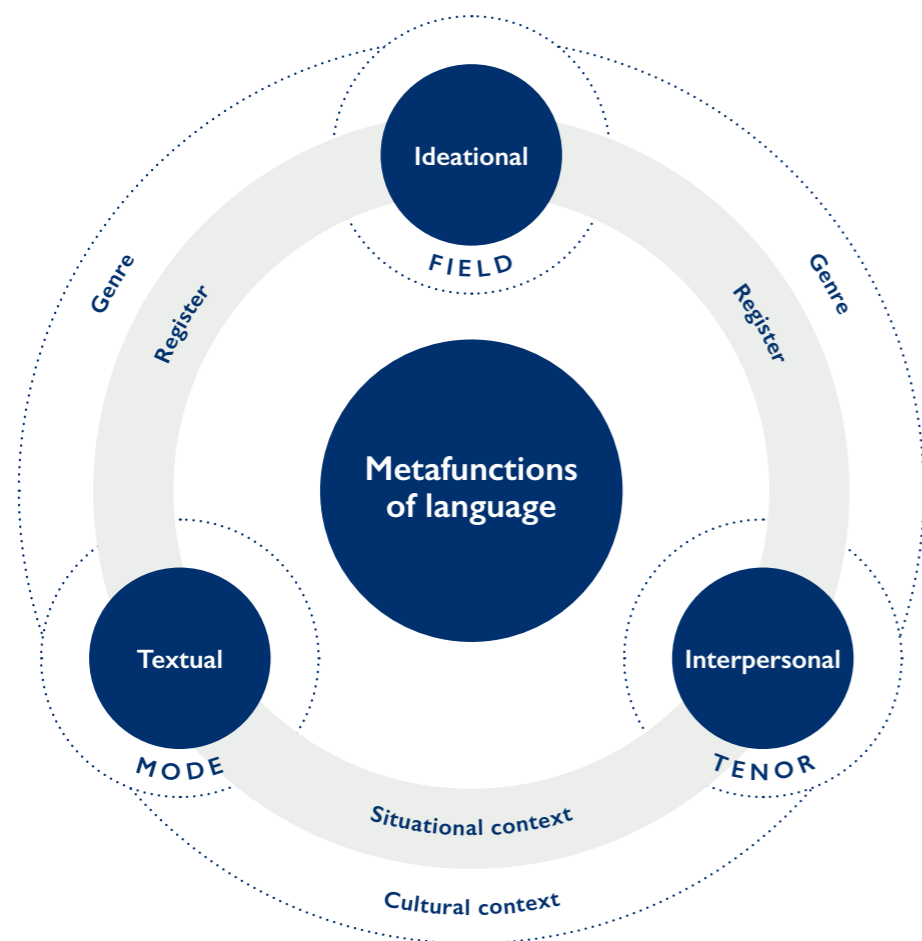
Figure 3.1 Metafunctions of language and contexts

The ideational metafunction (experiential) and field register

The ideational metafunction is concerned with the ways in which we interpret our experiences of reality, the external material, and our inner mental worlds with 'what kind of activities are undertaken, how participants in these activities are described, how they are classified and what they are composed of' (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 66). Halliday (1975) referred to the ideational function as 'language about something' or the content function of language.

The examples in Table 3.2 should help clarify what is meant by talking about experiences of the material and mental worlds and relations (cf. Ryshina-Pankova et al., 2021; Humphrey, 2020; Moore et al., 2018; Schleppegrell, 2004).

Table 3.2 Metalanguage and examples for ideational experiences

Experience	Metalanguage	Examples
Material	doing, happening	Handili is *building* a tower while his mother *watches* closely.
Mental	sensing	He *feels* proud of himself. His mother *thought* about how he *reminded* her of his father.
Relational	being and having	He *is* fortunate that he *has* the materials to build his tower.

These are but a handful of examples of the different ways we use language to describe our experiences. We add another layer to the discussion as we move next to the interpersonal metafunction and its associated register element, tenor.

3.4.3

The interpersonal metafunction (social interaction)

Language allows us to express the details of our experiences, but it also allows us to interact with our world and others. The interpersonal metafunction serves as the resource for enacting speech functions such as offering, stating, commanding, questioning, etc. (Halliday, 2014). These involve playing social roles which take into consideration the status of people interacting and their relationships. Halliday (2014) identified speech roles in the interpersonal metafunction to be those of either *giving* or *demanding*, and this could mean the giving or demanding of *goods and services* or *information*. The table below provides examples for clarification.

Table 3.3 Examples of speech's role and functions

Role	Goods or services	Speech function	Information	Speech function
giving	Would you like this book?	offer	Banda is giving him the book.	statement
demanding	Give him the book!	command	What is he giving him?	question

As can be seen in the table above, the examples of giving and demanding are conveyed through four speech functions, but there is also a variation in mood as determined by whether the sentences were statements, commands, or questions. Consider how meaning changes when you change some of the attitudinal features of the sentences below.

Table 3.4 Tenor variations in sentences that change meaning

Sentence 1	Sentence 2
Would you like this book?	Should I give you this book?
Give him the book!	Give him the book NOW!
Banda is giving him the book.	Banda will probably give him the book.

Moore et al. (2018) described the interpersonal metafunction as an appraisal system from which attitudes are represented according to their *polarity* (positive, negative, neutral) and *force* (intensely, softly). These examples express the metalanguage of the interpersonal metafunction and can be taught explicitly to children so that they are not only able to recognise attitudinal aspects in the speech of others or in text but also learn how they can use these tools for their own language use.

Activity 2: Learning outcomes 1 and 3

1. With examples, explain the meaning of interpersonal metafunction.
2. With the use of examples, explain the meaning of ideational metafunction.
3. How does the interpersonal metafunction affect the ideational metafunction in language use?
4. Explain how the relationship between ideational and interpersonal metafunctions affect or influence language teaching in schools.
5. Discuss as a group or class how the seven microfunctions in early childhood are related to the two metafunctions of language here: ideational and interpersonal.

3.4.4

The textual metafunction

The ideational metafunction and interpersonal metafunction work together to communicate our human experiences, but it is through the textual metafunction that this communication is organised to form a cohesive and coherent message through *mode* (which may be spoken, written, non-verbal or multimodal) and to communicate purposes (e.g. to persuade, to explain, to inform, to describe. This means that to communicate meanings, people choose the appropriate channels of communication—for example, the spoken form of the language or the written form, and so on. The form the text takes depends on the purpose of the message. For example, one can give a persuasive political speech, explain things, discuss, narrate, and so on. These choices depend on socially accepted ways of packaging information, that is, how to organise information to achieve social purposes. These are the **genres** which we discuss briefly below.

3.4.4.1

Genre

Martin (2009, 2014) expands on the metafunctions and their contexts by including genre, a transcendent feature of the metafunctions of language. In a sense, genre fine-tunes language because it accounts for the cultural aspects that influence language variation and choice beyond the situational conditions. For example, consider how narrative stories may be told through short stories, folktales, legends, or myths and how these stories have specific qualities, structures, or other elements indicative of the culture from which they are derived. To take folktales as an example, each culture has a way in which these stories are told: how to begin them—e.g. in Bemba, *Pantile akantu* is literally: 'There was a thing', equivalent to *Once upon a time* in English—how to establish the setting, to introduce the conflict, and to resolve it and so on. When one does not follow the generic accepted format, people consider that storytelling to be unsuccessful.

There are also accepted ways of organising written texts, such as arguments, reports, etc., and even the expected linguistic features which people follow. Genres help to realise the metafunctions of language discussed above. In a story, for example, there will be ideational related as well as interpersonal ones.

Activity 3: Learning outcomes 1 and 3

1. How do the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions of language work together?

2. Explain the relationship between field, tenor, and mode in language use.

3. What is the relationship between the textual metafunction of language and genres?

4. What are genres?

5. How would you apply the relationship between ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions of language to the teaching of language on one hand and literacy on the other hand in a multilingual classroom?

3.5

SFL's applicability to the classroom

Running through a number of chapters in this module have been arguments about which view of language is more important than the other: the formalist or functionalist. Formalists pay more attention to the structures of language, such as sounds, words, and how these combine into grammatically correct sentences. They are not very interested in meaning. Functionalists, including systemic functionalists, pay more attention to what language is used for in social life. Their units of meaning are functions such as offering, requesting, apologising, and so on. The linguistic structures for functionalists are seen as realisations of meaning or function (how it is expressed). In similar ways, language acquisition was also seen to follow from what was considered to be 'language': formalists saw language acquisition as basically acquiring rules of how to construct a grammar. Functionalists like Halliday see *language development* (he didn't like to use *acquisition* because it was like obtaining an object (Halliday, 1978)) as learning how to mean, to express functions.

For teachers, the two ways of looking at language should be considered complementary. Language has form and it is used to express meanings or functions. It is therefore important that teachers develop competence in understanding language structure as well as its functions in both the first language, or LOI in lower grades, and the second language. They should also be competent in understanding the metalanguage, words used to describe language (e.g. verbs, nouns, and so on), to effectively teach language structure. Learners, on the other hand, have to be helped to develop language awareness in the LOI, which may be their mother tongue or familiar language. This is important in helping them to see how the written form works. For example, the orthography (spelling) of a language is better understood and used when a person knows how it applies to the morphological system of the language. A case in point is how and why long vowels are represented in the spelling of Zambian languages. It is also important for children to appreciate the way their language works as part of being educated. They should not just focus on learning about other languages without paying attention to their own language and having opportunities to compare the structures of the MT and the foreign language.

Learners also need to learn about the structure of English as a way of realising the various meanings they wish to express. We discuss ways in which this is done below.

In terms of language teaching methodology, which will be dealt with in the second-year modules, systemic functional grammar has helped bring in what has been called the humanistic approach to language teaching. The traditional methods of language teaching paid more attention to correct learning and use of language structures in isolation.

Learners memorised rules and wrote sentences that were decontextualised, which were meaningless but grammatically correct. Functional linguistics made educationists aware of the importance of seeing language as a social tool for expressing meanings in social interactions. Language is contextualised; it occurs among people in different social situations. Therefore, children have to learn languages through similar social interactions: learning has to be made meaningful. This is often done by using role plays and drama activities. This brought in communicative language teaching and the related concept of communicative competence. Language involves an understanding of the sociolinguistic context in which it exists and works, an understanding of the pragmatics of language use—how people use language in different social situations and how they manage their conversations or interactions. This type of teaching requires teachers to empower learners to take charge of their learning, to be learner-centred, in that they have to communicate and not just listen to teachers explaining language facts. The syllabus has also to change from listing language forms to listing language functions and how these are realised in language forms (exponents). Structures are taught as ways of expressing various meanings, taking into consideration situational factors—for example, how does one apologise to a headmistress or to a friend? What type of language is used to do this?

In terms of literacy, systemic functional grammar has helped to improve the teaching of composition by linking it directly to the idea of conveying different meanings. For example, teachers now have to focus on teaching compositions that are used to narrate, persuade, inform, discuss, explain, and so on. Learners have to be made familiar with genres: that pieces of writing have a generic form (how information is presented) as well as language features. Stories are different from essays, poetry, and so on. In literacy teaching too, systemic functional grammar has brought in some emphasis on using meaningful texts to teach reading instead of focusing on phonics alone. It has led to what is called *balanced literacy instruction*.

Troyan et al. (2019) drew from some of the literature on SFL (Derewianka, 2011; Eggins, 2004; Halliday, 2014) to create questions that teachers could use to bring learners' attention to the metalanguage of a specific genre. Their work with some minor adaptations is outlined in the tables below. They are attempting to apply concepts from SFL to these different text types.

Table 3.5 Sample questions for narratives for each metafunction and their associated unit of analysis

Metafunction and register	Questions	Unit of analysis
Ideational: FIELD	What happened at the beginning, middle, and end of the story?	process (verbs)
	Who is…doing, saying, sensing, being?	participant/nouns
	What is it like?	attributes/adjectives
	What are the details of the story?	circumstance (adverbs/adverb groups, prepositional phrases, noun groups)
Interpersonal: TENOR	What attitude is expressed by the character(s)?	positive vs. negative
	What is the intensity of the attitude expressed by the (character(s)?	word choice
Textual: MODE	How is the text structured?	theme-rheme (problem/solution, chronological order)
	How do the illustrations add meaning to the text?	images

Consider how language varies from narrative to expository text when the author's purpose may be to explain the process of an event (life cycle of a butterfly) or compare and contrast two topics of interest (the similarities and differences between two Zambian tribes).

Table 3.6 Sample questions for expository text for each metafunction and their associated unit of analysis

Metafunction and register	Questions	Unit of analysis
Ideational: FIELD	What is being described?	process (verbs)
	What is it like?	attributes/adjectives
	What are the details of the topic?	circumstance (adverbs/adverb groups, prepositional phrases, noun groups)
Interpersonal: TENOR	How does the author feel about the topic?	positive vs. negative
	What is the author's intensity of feelings about the topic?	word choice
Textual: MODE	How is the text structured?	theme/rheme text structure (compare/contrast; descriptive, chronological order/ procedural, cause and effect)
	How do the features of the text add meaning/help to understand the meaning of the text?	expository text features (headings/ subheadings, captions, photographs, diagrams, timelines)

Activity 4: Learning outcome 3

1. In reviewing Tables 3.5 and 3.6, what similarities and differences do you notice between the features and structures of narrative and expository text, and what implications does this have for the classroom?

2. How might you scaffold instruction to help students transition better between different genres?

3.6

Chapter summary

In this chapter we have seen how language can be viewed as a tool for expressing meanings. We have seen how Halliday applied this functional perspective the language development of children, that is, how they learn to express functions, and also adult language. The adult language is said to express three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual, and how these reflect the features of register: *field, tenor* and *mode*. We have also discussed how SFL has influenced language teaching methods by changing the focus from language structure to functions of language, thus making learning more humanistic and explicitly linking reading and writing skills.

3.7
Assessment of learning

1. Discuss how the following notions relate to each other:

   a. Field and ideational metafunction

   b. Tenor and interpersonal metafunction

   c. Mode and textual metafunction

2. What are the advantages of teaching metalanguage (the object language being the metalanguage)?

3. How does the knowledge of language functions help in the teaching of language on one hand and literacy on the other hand?

4. Apply the concept of metalanguage and object language to the following practices and methodologies:

   a. Translanguaging

   b. Grammar translation method

   c. Direct method

CHAPTER 4

Language Acquisition and Learning

Language Acquisition and Learning

INTRODUCTION

The teaching of language and literacy builds on the acquisition of the first language. This is the foundation for the development of listening, speaking, and later reading and writing. The study of children's language acquisition has also influenced theories of learning as well as language teaching. In this chapter, we will begin by comparing and contrasting the processes of language acquisition and language learning. Then we will explore theories of first language acquisition. Theories of language learning are discussed in the literacy module in chapter 5.

Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.5   Theories of language

    1.2.5.1   Analyse the theories of language acquisition and language learning

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1. distinguish between language acquisition and language learning

2. identify and describe developmental stages of language acquisition

3. compare theories of language acquisition

4. relate theories of language acquisition to the teaching of literacy and language.

4.2

Instructional materials

Student module

4.3

Key terms

Language acquisition

The process of how children become speakers of the language of the community or family in which they are born

Language learning

The formal or explicit teaching of language to a child or adult

Holophrastic stage

When children appear to use just one word to communicate a whole message

Telegraphic speech

In this phase, children start stringing together two or more words but omit some such as function words like articles or inflections in Bantu languages.

Behaviourist theory

A psychological theory of language acquisition which states that whatever children come to learn and know, they gain from the environment around them by imitation and reinforcement

Nativist theory

A language acquisition theory suggesting that children are born already programmed to acquire languages

Interactionist theory

A theory of language acquisition that combines behaviourism and nativism, acknowledging that part of learning language involves imitation and part involves what the child brings to the learning experience

4.4

Language acquisition and language learning

The term **language acquisition** is usually associated with the process of how children become speakers of the language of the community or family in which they are born. It thus refers to child language acquisition or first language acquisition. Language acquisition is a subconscious process. Children are not aware that they are acquiring a language. It is spontaneous and informal, as children acquire language while interacting with their caregivers or peers. They also acquire language merely by being exposed to the environment that uses the language. This informal and natural process requires no planning, only access to more and more complex language structures. This is why some language researchers have said it is more to do with what happens to the child rather than what the child does. Children are not aware of learning grammatical rules, although they can tell correct uses from incorrect uses of language as they become fluent users of the language. They may not be able to explain what is wrong in a sentence or phrase, but they develop an understanding that something is not right because it is different from what they are used to saying or hearing. Parent and other caregivers do not normally correct a child's language, but more often they try to understand what the child is saying and model the correct way of saying it for the child. For example, if a child points to a pint full of porridge and says 'want water', the parent may correct him and ask 'you want porridge?'

The term **language learning**, on the other hand, is used to refer to the formal or explicit teaching of language to a child or an adult. The formal part here refers to learning in an institution like a school, where time is allocated and there is a prescribed syllabus and methodology for teaching the language. The learner is very conscious of learning vocabulary, dialogue, grammar rules, language structures, etc. in a second or additional language. There are even assessments designed to measure learning.

Activity 1: Learning outcome 1

Discuss the difference between language acquisition and language learning, and then write your own definition for each.

4.4.1

Developmental stages of language acquisition

Although there is some disagreement among researchers regarding *how* children learn language, there is general agreement about *what* happens during the acquisition of language. Several developmental stages of language acquisition have been identified. What most of the researchers have noticed about monolingual, first language acquisition, is that children, no matter where they live or what language they are learning, seem to pass through very similar stages of language development. Children may pass through each stage slightly earlier or later than others; however, the order in which these stages occur appears to be universal.

Table 4.1 below (based on Aitchison, 1983, p. 90; Myhill, 2010, p. 220) is a simplified outline of some of the milestones achieved by all children when learning to talk. It is important to point out that children initially have to perceive speech sounds before they can produce them. Children have to learn to discriminate between sounds they hear, to tell which sounds are merely environmental noises unrelated to speech. They are also able to identify the voices of their mothers and even other caregivers.

In Table 4.1, the left-hand column gives the approximate age in months when the milestones or developmental stage on the right are reached or achieved. From birth to 2 months, the baby cries and this has been said to be a form of communication on the part of a child as was discussed in chapter 3 in relation to how children learn language functions by Halliday (2004). For example, the child will mainly vocalise expressions of discomfort, but this is also the first use of the vocal organs (speech organs). One of the sounds babies produce in this period is cooing; it is a way of exercising their vocal organs. Within this early pre-language stage, the child shows signs of wanting to interact with caregivers by establishing eye contact with a caregiver holding or tending to her/him. The child also smiles at the caregivers. These are paralinguistic features that in later life people use to establish rapport with people with whom they are communicating. After 2 months, vocalisations continue and the baby can be heard producing vowel-like sounds. At about 6 months, the baby will begin to babble, combining vowel sounds with consonant sounds to create consonant vowel (CV) syllables such as 'da-da-da' or 'ma-ma-ma'. During this stage, children also make other noises such as blowing saliva bubbles, gurgling and spluttering, as well as engage in vocal play to manipulate pitch (squealing and growling), volume (screaming, yelling), and nasal murmurs and snorts. Children also produce intonation patterns as they babble. They begin to imitate the intonation patterns of the ambient speech they hear around them. From a distance, this might sound like language, but upon clearly hearing what is produced, the listener will

hear no actual words—only rhythmic, syllable-like sequences. No other animal behaves this way or produces any behaviour similar to babbling. Some researchers believe this helps the infant gain control of the motor systems of speech to prepare them for language production.

Table 4.1 Language development milestones

Months	Language development milestone
0–2	Crying, eye contact, smiling, cooing
2–6	Vocalisation, especially of vowel sounds
6–10	Babbling, repetitive consonant sounds, syllables (e.g. mamama, dadada, intonation patterns)
9–18	Holophrastic (one-word) stage; development of 10–40 single words or word stems
18–24	Vocabulary explosion, beginning of two-word stage; mini-sentences with simple meanings ('want water')—about 50+ words
24–30	Telegraphic speech, early multi-word, multi-morpheme stage
30–36	Later multi-word stage, articles, prepositions and verb endings
48	Onset of full sentences, more complex grammar, negation, past, questions, future tense, complex ideas

Infants are able to understand some words in the speech directed at them around the age of 5 months but it takes them almost a year before they can produce their first words. These words are normally nouns: the names of objects and people around them. Babies do not produce these words in full at first, but in a deformed form. Some examples are:

- *Omission or deletion of parts of words (e.g.* imbwa *becomes* bwa *for 'dog').*
- *Substitution of one fricative with another (e.g.* fwiti *for 'sweet';* ncima *for* nshima*).*
- *Stopping – substituting a stop [p] for a fricative [s] (e.g.* isabi *becomes* ipabi *or* icabi *for 'fish').*

The single word stage has been called the **holophrastic stage** because children appear to use just one word to communicate a whole message. For example, a Bemba child may use the expression *paapa* 'carry on the back' whose adult target word is *mpaapa* 'carry me (on your back)' to express that desire to be carried on the mother's back (Mwansa, 2011, p. 142). The number of words the children are able to produce at this stage increases rapidly from a few to some 30 or 40 words.

Activity 2: Learning outcome 2

What is the nature of the children's early speech as you have experienced it from your siblings or your own children (if applicable)? What differences do you notice between child and adult language? Can you classify these linguistically?

Teacher educator guidance

Student teachers may create a chart in their notebook to compare and contrast early speech with adult language.

In the **telegraphic speech** phase, children start stringing together two or more words. This is the beginning of the development of morpho-syntax or grammar. The words used are typically content words—words that carry their own meanings such as nouns and verbs. Phrase examples include: *daddy gone* (Myhill, 2010, p.219) and *peela kaka* 'give milk'. What is noticeable from these two examples is that the children appear to put words together in the correct syntactic order—nouns appearing before verbs. There is also the omission of function words, which are words required to make the sentences grammatically correct—such as articles, prepositions, and inflections or parts of words that indicate such things as tense, number (singular and plural), and so on. In the English example, there is the omission of 'has', an auxiliary verb used to indicate tense. In the Bemba example, there are omissions of the object prefix 'm' in *mpeela* 'give me'; the noun prefix 'umu' in *umukaka* 'milk'. This two-word stage has been called telegraphic speech because children omit certain words or morphemes.

In subsequent months, children acquire more complex features of their languages. By the age of four they can be said to have acquired the grammar of their languages.

Activity 3: Learning outcome 2

What are the stages of first language acquisition? Identify characteristics and sample language patterns for each stage from what you have observed among your siblings or children.

Teacher educator guidance

Student teachers may draw a chart in their notebooks to organise the information to answer the questions. They can then share with peers.

Theories of language acquisition

How can this remarkable feat of rapid language acquisition by children be explained? There are several theories explaining how children acquire languages.

We know that it is not possible for a child to learn how to speak a specific language if he or she has not been exposed to any human language. Therefore, language input is a requirement. If this were not the case, a child in Zambia would grow up speaking Hebrew or some other foreign language. This would tell us that language was already in the child's brain. We can clearly see that the development of language without language input does not happen.

However, all children, excluding those with physical challenges like defects to the speech mechanism or hearing, eventually speak the language of their environment. Speech develops even if the child is intellectually poor. This indicates that language development is something that all children appear to be equipped to do if they are exposed to language input. The question that has divided researchers is whether children actually have some language structure in their minds at birth or if everything they come to know about language is found in the speech that they hear around them in the environment.

4.5.1

Behaviourist theory: The role of nurture

Behaviourism suggests that children are born with blank minds; they have no pre-existing knowledge of anything. They are blank slates—or *tabula rasa*, to use a Latin phrase. Behaviourism states that whatever children come to learn and know, they gain from the environment around them. From this view, behaviourists find that children learn languages by paying attention to what is said around them. The child is rewarded for using language and, therefore, repeats and builds on those behaviours. For example, a baby who sees her siblings calling a tall man *daddy* every time he appears may one day imitate her siblings and call the man *daddy*. When the man praises the child for saying this, the child will feel happy and repeat this whenever he appears. It becomes a learnt habit; a language habit. This is how B.F. Skinner (1957), one of the most famous behaviourists, basically used to explain how children acquire what he called *verbal behaviour* or *language*. In the example above, the word *daddy* uttered by the child's siblings whenever their daddy appeared is the *stimulus*. The child's imitation of this, is the *response* and the praise from the other children or the father is the *reinforcement*. In this case, it is positive reinforcement because it is praise. It is this reinforcement that encourages the child every time she sees the father to say 'daddy'.

So, it becomes a *conditioned response*. If she was not praised, that is, negatively reinforced, she might not continue saying the word. Skinner applied to human learning ideas he and other behaviourist psychologists used in training animals such as rats or pigeons to perform tricks by rewarding them with food when they did what was required, and thus conditioning them to those habits.

4.5.2

Nativist theory: The role of nature

Nativism, the opposing view, suggests that we're born with a specific language-learning area in our brain. Nativists believe that children are wired to learn language, regardless of their environment and point out a number of reasons why the behaviourists' explanation does not account for language development. First, the rate of language acquisition is very fast. From birth to 5 years, a child will fully acquire the grammatical structure of his language. Second, children acquire language effortlessly—it happens *to* them; it is not what *they* do. They are not instructed. Third, as we have mentioned before, children pass through very similar developmental stages in the acquisition of their languages. Nativists have interpreted this to mean that the development of language has a biological basis; it is like it grows and matures just like a baby learns to walk or stand.

Chomsky (1987) believed that children are born with a language acquisition device (LAD). He referred to this as a mental faculty that enables an infant to process, comprehend, and produce language. Chomsky suggested that all humans are born with an innate universal grammar that includes a system of general principles and accompanying parameters about language and its use. Nativists believe that children use the language input around them to check against the universal grammar system that they are born with. For example, all languages have noun phrases, but these noun phrases are structured in different ways. The noun which is the head of the phrase might come first or last in the noun phrase. In Bantu languages, the noun comes first: *Umuntu umutali* or 'person tall', while in English, the noun comes last, 'tall person'. We can call these two *parameters* in which nouns occur in languages. Nativists believe that a child acquiring a language already possesses the general principles of language, so she merely fixes (chooses) the right parameters. For example, the child may fix the idea that in Lozi, for example, the noun is in an initial position.

4.5.3

Interactionist theory: Nature and nurture work together

The third theory of language acquisition is a combination of some of the ideas in behaviourism and nativism, acknowledging that part of learning language involves imitation and part involves what the child brings to the learning experience. **Interactionists** do not believe in the Language Acquisition Device that Chomsky suggested, nor do they believe that language is solely acquired through experiences. Interactionists believe that children have innate abilities that help them acquire language, such as recognising and learning patterns that they hear, but these are not specific to language learning. Children also acquire language by interacting with caregivers and peers. They notice how language is used to express social functions and to get one's needs met (see Halliday, 2004). Thus, they pick up language skills through applying their own cognitive skills when interacting with caregivers and peers. This is the theory of language acquisition that language and literacy teachers should most carefully consider for their instruction.

Activity 4: Learning outcome 3

Compare and contrast the theories of language acquisition and write a short description of each theory.

Which theory makes the most sense to you?

Teacher educator guidance

Choose to have teachers do this by creating a Venn diagram but with three circles. The circle in the centre represents their shared characteristics, while the outside spaces represent what is different about the theory in comparison to the others. You may choose to have student teachers work independently at first and then share their work with their peers before group discussion.

4.6

Implications of acquisition theories on literacy teaching

Primary grade teachers need to understand the three main theories of language acquisition because these theories influence educational practices related to teaching language and literacy skills. Literacy skills are dependent upon strong language skills. Therefore, teachers need to be able to recognise language weaknesses in young children and support children's development of both receptive and expressive language skills.

The language that children are exposed to in their homes will impact the language skills they master when they enter school. This means that children will arrive at school with varying levels of language competence. Teachers can support language skills development through a number of language-centred activities. For example:

» *Teachers should help children learn the appropriate use of language according to the social context—what is called the pragmatics of language. They can do this by modelling the appropriate use of language. This is because language acquisition does not end with the acquisition of grammar.*

» *Teachers have to ensure that they use more supportive language, for example by encouraging children to respond in more elaborate ways instead of in short utterances to teachers' questions. They should be encouraged to give more elaborate responses.*

» *Teaching about the language should proceed from what the children already know, asking them to reflect on the language they already use so that they develop an awareness of how their language works.*

» *Teach listening skills: Teachers can help children understand the difference between hearing and listening (e.g. we hear sounds with our ears but we listen to ideas with our minds).*

» *Model challenging academic language: The teacher can engage the children in discussions using rich and abstract vocabulary, with increasingly complex sentences and using words to express ideas and ask questions about things that are not known.*

» *Teach dialogue skills: Teachers can help children learn to engage in dialogue using, asking questions, turn-taking, staying on topic, and using verbal and non-verbal language.*

» *Provide opportunities for talk: Teachers can plan activities where children engage in language use through presentations and discussions.*

Activity 5: Learning outcome 4

What types of activities might teachers of language and literacy use to help facilitate language development for young children?

Teacher educator guidance

Student teachers can brainstorm with peers and share with the class.

4.7
Chapter summary

Language acquisition and language learning are two different skills. Language acquisition is the unconscious, unplanned learning of the language used in one's home environment, whereas language learning is the planned learning of a second or additional language through structured instruction (typically in an academic setting). The three main theories of language acquisition are the Behaviourist Theory, the Nativist Theory, and the Interactionist Theory. Behaviourists believe that language is acquired by interacting with the environment, nativists believe that structures for language exist in the brain at birth, and interactionists believe that language acquisition is a combination of nature and nurture. Teachers need to understand language acquisition theories because they need to know how to best support and facilitate language development in primary school children.

4.8
Assessment of learning

1. What are the major differences between language learning and language acquisition?

2. Discuss why it is important to learn about language acquisition for the teacher of literacy and language.

3. According to nativists, what are the weaknesses of the behaviourist theory of language acquisition?

4. In what ways can the two theories be used to complement each other as one plans to teach language or literacy?

5. How do the nativists interpret the fixed order of the stages or milestone of language acquisition?

6. Relate the developmental stages discussed in this chapter to what you have observed in your environment. Are these stages applicable to your society?

4.9
Supplementary reading

Language Development: 5–8 years: https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/development/language-development/language-5-8-years

Fostering Academic Language Development in Primary Grades: https://keystoliteracy.com/blog/fostering-academic-language-development-in-primary-grades/

Developing Language in the Primary School: https://www.all-languages.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Developing-languages-and-literacy.pdf

CHAPTER 5

Levels of Linguistic Analysis

Levels of Linguistic Analysis

INTRODUCTION

It is important that student teachers demonstrate understanding of the levels of linguistic analysis to have necessary working knowledge about the structure of language, language discourse, and the social and mental processes involved in language acquisition. With this understanding, teachers will be more capable of designing instruction to meet their learners' needs, as it is possible that learners may not be familiar with the language of instruction (LOI), and there may be a variety of Mother Tongues (L1) spoken in the classroom. Being aware of the sounds and structures of the languages used and taught in the classroom helps teachers prepare for what will be most challenging for his or her learners. This chapter focuses on the levels of linguistic analysis, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics, and the implications of these themes as they relate to language and literacy teaching and learning. The levels of linguistic analysis are diagrammed in Figure 5.1.

phonetics	
speech sounds (phones)	organs of speech

phonology	
phonemes	syllables

morphology	
morphemes	words

syntax

semantics
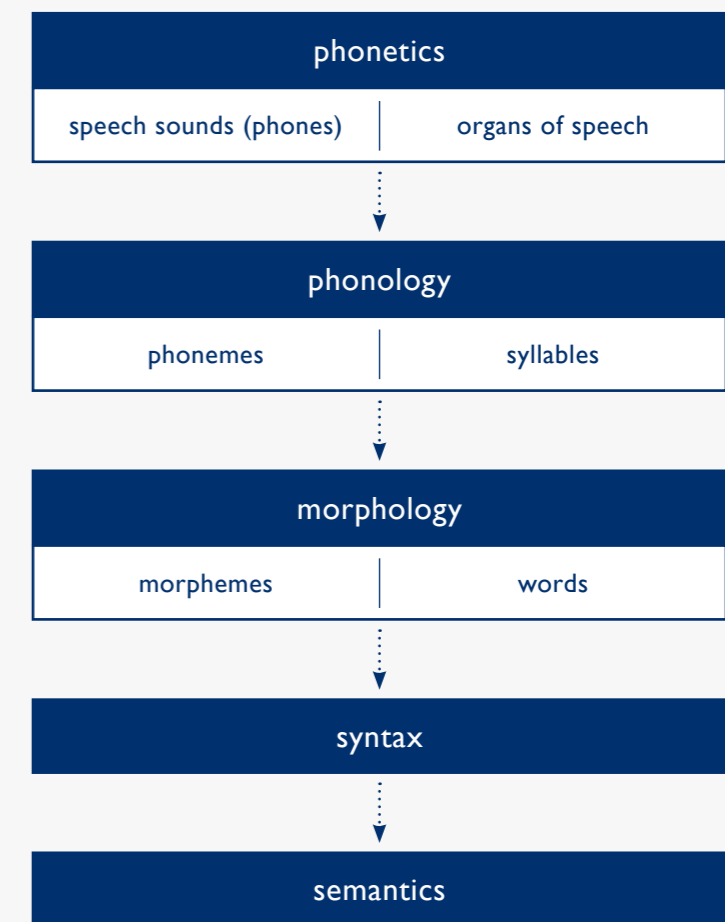
Figure 5.1 Levels of linguistic analysis

5.1

Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.7   Levels of linguistics

    1.2.7.1   Identify the levels of linguistics

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1   define the levels of linguistic analysis

2   analyse the structure of English and Zambian languages according to levels of linguistic analysis

3   discuss the implications of the levels of linguistic analysis to teaching and learning within the context of the language and literacy classroom.

5.2

Instructional materials

- Student module
- Handout: International Phonetic Alphabet (Appendix 5A)
- List of inflectional and derivational affixes in English and Zambian languages

5.3

Key terms

There are numerous terms used within the field of linguistics. Some key terms are listed below, but there are further terms throughout the chapter that will be explained within the text.

International Phonetic Alphabet
an alphabet created in the 19th century to represent all of the sounds of language

Phonetics
the study of speech sounds

Phonology
the study of how sounds pattern together in language to encode meaning

Articulatory phonetics
the study of how and where within the vocal tract speech sounds are produced

Acoustic phonetics
the study of what sounds sound like and includes properties of pitch, length, or amplitude

Auditory phonetics
the study of how speech is heard and perceived

Prosodic properties
properties of intonation, stress, and length

Morphology
the study of the internal structures of words

Syntax
the study of sentence structure; how words combine to form words, phrases, clauses, and sentences

Semantics
the study of meaning in language

Phoneme
the smallest unit of sound that signals a difference in meaning in a word

Morpheme
the smallest unit of meaning in a word

What is phonetics?

Phonetics is the systematic study of speech sounds (phones) in general as opposed to their use in specific languages. There are three branches of phonetics—**articulatory phonetics**, **acoustic phonetics**, and **auditory phonetics**. These three branches represent how sounds are produced, the physical properties of the sounds as they are transmitted from mouth to ear, and how they are heard or perceived, respectively. In this chapter, the **International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)** (see Appendix 5A) may be referenced as a way of connecting sounds to the graphic or written form. The IPA will be used in the discussion of both English and Zambian languages. This section is divided into two main subsections. The first describes the three branches of phonetics and the second explains the relevance of the understanding of phonetics as it relates to language and literacy.

5.4.1

Acoustic phonetics, auditory phonetics, and articulatory phonetics

Articulatory phonetics concerns itself with the study of how and where within the vocal tract speech sounds are produced. Figure 5.2 illustrates the vocal tract and the *organs of speech*. When we speak, air moves up the **trachea** (not pictured), located below the **larynx**, and then passes updwards through the **glottis**, located between the **vocal cords**. Next, air passes through the tube-like organ, the **pharynx** and then out of the **oral cavity** (through the mouth), or out of the **nasal cavity** (through the nose). **Voiced** sounds produce vibration within the vocal tract (in the glottis), while **voiceless** sounds do not. All speech sounds are classified as either voiced or voiceless **consonants** or **vowels**.

Acoustic phonetics describes what sounds sound like in line with the variable properties of **pitch** (high or low), **length** (short or long), or **amplitude**, as measured by their
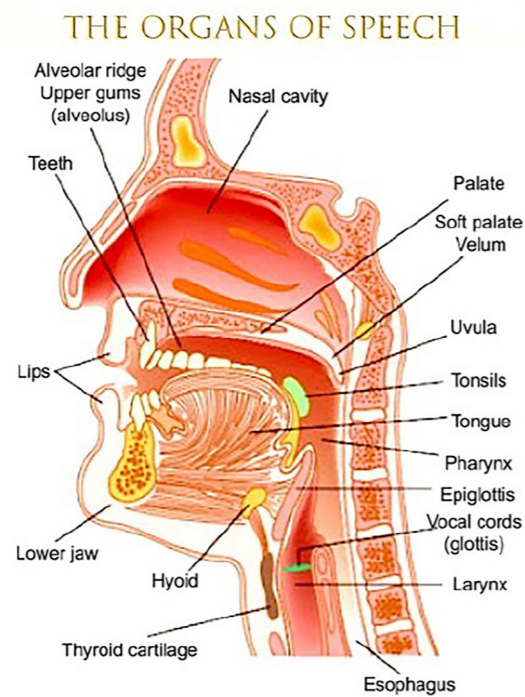
Figure 5.2 The organs of speech within the vocal tract

Source: https://worldlanguagesgazetteer.wordpress.com/

frequency and intensity. **Prosodic properties** of sound include **intonation**, **stress**, and **length**. The acoustic and prosodic properties of sounds are understood in relation to each other. For example, there are two types of pitch—tone and intonation (Park-Johnson & Shin, 2020). Differences of tone occur in tonal languages found throughout Southeast Asia, all varieties of Chinese, African languages, and some of the Native languages of the Americas, and these differences in tone can lead to differences in terms of meanings of words, which are otherwise identical (Park-Johnson & Shin, 2020). For instance, in Mandarin Chinese, depending on the way the syllable *ma* is produced, the following words could be created: *mother*, *hemp*, *horse*, and *scold*. Differences in intonation do not result in differences of word meaning but could result in a difference in how a statement is understood. Consider the way the meaning changes in the following sentences:

A. *She took her purse with her.*

B. *She took her purse with her?*

In the first sentence, the statement is understood as a declarative (giving information) whereas the second sentence results in an interrogative or questioning statement.

Acoustic phonetics is also related to **auditory phonetics**, which studies how the properties of speech are perceived and heard. While auditory phonetics is indeed a branch of phonetics, it is beyond the scope of the purpose of this chapter. However, it is worth pointing out that when acquiring language, a functional auditory system is necessary to both perceiving the sounds of speech accurately and producing sounds accurately.

5.4.2

Vowels

Vowels are produced from the uninterrupted flow of air. It comes out of the mouth without closure or restriction. The only thing that takes place is the vibration of the vocal cords in the larynx because most of the vowels are voiced.

Activity 1

Feel your vocal cords while paying attention to the shape of your mouth (lips) as you pronounce each of the following words and vowel sounds:

Words: are, or

Vowel Sounds: [a, e, i, o, u]

In Figure 5.3, the eight **cardinal vowels** are conceptually represented according to the shape of the mouth and the position of the tongue, referred to as **vowel height** and **vowel backness** when the vowel sound is made (The Mimic Method, 2019). Notice that the shape of Figure 5.3 is trapezoidal, illustrating the shape of the mouth when viewed from the side.
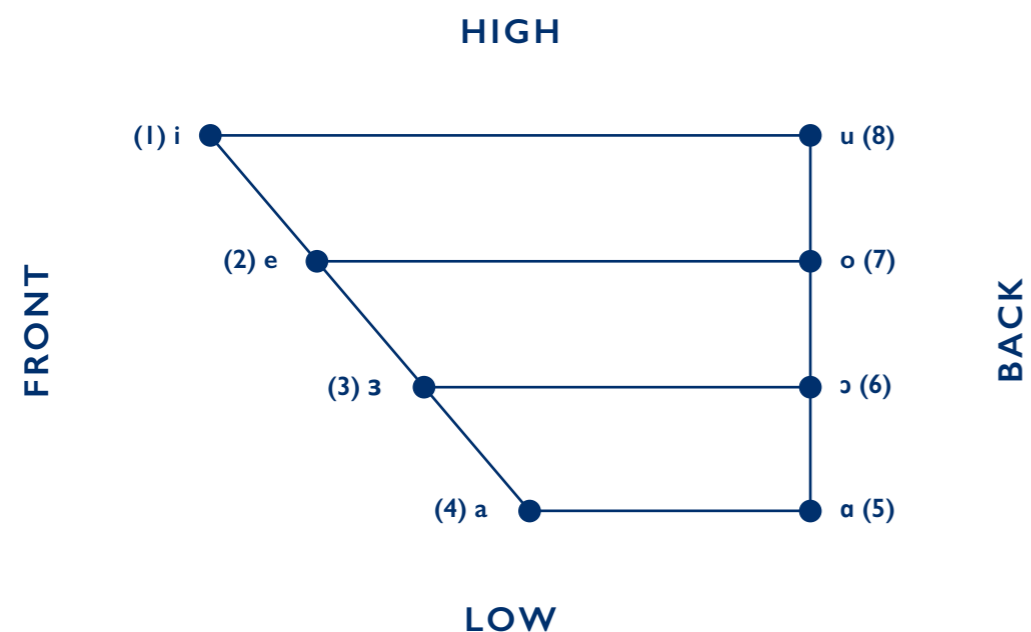
Figure 5.3 Primary cardinal vowels

In Figure 5.3 the high-front vowels [i], in the words like *feel* or *seam*, are produced when the tongue moves up towards the front of the mouth, almost touching the teeth ridge, while the high-back vowels [u], like in the words *woo* or *coo*, are produced when the the back of the tongue moves up and backwards. Low vowels [a] like in the words *thigh* or *light* are produced when the tongue is lowered beyond its resting position, the position of the tongue when one is not speaking. There are two central vowels: the [ə], also known as the *schwa*, and the [ɜ] (r-controlled vowels). The following words are made up of the schwa sound but represented by different letters: b<u>a</u>lloon, probl<u>e</u>m, fam<u>i</u>ly, bott<u>o</u>m, and s<u>u</u>pport. The following words contain different iterations of the [ɜ] sound: sw<u>er</u>ve, h<u>ear</u>th, t<u>ur</u>n, th<u>ir</u>d, w<u>or</u>ld, and j<u>our</u>ney. Table 5.1 summarises the cardinal vowels and their associated symbols.

Table 5.1 Cardinal vowels and symbols

Classification	Language development milestone
High vowels	[i], [u]
Mid vowels	[e], [o]
Low vowels	[a]
Front vowels	[i], [e]
Central vowels	[ə], [ɜ]
Back vowels	[u], [ɔ]

Activity 2: Learning outcome 2

In pairs, use the International Phonetic Alphabet (Appendix 5A) to find at least two examples of English words and Zambian words for each vowel classfication. Be prepared to share with the class.

Teacher educator guidance

At this point, students should be becoming aware of the value in understanding how sounds are produced according to the shape of the mouth and the position of the tongue.

5.4.3

Consonants

Consonant sounds are produced by the narrowing or complete blocking off of the vocal tract and are classified according to both the place and manner of the restriction as well as whether the sound is voiced or voiceless (voicing). Table 5.2 organises how consonants are classfied as they correspond to their place, including brief explanations, IPA symbols, and examples of English words for further understanding. Following that, Table 5.3 describes the manner of articulation of consonants and their associated IPA symbols.

Teacher educator guidance

As you review the chart with the students, have students read the words aloud while paying attention to the shape of their mouth and the position of their tongue as well as whether the word produces voiced or voiceless consonants.

Table 5.2 Classification of consonants by place

Place	Description	Example(s)
Bilabials	formed when the lips come together; [p, b]	pin, bin
Labiodentals	formed when the lower lip touches the upper front teeth; [f, v]	fan, van
Interdentals	formed when the tip of the tongue is inserted between the upper and lower teeth; [Ɵ ð]	thin, this
Alveolars	formed when the front part of the tongue is raised to the alveolar ridge; [s, z] [t, d]	sip, zip
Post/Palatal-alveolars	formed when the front part of the tongue is raised to a point on the hard palate located behind the alveolar ridge; [ʃ, ʒ], [tʃ, dʒ] or [ts, dz]	shy, ship; measure, pleasure; cheese, geez
Palatals	formed when the tongue is positioned on or near the *palate*, the highest part of the roof of the mouth; [j]	yes, you
Velars	formed when the tongue is on or near the *velum*, located toward the back of the roof of the mouth; [k, g] [ŋ]	car, go, king
Glottals	formed when there is no change to the flow of the airstream in the mouth; the vocal cords are the primary articulators; [h]	house

Table 5.3 Classification of consonants by manner of articulation

Place	Description	Symbol
Stops/Plosives	formed by complete closure and sudden release	[p, b], [t, d], [k, g]
Affricates	formed by complete closure and gradual release	[tʃ, dʒ], [ts, dz]
Fricates	formed by a narrowing or partial closure	[ʃ, ʒ], [s, Z]
Nasals	formed by the lowering of the *uvula* to allow the airstream to issue out through the nose	[n, m, ŋ, Y]
Liquids	formed by a significant restriction of the vocal tract that does not adequately narrow the tract enough to cause friction	[l], [r]
Glides	formed by little to no restriction of the airstream in the mouth; made by the rounding of the lips and simultaneous raising of the back of the tongue toward the *velum*	w], [w]

Teacher educator guidance

In our discussion of consonants, we have only touched on how they are classified according to the structure of the English language. There are indeed three other places of articulation represented in other languages: the **retroflex**, **uvular**, and **pharyngeal** sounds (Park-Johnson & Shin, 2020). Retroflex sounds are formed when the tip of the tongue curls back behind the alveolar ridge. Uvular sounds are formed by raising the back of the tongue toward the uvula, and pharyngeal sounds are formed by pulling the tongue root toward the back wall of the pharynx.

Activity 3: Learning outcome 2

In pairs or small groups, use the classification of vowels (refer to Table 5.1) and the classification of consonants (refer to Tables 5.2 and 5.3) to transcribe the following words: *police*, *teacher*, *doctor*, *school*, *teeth*, *tree*, *circuit*, *clerk*, *water*, and *plate*.

Teacher educator guidance

Use the Gradual Release Method ('I Do', 'We Do', 'You Do') to guide student teachers through the activity.

5.4.3
Relevance of phonetics to literacy and language teaching

Knowing a language does not qualify one to be able to teach a language. Teachers who are knowledgable about the sounds and structure of their learners' language(s) will be capable of discerning the challenges that their learners may face in literacy and language instruction. When teaching phonics, the first step is for children to identify and produce the sounds of the letters they are learning about. Teachers therefore have to model to the learners the correct ways of articulating (producing) the sounds so that learners have an accurate way of doing the same. Teachers can ask learners to pay attention to the shape of their mouths and the positions of their tongues when making sounds. During the transition from Zambian languages to English, teachers have to ensure that learners are able to hear and produce the correct English sounds, as opposed to the sounds they are familiar with in Zambian languages.

Activity 4: Learning outcome 3

Why is the correct pronunciation of sounds important to literacy and language acquisition in English and Zambian languages?

Teacher educator guidance

Provide students with time to consider the question, then pair students together to share. Afterwards, ask students to volunteer their thoughts.

5.4.5
Summary of phonetics

Phonetics is the first level of linguistic analysis and studies the way in which sounds are produced with the organs of speech in the vocal tract. The three branches of phonetics (Articulatory, Acoustic, and Auditory) help us to understand how speech is produced, what sounds sound like, and how sounds are perceived. A phonetic inventory like the IPA is used to symbolise all the possible ways in which vowels and consonants are produced, across languages. Teachers' knowledge of phonetic properties (articulatory, acoustic, and prosodic) are integral to both literacy and language teaching and learning in learners' L1 and L2. In the following section, another level of linguistic analysis is explored: phonology.

5.5
What is phonology?

Phonology is the study of how the sounds in language combine to form patterns which encode meaning (Park-Johnson & Shin, 2020). Phonological knowledge (phonological awareness) helps us to choose the correct sounds to make meaningful utterances or words and develops from holistic or larger units to smaller units (Gunning, 2010). **Phonemes**, **allophones**, and **syllables** are central concepts to this level of linguistic analysis. Phonemes are sounds that are contrastive or signal the difference in the meaning of a word, while allophones are variants of phonemes and noncontrastive. Syllables are formed by combining phonemes and have distinct structural boundaries. In the literacy and language classroom, the level of learners' **phonemic awareness**, or understanding that spoken langauge is comprised of phonemes, is 'the most powerful predictor of difficulty in learning to read' (Honig et al., p. 2.16). In this section, the phonological features of language are explored and the importance of phonology to language and literacy instruction is provided.

5.5.1
Phonemes and allophones

As mentioned above, phonemes are sounds that are contrastive in a language. They create differences in the meanings of words. When words differ by only one sound, they are considered to be **minimal pairs**. Look at this pair of words: **b**ean and **d**ean. In this pair of words, the only differences are the initial sounds /b/ and /d/ while the rest are the same. The fact that the use of /b/ and /d/ leads to the creation of different words, means that /b/ and /d/ are phonemes in English. This is how a list of phomenes can be discovered in a language using minimal pairs. Including more words beyond pairs creates **minimal sets**. For example, the words *set*, *sit*, and *sat* form a minimal set in which a new word is created by the substitution of a vowel.

Sometimes there are variations in the pronounciation of a sound which does not lead to a difference in meaning. Where the same sound can be articulated differently without producing a difference in meaning, we get an allophone. In Bemba, the word *ukubomba*, contains two orthographic spellings of the letter 'b'. Phonetically, the two sounds are similar; they are bilabials, but they differ in their manner of articulation. The first 'b' is produced as a voiced bilabial fricative sound [β] while the second 'b' is produced as a voiced bilabial plosive or stop sound [b]. In this example, the phoneme /b/ resulted in the two allophones [b] and [β]. In linguistic terms, these allophones occur in distinct

phonological environments. The first 'b' is at the beginning of a syllable *bo* while the second occurs after a nasal sound /m/, which forms what is called a nasal cluster /mb/. Thus the bilabial fricative sound [β] occurs in the environment after a nasal while the stop or plosive occurs at the beginning of a syllable. Consider also how in English, when adding -s to certain words, the consonant changes from voiced to voiceless. In the word *cat*, adding -s creates the voiceless sound-[s], while in the word *dog*, adding -s results in a voiced sound [Z]. Say the words to verify this.

Activity 5: Learning outcomes 2–3

With a partner, review the minimal sets and determine what changed in the words as new words were created. Then be prepared to discuss how the knowledge of minimal pairs and minimal sets may be used in literacy and language instruction.

Minimal Sets:

pin, pan, pun

tin, fin, shin, thin, bin, kin, win

thigh, thy

mat, sat, fat, bat, hat, cat, rat

Teacher educator guidance

All possible words may not be included in the set. Extend the activity by asking students to create their own minimal pairs or minimal sets in English and/or Zambian languages.

5.5.2
Syllables

Syllables have discernible boundaries in speech. It is easy to tell how many syllables are in most Bantu words, e.g. *atate* (*a-ta-te*). Syllables have structure: they have an onset, that is the initial sound which is usually a consonant(s) and the rime, the rime is made up of the vowel which may be followed by a consonant or consonants. Open syllables end with vowel sounds while closed syllables end with consonants. A single syllable word is considered to be monosyllablic like in the word *cat*. This one has the onset: Consonant (C) followed by the rime: Vowel (V) and a Consonant (C) giving the structure CVC. Additional syllables result in polysyllabic (also known as multisyllabic) words. Table 5.4 compares the syllable structure of English with that of Zambian languages.

Table 5.4 Comparing the syllable structure of English with Zambian languages

Syllable structure	Type of syllable	Example words in English	Example syllables in Zambian languages
V	open	Are [a:]	a[a]
CV	open	Car [ka:]	ba [ba]
CCV	open	Tree [tri:]	mba [mba] (some more complex onsets are mbw, and mphw)
CVC	closed	Sit [sɪt]	-
VC	closed	Ask [a:sk]	-
CCVC	closed	Sleep [sli:p]	-
CCCVC	closed	Splash [splæʃ]	-
CVCC	closed	Tenth [tenθ]	-
CCVCCC	closed	Prints [prɪnts]	-
CVCCCC	closed	Tempts [tempts]	-

Teacher educator guidance

When reviewing the table with students, explain that Zambian languages generally follow a CVCV syllable structure: *taata/tata/atate*. This means Zambian languages only admit open syllables. The only consonant clusters found in Zambian languages are nasal complexes such as [*ntu*] like in the word *muntu*.

Activity 6: Learning outcome 3

How would teaching the structure of syllables and their associated features (open, closed, onset, and rime) be helpful in teaching literacy and language?

5.5.3

Aspects of phonological processes

A significant aspect of phonology is that sounds change when they are put together as words and in a sentence. Also, the features of continuous speech (i.e. pace of speech, intonation) may cause changes in sounds. Phonological processes attempt to show these linguistic variations as predictable outcomes which may be mandatory or optional. The importance of having some basic understanding in phonological processes relates to:

a. *Knowing when and in what given context a given sound changes into another sound (assimilation)*

b. *Knowing when and in what context a given sound can be lost (deletion/elision)*

c. *Knowing when and in what context a given sound can be added (insertion)*

d. *Knowing when and in what context a given sound or sounds can be fused into one (coalescence)*

Briefly, each process identified above is exemplified here below:

1 Assimilation

The process by which a sound is changed into another sound by 'copying' or 'spreading' a feature of a following phoneme, making the two phones more similar. For example, /s/→/z/ after /g/. In the word *dogs*, the /s/ becomes [z] as in [dɒɡz]. Similarly, /b/ becomes /b/ after a nasal sound and /b/ becomes /β/ elsewhere. For example, [*ukuβomba*].

2 Deletion

A process in which a sound or segment is lost. For example, /u/ is deleted in [*umuntu*] 'person' when negated as in *tee umuntu → tee muntu* 'it is not a person'. In English, vowel deletion or loss is common in an unaccented syllable. For example, police [pəlis], secretary [sekritry]. Similarly, deletion is noticeable in a word's final position for /r/ sounds. For example, in all the following words /r/ is not realised: 'car' [ka], 'far' [fa], 'father' [fa:əə], 'teacher' [ti:tʃə] except for people who have *rhotic* accents who pronounce the /r/ after vowels.

3 Insertion

A process in which a new element is introduced or created. In Zambian languages, insertion is common in loanwords. For example, 'pot' [pɒt] in Tonga: *mpoto*; Bemba: *impoto*; Nyanja: *mpooto*. You can see that new elements have been added to the English word *pot*.

4 Coalescence

It is the combination or fusion, of two or more segments into one segment. In Zambian languages, the following are possible cases of coalescences: a+i = ee; a+u =oo. Below is an example from Bemba of the fusion of (a+i):

a + i = *ama + inshi ameenshi* 'water'

Activity 7: Learning outcomes 2–3

The different pronunciations of suffix -ed

A suffix is an *affix* (morpheme) that is attached to the *end* (stem) of a word. In English, suffix -ed changes present-tense words to past-tense words. The pronunciation of suffix -ed depends on phonological rules.

When suffix -ed is placed at the end of a word ending in /t/ or /d/, suffix -ed is pronounced as /Id/.

Examples: hated, needed

When suffix -ed is placed at the end of a voiced sound, suffix -ed is pronounced as /d/.

Examples: thrived, filled, cried

When suffix -ed is placed at the end of an unvoiced sound, suffix -ed is pronounced as /t/.

Examples: hopped, kicked, fished

With a partner or in a small group, create a table of three columns to organise words according to the three ways in which suffix -ed is pronounced. Add words to the chart for each rule.

Teacher educator guidance

When students are finished, discuss with teachers why explicit teaching of phonological rules is important to teaching literacy and language. Extend the discussion to consider how they could include activities that teach suffix -ed in their own classrooms (i.e. word sorts, creating new words based on the rules).

Relevance of phonology to literacy and language teaching

It was mentioned above under phonetics that teachers have to help learners to articulate and identify sounds correctly. This advise is repeated here, and it is worth mentioning that learning to read requires a knowledge of the phonology of a language, usually referred to as phonological awareness in literacy circles. This phonological awareness refers to a child's awareness of all levels of sounds in a language from words, syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes. Teaching initial reading usually starts with raising learners' awareness of these sound units. Although learners have a tacit understanding of these units which they acquire naturally, they may not be able to explain them. For example, even the concept of a word might not be familiar to a 6-year-old child, let alone syllables and phonemes. Thus children are made aware of these units through various exercises that enable them not only to identify, differentiate but also manipulate these units in different ways. Later the written form of the language is linked to these units, e.g. at phoneme level for the alphabetic writing system (McKenna & Stahl, 2003; Reading Rockets, n.d.). As learners move to English, they also need to be made aware of the phonological features of English so that they are aware of the differences between their L1 and L2. To help with second language acquisition, teachers should 'exaggerate the differences in articulation between the sounds they are trying to contrast, using slower tempo and repetition to help learners hear and feel the differences' and can even use mirrors to help learners see the position of their articulators as they are learning to make certain sounds (Park-Johnson & Shin, 2020, p. 52).

Teachers are capable of assessing learners' levels of phonemic and phonological awareness in their L1 when they enter the classroom by assessing key skills for initial reading—beginning sounds and segmentation (Gunning, 2010). After assessment, teachers should target instruction to meet their learners' instructional needs. Below is a list of simple informal assessments that can be used (Gunning, 2010, p. 202; McKenna & Stahl, 2003, p. 93):

1. See if the child can identify words that rhyme.

2. Say three words to the child, two of which have a common phoneme, such as an initial sound. Ask the child to tell which of the three words does not belong with the other two.

3. Tell the child that you are going to say a word in your own 'secret code'. Then pronounce the word by saying each phoneme in succession. The child must blend the sounds to form the word.

4. Provide the child with a common rime. Ask the child to make a word by adding a sound to the beginning of the rime. Provide an example or two first to make the task clear.

5. Have the child say a word in syllable parts, in onset-rime parts, or the separate sounds in a word.

Summary of phonology

Phonology helps us to understand how sounds pattern together in specific languages to form spoken language. Phonemes and their variations—allophones—combine to form syllables with distinct structures and features (onset, rime, pattern, open or closed, stressed, unstressed). Although there are similarities between languages, there are also phonological differences, and teachers must understand the structure and rules of their learners' native language and the LOI and how to apply this knowledge explicitly to literacy and language instruction. As yet, there are three other levels of linguistic analysis—morphology, syntax, and semantics—that are also important for literacy and language teachers to know and understand. Morphology is explored in the following section.

5.6

What is morphology?

At this point, we have learnt how and where speech is formed as well as its properties (phonetics) and how sounds combine or pattern together to form syllables and words (phonology). In this section, another layer of linguistic analysis is added—**morphology**—which is the study of the internal structure of words and their relationship with other words which are stored in our mental dictionary, our *lexicon* (Park-Johnson & Shin, 2020).

5.6.1

Morphemes

The building blocks of words are called morphemes. These are the 'smallest linguistic units with a meaning or a grammatical function' (Park-Johnson & Shin, 2020). Based on the number of morphemes a word has, they may be considered *simple words* (single morpheme) or *complex words* (two or more morphemes). Below are some examples of complex words, separated into their morphemic parts:

a. *Faithfulness = {faith} +{ful} + {ness}*

b. *Transformationalism = {trans} + {form} + {ation} + {al} + {ism}*

c. *Teacher = {teach} + {er}*

d. *Accountant = {account} + {ant}*

e. *Walked = {walk} + {ed}*

Teacher educator guidance

It is important for your student teachers to understand that morphemes are not the same as syllables. For example, the simple word *happy* (single morpheme) has two syllables (Park-Johnson & Shin, 2020). However, in Bantu languages, some syllables may be morphemes, e.g. tense, subject, and object markers, etc.

When morphemes join together to form complex words, additional features emerge. A complex word generally has a root **morpheme** (root word or stem) that transforms into different words through the addition of affixes. The term *affix* is an umbrella term for morphemes that *affix* (or add) themselves to words in a variety of ways. Affixes can be inserted at the beginning (prefix) like in the word *mu + ana* (=*mwana*) '*child*'. The {mu} is the prefix while {ana} is the root. Affixes may also be placed at the end (suffix) of words, like in the example above in which suffix -ed was added to the root *walk*. (In some languages affixes may be inserted into existing morphemes and referred to as *infixes* or even at the front and end of roots simultaneously in which both must be present for the word to have new meaning and are called *circumfixes* (Park-Johnson & Shin, 2020)). The next tables list common prefixes and suffixes found in the English language.

Table 5.5 English prefixes, definition, example

Prefix	Definition	Example(s)
anti-	against	antisocial
de-	opposite	defrost
dis-	not, opposite of	disconnect
en-, em-	cause to	enrage; embody
fore-	before; front of	foreground
in, im-	in	include; implant
in, im, il-, ir	not	incomplete; impossible; illegal; irregular
inter	between; among	intermingle
mid-	middle	midway
mis-	wrongly	misinterpret
non	not	nonfiction
over-	over; too much	overflow
pre-	before	precaution
re-	again	replay
semi-	half; partly; not fully	semiformal
sub	under	submerge
super	above; beyond	superimpose
trans	across	transfix
un	not; opposite of	unable
under	under; too little	underground

Modified from Corwin Press, as cited in Reading Rockets (n.d.)

Table 5.6 English suffixes, definition, example

Suffix	Definition	Example(s)
-able, -ible	is; can be	adaptable; convertible
-al, -ial	having characteristics of	seasonal; terrestrial
-ed	past tense verbs; adjectives	the balloon inflated; the inflated balloon
-en	made of	strengthen
-er, -or	one who; person connected	teacher; professor
-er	more	greater
-est	the most	fanciest
-ful	full of	graceful
-ic	having characteristics of	tragic
-ing	verb forms; present participles	dancing
-ion, -tion, -ation, -ition	act; process	abrasion; solution; culmination; fruition
-ity, -ty	state of	ability; safety
-ive, -ative, -itive	adjective form of noun	captive; indicative; positive
-less	without	colorless
-ly	how something is	angrily
-ment	state of being; act of	fulfilment
-ness	state of; condition of	calmness
-ous, -eous, -ious	having qualities of	glamorous; righteous; curious
-s, -es	more than one	cars; couches
-y	characterised by	sunny

Modified from Corwin Press, as cited in Reading Rockets (n.d.)

Activity 8: Learning outcomes 2–3

Review the list of prefixes and suffixes in your small group or with a partner. Make sure to read through the definitions and how the definitions help you to understand the meanings of the words provided. In your group, discuss the following question and be ready to share with the whole class.

In what ways would explicitly teaching prefixes and suffixes be a useful strategy in the literacy and language classroom?

Teacher educator guidance

Student teachers should be able to see how knowing meanings of prefixes and suffixes is helpful in learning new words that may not have been formerly introduced. If possible, a helpful strategy would be to provide students with word lists or word journals in which new words are added that have the same prefixes and/or suffixes. As well as this, students may point out that words can be manipulated by adding multiple morphemes to words.

5.6.2
Morphological systems

It is important to understand that Zambian languages are morphologically different from English. Morphologically, languages may be classified as either *analytic* or *synthetic*. As the words imply, analytic languages tend to have short words that are usually single morphemes. A good example is Mandarin Chinese. Although English has some multimorphemic words, it is mostly analytic. Synthetic languages, on the other hand, have words that consist of many morphemes strung together. Bantu languages are said to be agglutinating languages because their words consists of strings of morphemes 'glued' together. To see the difference between English and Zambian languages, look at this example from Nyanja and the translation into English:

> *Nikukonda* 'I love you'.

There are three single morpheme words in English to the one word (verb) in Nyanja.

Thus, in Bantu languages (from which Zambian languages are derived), words can be sentences, which is much different from English. Table 5.7 gives additional examples from Nyanja.
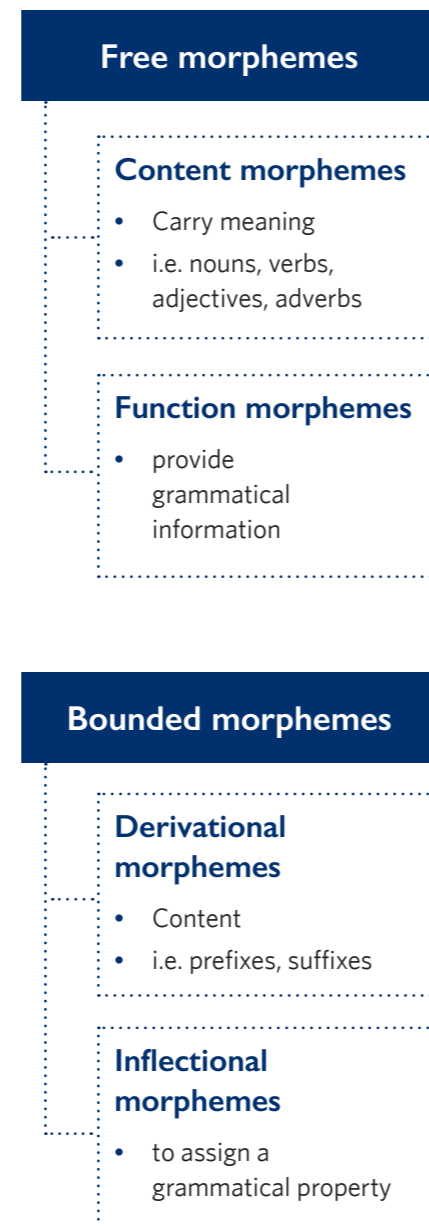
Table 5.7 Differences between English and Nyanja

Nyanja	English translation
Amakonda kusewera panji	She likes to play outside.
Ndikuyenda	I am walking.
Ndidya nditatha kuwerenga	I will eat after I read.
Dzuwa likuwala	The sun is shining.

5.6.3

Classifying morphemes

Thus far, we have learnt that morphemes may exist as single morphemes/simple words or be joined together to create complex words of two or more morphemes. Affixes are morphemes which are added to root words at different positions, thereby changing the word and its meaning. There are also important differences in languages based on two broad, morphological categories, whether the language is mostly analytic or mostly synthetic. As English is mostly an analytic language, and Zambian languages are agglutinating languages (a type of synthetic language), teachers must be aware of how this key difference may be a challenge to their learners in the classroom. Yet, there are as yet other aspects of morphology that are helpful for teachers to know. In this section, we explore how morphemes are classified according to two main types—free or bounded morphemes. Free or bounded morphemes may be broken down into further subcategories, as diagrammed in the figure below (Park-Johnson & Shin, 2020).

Free morphemes

Content morphemes
- Carry meaning
- i.e. nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs

Function morphemes
- provide grammatical information

Bounded morphemes

Derivational morphemes
- Content
- i.e. prefixes, suffixes

Inflectional morphemes
- to assign a grammatical property

Figure 5.4 Two categories of morphemes: Free or bounded

In the section below on word formation processes, an attempt has been made to show that Zambian languages are agglutinating. Part of this is done under syntax because in Bantu languages, some words are typically sentences. For example, a word like *ndabola* (Tonga) is translated as 'I am coming', which is typically a sentence.

As noted above, English does not fall squarely in one language type; it has features of both analytic and synthetic languages. In the example that we have used before in this section, unfaithfulness, we notice characteristics of an agglutinating language as three bound morphemes have been glued to the free morpheme {faith}, which is also the root.

5.7

Words

According to Bloomfield (1933), a word is a minimum free form. This means a word is the smallest unit with meaning. However, as has been observed above under the morphological typology, words are differently constructed under each language type. In analytic languages, which are also known as isolating languages, all words can stand alone as minimum free forms. However, in agglutinating languages where words are made up of two or more morphemes, a word cannot be conceived of as minimum free form. In Bantu languages, it is clear to see that a word can be a sentence created from an assemblage of bound morphemes. It is therefore important to distinguish between simplex words and complex words. Simplex words are those made up of a single morpheme while complex words are made up of at least two or more morphemes. See the next table below for illustration.

Table 5.8 Simplex and complex words

Simplex words	Complex words
police	unfaithfulness
Bbola 'come'	*Baleemusamba* 'they are bathing him'

Further, it is important to note that words belong to word classes. Broadly speaking, words are classified under two classes: content words and function words. The content or lexical words include nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. It is important to mention here that content or lexical words belong to the open class system because new words can be created and added. These words have full lexical meanings, often referred to as independent meanings. Functional or grammatical words belong to a closed class system as these sets of items belonging to this class cannot be extended; new ones cannot be created. Additionally, their meaning is dependent on lexical words as they only contribute grammatical meaning to the construction. Such items include prepositions, numerals, articles, pronouns, conjunctions, and interjections.

Table 5.9 Open class words and examples

Word classes	Examples
noun	house, plate, John, school
verb	walk, talk, to be
adverb	slowly, quickly, fast, here, there
adjective	big, small, blue, kind, short, beautiful, etc.

Table 5.10 Grammatical words and examples

Grammatical words	Examples
prepositions	on, at, in, for, outside, under, above
pronouns	she, he, her, his, they, them, us, we
numerals	one, two, three
articles	the, a, an
conjunction	and (clausal link = when, if, because)
interjection	oh, ah, uh

The word classes identified in the two tables above have been defined from three different perspectives: the notional, form, and function. The notional approach looks upon words based on their meanings. For example, nouns are said to be *naming* words, verbs as *doing* words while adjectives are said to be *descriptive* words. When it comes to form, words are classified based on their structure or form. Nouns are seen to inflect for number, verbs for tense, and adverbs end in *-ly*. The two approaches have been criticised due to their shortcomings. For example, not all verbs are doing words. Some verbs are stative verbs, for example, the verb 'to be', e.g. *is*, *are*. Similarly, it is not always the case that word structure will determine the word class of a particular word. If we take the word *round*, for example, nothing about it would point us to its word class. It is because of such shortcomings that the functional approach was developed. Here, words are classified based on their syntactic function in a given sentence. For example, nouns may function as the subject or object of the verb. To this end, we can only make judgments about the class to which a given word belongs based on the function of the word in a given syntactic construction. For a detailed discussion and exemplification, consider section 1.5 under syntax.

5.7.1
Word formation processes

As pointed out above and discussed in chapter 1, languages are creative. They form words in various ways, normally from existing elements. Let's consider some of these processes here below.

5.7.2
Affixation

Affixation is the process by which words are formed by adding elements or affixes before or after the root. This means affixation manifests either as prefixation or suffixation. For example, the word *deregistration* is formed by affixation = {de} + {register} + {ation} in which {de} is a prefix, {register} is a root affix and {ation} is a suffix. In Zambian languages, affixation is a very productive word formation process. The nominal/noun class system draws extensively from affixation in the formation of singular and plural forms of the nouns. See the table below showing the basic nominal structure in Bantu accounting for the position of a prefix and noun stem.

Table 5.11 Nominal structure

Noun class	Prefix	Stem	Gloss
I	mu	-ntu	Person
2	ba	-ntu	People
	mu	-tengo	Tree
	mi	-tengo	Trees

Table 5.12 Verbal form

Infinitive marker	Verb-root	Vowel ending (suffix)	Gloss
ku	samb	-a	To bath (Tonga)
ku	belek	-a	To work (Tonga)
ku	lim	-a	To cultivate (Tonga)
ku	imb	-a	To sing (Bemba)

As can be observed from the two tables above, languages form new words by attaching affixes to the root or stem in a sequential order.

5.7.3

Reduplication

Reduplication is another productive word formation process. By definition, reduplication is a process in which a base or part of it is reproduced or repeated to form a new word. As examples below show, in Zambian languages, reduplication is transformational as it normally leads to a change in meaning of the initial lexeme (word). In the next table, you will notice how semantic extension is achieved by reduplicants. See the examples of reduplication in the table below.

Table 5.13 Semantic extension by reduplication

Reduplication	Language	Gloss
flip-flop	English	
wish-wash	English	
kalongalonga {ka-longa-longa}	Tonga	(diminutive) small stream
fubefube	Bemba	fog
panoonopanoono	Bemba	little by little / slowly

5.7.4

Zero derivation or conversion

Zero derivation or conversion is a word formation process in which new words are created without any physical alteration to the existing word that is being converted. It is recognised, however, that in Bantu languages and sometimes in English, there are observable phonological changes that take place during conversion. In English, there is a stress shift while in Bantu languages there is change in tonal focus. Consider the examples below:

Table 5.14 Stress shifts in English

Verb	Noun
proˈduce [prəˈdjuːs]	ˈproduce [ˈprɒdjuːs]
subject [səbˈdʒekt]	subject [ˈsʌbdʒəkt]

Table 5.15 Tonal focus in Bantu

Word	Word Meaning	Language
ukuluka	plait	Bemba
ukuluka	vomit	Bemba
kuluta	teach	Lozi
kuluta	urinate	Lozi
impanga	sheep	Bemba
impanga	bush/forest	Bemba

5.7.5

Compounding

Compounding is a process in which new words are formed by joining two independent roots or words together. Some compounds are written with a hyphen while others are written without. See the examples in the table below.

Table 5.16 Compound words in English

Compound	Analysis
blackboard	{black}$_{adj}$ + {board}$_N$
sunflower	{sun}$_N$ + {flower}$_N$

Table 5.17 Compound words in Bantu languages

Compound	Analysis	Gloss
m'penyazuwa	{m'penya}$_v$ + {zuwa}$_N$	sunflower (Chewa)
cilangazuba	{ci-langa}$_v$ + {zuba}$_N$	sunflower (Tonga)
amafisakanwa	{amafisa}$_N$ + {kanwa}$_{N-}$	corruption

Note that compounds can be transparent or opaque, endocentric or exocentric. Transparent compounds are usually endocentric as their meaning can be deduced from the constituent elements themselves, as in the case of {blackboard}. Opaque compounds are normally exocentric as their meaning is outside of the constituent elements, as in the case of {headhunter} when used in reference to a recruiter of personnel. The Bemba example, *amafisakanwa* whose literal meaning is 'that which hide the mouth' is also opaque and exocentric. When it comes to headiness (headedness) within a compound, in English, the head of the compound is usually on the right while the head in compounds in Zambian languages is usually on the left. Remember, the head of a compound is the word that carries the grammatical/syntactic features or inflection of the compound. In the word {sun+flower} the plural morpheme {-s} is attached to the right of the right most constituent and not to the base/root of the word {sun}. Contrariwise, in Tonga, as in many Bantu languages, it is the constituent element to the left in a compound which carries the syntactic/grammatical features. For example, in the compound {mungu mumba} 'gourd' (Tonga), pluralisation is achieved by attaching the plural prefix mi- at the beginning of {mungu} to render as {myungu mumba}. The Bemba example above already has a plural prefix attached to the first word *fisa* 'hide' which is actually a verb turned into a noun.

Activity 9: Learning outcome 2

1. With examples from both English and Zambian languages, discuss other word formation processes. These should include but are not limited to the following: blending, initialisms, back-formation, borrowing, etc.

2. Carry out word analysis of the words as provided by the instructor.

Teacher educator guidance

Prepare a list of words for the student teachers and provide a list of inflectional and derivational affixes in both English and Zambian languages.

5.7.6

Morphophonological issues

Phonology and morphology interact during the word formation process. This interaction is what linguists refer to as morphophonology. The examples below are illustrative of this phenomenon.

a. *Mu+ana = mwana 'child'*

b. *Mi+ungu = myungu 'gourds'*

c. *Electric [k] → electricity [s]; medical [k] → medicine [s]; critical [k] → criticise [s]*

In the examples above, we notice the interaction of morphology and phonology. What is noticeable is that affixation affects the quality of the phonemes. In (a) for example, the prefix {mu-} is made up of a syllable which ends in a vowel /u/. The stem {ana} starts with a vowel /a/. However, when affixation occurs between {mu} and {ana}, the vowel /u/ is changed into a semi-vowel /w/, a process commonly referred to as semi-vocalisation. Similarly, in example (b), the /i/ in the prefix {mi} is changed to /y/ when affixation occurs with the /u/. In example (c) the focus is on the element 'c', which is a phoneme /k/ before the process of suffixation. When the suffix –ity, –ine, and –ise are attached to the respective words as shown above, the /k/ is changed to /s/. While we could refer to these elements as phonemes, they are better called morphophonemes as they are at the interface of morphology and phonology. Thus, morphophonology helps us to account for changes initiated by the influence of both phonology and morphology.

5.8

Syntax

Generally defined as the study of the arrangement of words into larger units—i.e. phrases, clauses, and sentences—**syntax** is the fourth level of linguistic analysis. Its place in language study is significant, as much of what happens when we write or speak is governed by syntax. It is largely concerned with meaningful structures of sentences and their communicative functions. As a result, most linguists equate syntax to grammar. For the purposes of this section, the discussion of syntax will be restricted to phrases, clauses, and sentences with respect to how they are organised and how they operate. For example, aspects of morphology such as words and inflections are equally discussed in syntax. As will become apparent, the functional class of words plays a very significant role in the architecture of sentences. For inflection, that is, grammatical features of number, tense, gender, nominative case, accusative case and degree help to support the grammar (correctness) of the sentences. Here below, we show the over-organisation of syntax at the sentential level.

```
        ┌─────────────────────────┐
        │        Sentence         │
        └─────────────────────────┘
                    ▲
        ┌─────────────────────────┐
        │         Clause          │
        └─────────────────────────┘
                    ▲
        ┌─────────────────────────┐
        │         Phrase          │
        └─────────────────────────┘
                    ▲
        ┌─────────────────────────┐
        │          Word           │
        └─────────────────────────┘
                    ▲
        ┌─────────────────────────┐
        │  Morpheme (inflection)  │
        └─────────────────────────┘
```
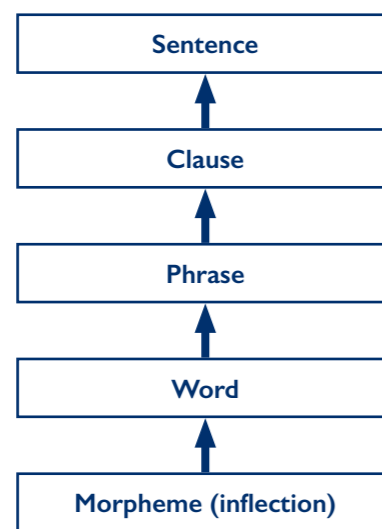
The diagram above shows the hierarchical organisation of the sentence structure, accounting for lower-level input which ultimately leads to the well-formed sentence as an output. At the bottom of the hierarchy are the actual morphemes, which account for inflection such as tense, number, or aspect. Morphemes combine to form words which are grouped into syntactic categories from which phrases are formed. As will be shown later, each word class produces its own phrases named after it. Nouns give rise to noun phrases, verbs to verb phrases, adjectives to adjective phrases, prepositions to prepositional phrases and so on. Phrases combine to form a clause or a sentence. This hierarchical organisation of sentences demonstrates a careful arrangement of constituents for a well formed and meaningful sentence structure.

5.9

Phrases

Crystal (2009:367) defined a *phrase* as 'a term used in grammatical analysis to refer to a single element of structure typically containing more than one word and lacking the subject-predicate structure typical of clauses'. In traditional grammar, what Crystal means is that a phrase is the element made up of at least two words, and such a combination should not lead to a clause or simple sentence. Put differently, a phrase is a word or group of words without a subject and finite verb. Ordinarily, phrases are built around lexical heads from which they draw their name. For example, 'this man' is a noun phrase headed by the noun 'man'; 'slowly' is an adverbial phrase headed by the adverb 'slowly'; 'to town' is a prepositional phrase headed by the preposition 'to'. In defining the 'head' of a phrase, Crystal (1991: 163) stated that the head is 'the central element which is distributionally equivalent to the phrase as a whole'. This means that the head of a phrase as pointed out already determines the name of a given phrase and its syntactic distribution and function within a sentence or clause. In what follows, examples of phrases are provided.

(a) Noun phrase

It is a phrase headed by a noun. For example: the man; a house; the boy; teachers. In terms of its distribution and function within a sentence, noun phrases occur as the subject, object, or complement. Consider the following example: 'the teacher $_{\{subj\}}$ gave $_{\{verb\}}$ the boy $_{\{object\}}$ a present $_{\{object\}}$'.

(b) Verb phrase

It is a phrase headed by a verb. Verbs always function as verbs to link or state the relationship between the subject and the predicate or complement. Consider the following examples: 'she$_{subj}$ feels$_{verb}$ happy$_{subj\ comp}$'. In this example, the verb 'feel' is used to show the state of being of the subject and also communicates the fact that the subject is in third person singular present. In the sentence, 'John kicked the ball', the verb 'kick' denotes the action of the subject 'John' upon the object 'ball'. Note also that the verb carries the tense, pointing out the time of the action as having been in the past (unspecified past, hence simple past tense).

c. Adverb phrase

It is a phrase headed by an adverb. Generally, adverbs modify verbs or give more information about the action communicated by the verb in sentences. Consider the following example: 'she$_{subj}$ walked$_{verb}$ slowly$_{adverb}$'. Here the adverb gives information about the manner of walking. In terms of the syntactic distribution, adverbs have no fixed position per se. They can be placed before or after the verb they modify, though this might have stylistic implications, such as emphasis and topicalisation.

d. Adjective phrase

It is a phrase headed by an adjective. Generally, adjectives qualify nouns in a sentence. In terms of distribution, adjectives can occur as before or after the noun 'He is a *kind* person' or ''He is very *kind*.'

e. Prepositional phrase

It is a phrase headed by a preposition. Prepositional phrases normally function as adverbials to denote the place, time, or manner among other things. Consider the following examples: 'the teacher$_{subj}$ reported$_{vp}$ for work$_{pp}$ *in the morning*$_{pp}$'.

Teacher educator guidance

After each type of phrase, ask teacher educators to come up with more examples of each of the phrases discussed. Ensure that student teachers have understood by giving correct examples before you move to the next phrase type.

Clauses

A clause is a 'unit of grammatical organisation smaller than the sentence, but larger than phrases, words or morphemes'. Linguists have traditionally classified clauses into main clause and subordinate clause. The main clause is the independent clause because it can work as a full sentence on its own while the subordinate clause is the dependent clause because it cannot serve as a full sentence on its own. Depending on the nature of the verb in a given clause, clauses have further been subdivided into finite and non-finite clauses. Non-finite clauses are marked by non-finite verbs, namely: 'ing-form', 'participle', and 'infinitive', as in the following examples respectively: i) '*peeping through the window*, I saw learners playing football'; ii) '*Having left his house in a hurry*, he forgot to switch off the TV set; iii) '*To speak to the head teacher*, I would require the support of the deputy head teacher'. Clauses have further been subdivided into clauses with verb or verbless clauses. Consider the following example: 'when happy$_{verbless\ clause}$, John$_{subj}$ becomes$_{verb}$ overly generous'.

a. Independent clause

It is the main clause in the sentence with a subject and predicate or complement.

b. Dependent clause

It is a subordinate clause with incomplete meaning. Dependent clauses are optional elements. Therefore, they can be deleted. Secondly, they can be found preceding or following an independent clause or inserted in one. Finally, dependent clauses usually have some feature which marks them as dependent. Consider the following examples:

 i. Mary was washing the car$_{MC}$, *while I cooked nsima*$_{DC}$ (the underlined clause is a dependent clause and can be deleted without altering the meaning of the main clause)

 ii. *Although I was busy cooking*$_{DC}$, I could hear the splashes of water$_{MC}$.

 iii. She told the man, *who was wearing a red shirt*$_{DC}$, to leave the room. (DC inserted in the MC)

 iv. ***After*** *we had finished writing the exam*, our papers were collected for packaging.

Note that dependent clauses are joined to the main clause using subordinating conjunctions such as *while*, in the first sentence, and relative pronouns, as in the third sentence. Here are some of the linking words: as, after, although, as far as, as if, as long as, as soon as, as though, because, before, by the time (that), even, even if, how, however, if, in case, in order that, now, since, so, so long as, so that, suppose, supposing, till, though, unless, until, whereas, whether, while, etc. Scott et al. (1968: 52) reminded us that 'the use of these particles is one indication of a dependent clause'. Example (iv) above uses 'after' in its dependent clause. Similarly, when expressing a reason, we use *because* or *since* in the dependent clause, as in the following example: '*Because she came late*, she failed the test'. We could start with main clause, as in 'she failed the test *because she came late*'. Notice the change in the punctuation once we start with the main clause.

Types of clauses:

a **Wh-clauses**

I wonder *when they will leave*$_{DC}$.

b **Wh-ever marked dependent clause**

Whoever betrays you, I will remain true.

c **That-clause**

They decided *that the journey was too far*$_{DC}$.

Clause patterns

To illustrate the structure of a clause, linguists have proposed the following clause elements: subject, Verb (V) (predicate), complement (C), adjunct (A). In what follows, the patterns are exemplified.

a.   SV: John slept [use of intransitive verb]

b.   SVA: John went home [use of an intensive verb]

c.   SVC: John was happy [use of stative verb]

d.   SVCA: John submitted his assignment in the morning [use of an intensive verb]

e.   SVOC: John appointed his brother heir apparent [use of an intensive transitive verb]

f.   SVO: John closed the book [use of mono-transitive verb]

g.   SVOO: John bought his brother a present [use of ditransitive verb]

Activity 10: Learning outcomes 2 and 3

1.   Explain the differences between independent and dependent clauses.

2.   Give example sentences for each of the clause patterns discussed.

3.   Discuss the relevance of this topic on language teaching in schools.

Teacher educator guidance

Student teachers may refer to the syllabus or their own experience/memory as primary/secondary school learners of language. Student teachers may work together or independently according to your preference.

5.11

Sentences

So far, we have looked at the building blocks of sentences starting from words and how they combine to form phrases, and how phrases combine to form clauses, and eventually how clauses combine to form sentences. In defining a sentence, Crystal (2009: 432) starts that a sentence is 'the largest structural unit in terms of which the grammar of a language is organized'. Notice that this definition places a sentence at the top on the structural hierarchy of language organisation. While it is not difficult to identify a sentence in written text, it is not always easy to do so from a spoken source. This is because speakers do not always utilise such features of speech as intonation and pause to the same degree when speaking. Therefore, it is always difficult to pass judgment as to when a sentence ends and another one begins. In discussing sentences, traditional grammarians looked upon a sentence as 'the expression of a complete thought'. Critics of this position have raised concerns about when one would know that a complete thought has been expressed. For example, should 'stop' be considered a sentence since it expresses a complete thought when used as an imperative? Because of the challenges involved in defining a sentence, most linguists are more concerned with the classification using the Immediate Constituent Analysis (ICA) or the hierarchical analysis of Hallidayan and other grammars, in which sentences are seen as composites of clauses, which in turn are broken down into phrases and eventually words (cf. Crystal, 2009).

Whatever the controversy, there is consensus on the discourse functions of sentences, which are exemplified here below:

a   Statements

utterances that are primarily used to convey factual information;

b   Questions

utterances that are primarily used to request the listener to supply some lacking information on a specific point;

c   Commands

utterances that are primarily used to instruct somebody to do something;

d   Exclamations

utterances primarily used to express the speaker's own feelings or emotions.

Statements, questions, commands, and exclamations are performed by special types of sentences exemplified below:

a   Declarative sentences

used to express statements as in 'She has gone to town.'

b   Interrogative sentences

used to express questions as in 'Has she gone to town?'

c   Imperative sentences

used to express commands as in 'Go to town.'

d   Exclamative sentences

used to express exclamations as in 'What a beautiful house you have here!'

In discussing sentences, we recognise three types of sentences; namely, simple sentences, complex sentences, and compound sentences. Each has been exemplified as shown below.

a   Simple sentence

a sentence made up of a subject and a predicate. For example, 'John is a student at Lusaka secondary school'

b   Complex sentence

a sentence made up of an independent clause and a subordinate clause, as in: '*Because she came late*$_{DC}$, she failed the examination'$_{IC}$

c   Compound sentence

a sentence made up of two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, as in: 'John likes maths, and Mary likes English language'.

Activity 11: Learning outcomes 2 and 3

1.   Give examples with correct punctuation for each of the sentence types above.

2.   Why is it important to change the sentences into statements, questions, and commands when teaching structure?

5.12

What is semantics?

Several definitions have been given about semantics. Regardless, what is common between different definitions is that **semantics** is a study of meaning. For example, consider the following definitions as adopted from Semantica Inglesa:

a. *Semantics is the study of meaning (Lyons, 1977).*

b. *Semantics is the study of meaning in language (Hurford & Heasley, 1983).*

c. *Semantics is the study of meaning communicated through language (Saeed, 1997).*

d. *Semantics is the part of linguistics that is concerned with meaning (Löbner, 2002).*

e. *Linguistic semantics is the study of literal, decontextualised, grammatical meaning (Frawley, 1992).*

f. *Linguistic semantics is the study of how languages organise and express meanings (Kreidler, 1998).*

g. *Semantics is the study of linguistics meaning. It is concerned with what sentences and other linguistic objects express, not with the arrangement of their syntactic parts or with their pronunciation (Katz, 1972, p. 1).*

As hinted earlier, semantics is the study of meaning of a language. One may wish to know whether semantics is the study of meaning of a particular named language. It is important to note that semantics covers all aspects of meaning derived from a wide range of languages. However, meaning itself is not strictly communicated though named languages such as Bemba, Tonga, Lozi, or Nyanja. Rather, meaning can be communicated through symbols or signs. For example, consider the following signs and what they mean:

1. *Love/peace*

2. *Disapproval*

3. *Greeting*

4. *Agree/yes*

These symbols are not language specific but are used to communicate meaning. This begs the question of what is meaning? Consider the following:

'Meaning signifies' any and all phases of sign-process (the status of being a sign, the interpretant, the fact of denoting, the significatum) and frequently suggests mental and valuation processes as well...' (Morris, 1946, p. 19).

Other scholars have explained meaning in different and simple ways. For example, Leech (1974) explained that meaning refers to:

1. *That to which the user of a system refers*

2. *That to which the user of a symbol ought to be referring*

3. *That to which the user of the symbol believes himself to be referring*

4. *That to which the interpreter of a symbol:*

    a. *refers*

    b. *believes himself to be referring*

    c. *believes the user to be referring*

From the definitions of *meaning*, you can see that language and symbols are meaningful. In fact, the reason we use language in writing or speech is to convey meaning. That is the reason why, if someone says something to which people cannot relate, the common question that follows is: what do you mean? This is so because interlocutors know and expect any act of communication to be meaningful. You may also have heard that silence is loud. This is so because what people do and do not do all communicates meaning. Wierzbicka (1988) was right to state that 'everything in language conspires to convey meaning'.

So far, it has been established that semantics is the study of meaning and that meaning is that to which the speaker, symbol, or lexis refers. What has been clear is that meaning is not only conveyed through speech. That is why from a multimodal point of view, it is clear that speech, action, voice, movement, gestures, sight, smell, color and gaze all work together to create and convey meaning. This is very important for language and literacy teaching and learning. To start with, language teaching should be meaningful. The teaching of reading and listening comprehension means that learners should read with understanding and, in the case of listening comprehension, the discussion should be informed by exchange of meaningful utterances in which encoding and decoding become central. Further, the teaching of grammar should not be restricted to rule explanation but should extend to what those sentences mean, and they should be taught in meaningful situations—social contexts. Similarly, in the teaching of composition and summary, it should be the case that what learners write is clear and communicates the intended meaning. To this end, language teaching should be meaningful. The second implication of the multimodal nature of language is that language is not only speech. Every symbol and the material culture communicates meaning. In this case, teachers should endeavor to use various affordances in meaning making in the classroom. For example, speech, movement, tone and gestures should co-work in meaning making and in emphasising/buttressing the communicative intent in the classroom. This is clearly very helpful, as learners will connect what they hear to what they see in understanding what the teacher is communicating.

1. What is 'meaning' and why is 'meaning' important in the teaching and learning of language?

2. Mention the different affordances which teachers can use to communicate meaning in the classroom.

3. Why is it important for teachers to use different affordances at the same time as they teach?

Teacher educator guidance

Facilitate this discussion and ensure that student teachers discuss the answers in view of the classroom situation.

5.12.1

Types of meaning

We have now come to know that semantics is the study of meaning. Meaning itself has also been explained. Here are seven types of meaning according to Leach (1981):

1. **Denotative meaning:** This is also called conceptual meaning or cognitive meaning. This refers to what words and utterances mean by their own make up outside social context. Some explain it as the dictionary meaning of words.

2. **Connotative meaning:** Connotative meaning is concerned with the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to over its purely conceptual content. Connotative meaning is aimed at the real world experience one associates with an expression when one uses or hears it. Connotative meaning is unstable. Thus, it varies from time to time according to culture, historical period, and the experiences of an individual.

3. **Social and affective meaning:** This is a type of meaning which is determined by social circumstances, for example, in social relationships between the speaker and hearer; it is also reflected in the language used that is frequently in usage of words according to social status. Social meaning also includes what is called illocutionary force of an utterance, whether it is interpreted as a request, an assertion, an apology, etc. For example, *I haven't got a spoon*, has a meaning of assertion and the situation where it is spoken in a restaurant (addressed to the waiter). The assertion would be a request, such as *please bring me a spoon*.

4. **Affective meaning:** Affective meaning refers to meaning which reflects the individual feeling of the speaker, including his attitude expressed toward the speaker's objective. For example, with the objective of getting people to be quiet, we might say: *I'm terribly sorry to interrupt, but I wonder if you would be so kind as to lower your voices a little*. Politeness is included here, and factor in the possibility of voice timbre as necessary effect as well.

5. **Reflected meaning:** This sort of meaning arises in cases of multiple conceptual meanings. A sense of a word makes our reference to another sense. For example, the synonymous expression of the comforter and the Holy Ghost both refer to Third Person of the Trinity. So the comforter sounds warm and inviting, while the Holy Ghost sounds awesome. Reflected meanings are less obvious and manifest themselves as a form of euphemism too. This is the reason why reflected meanings are not always obvious.

6. **Collocative meaning:** Collocative meaning is the words, which are considered to have individual lexical items or share common ground in meaning but may be distinguished in their occurrence. For example, *pretty* and *handsome* mean 'good looking', but they can be distinguished in their occurrence with the nouns followed. The word *pretty* may be followed by words such as *girl*, *woman*, *lady*, etc. while *handsome* may be followed by words such as *man*, *boy*, etc. Further, the word *green* collocates with *grass* while the word *dark* collocates *night*. In other words, collocative meaning may be understood as an associative meaning in which one idea can point to another, even if they don't mean the same.

7. **Thematic meaning:** Thematic meaning is what is communicated by the way in which a speaker or writer organises the message, in terms of ordering, focus, and emphasis. It is the choice among expressions which have the same sense but different in communicative values. Let's examine the sentences below:

   a. *The boy kills the snake.*

   b. *The snake is killed by the boy.*

Although the two sentences mean the same, the first sentence focuses on the boy while the second sentence focuses on the snake.

In pairs or small groups, complete the following activity:

Come up with examples to illustrate each of the seven types of meaning.

Be prepared to discuss the relevance or applicability of each of the seven types of meaning to the teaching of literacy and language in Zambia. Refer to the syllabus content as needed.

5.13

Word/sense relations

Word meaning also comes from the relations or associations of the word you choose with other words that are related or connected to it in various ways—which you have not chosen, but which are there in your mind and memory. The relation between the words comes from the relation between their meanings in varying forms. These are:

a. **Synonymy:** A synonymy is the relation of sameness of meaning. Examples of synonyms are *glad* and *happy* as well as *sofa* and *couch*.

b. **Entailment**: Entailment is the relation between the two sentences under which one follows necessarily from the other by the virtue of a certain semantic relation between them. When two sentences entail each other, they are synonymous, or paraphrases. For example: *Kelvin swims beautifully* entails that *Kelvin swims*. However, *Kelvin swims* does not entail that *Kelvin swims beautifully*.

c. **Hyponymy:** This is a relationship of *inclusion*; a hyponym includes the meaning of a more general word: *dog* and *cat* are hyponyms of *animal*; *rose* and *lily* are hyponyms of *flower*. The more general term is the hyponymy.

d. **Antonymy:** Antonymy has to do with words which have opposite meanings. For example, *closed* and *open*, *dead* and *alive*, *he missed the target = he did not hit it*.

e. **Metonymy:** this is the relationship of a *whole* to a *part*: hand/finger; teapot/spout; car/engine; tree/branch, etc. This is not to be confused with hyponymy: hyponymy expresses the relation 'a kind of', metonymy 'a part of'.

f. **Tautology:** Tautology is a semantic redundancy which has superfluous information. For example, 'The man is an adult'. We can look in the predicate (adult) that its sense is included in the subject (man). So, it is also a meaningless repetition. Another example: 'My brother is an unmarried bachelor'.

g. **Presupposition:** Presupposition is a condition found in the meaning of the sentence expressing the proposition. In order for the sentence to make sense contextually, there is information that must be mutually known between the speaker and the audience. To be clear, let's see this example: *My brother is a doctor* presupposes I have a brother. Secondly, *my wife is a nurse* presupposes that I am married.

h. **Ambiguity:** ambiguity refers to having many or vague meanings. The two types of ambiguity are syntactic ambiguity and lexical ambiguity. Syntactic ambiguity arises from multiple syntactic structures corresponding to the same string of words. For example, the sentence, 'The boy saw the man with the telescope' is ambiguous. This sentence may mean that the boy used a telescope to see the man. But it may also mean that the boy saw a man who had a telescope. This type of ambiguity is caused by arrangement of words in a sentence. On the other hand, lexical ambiguity arises from multiple meanings corresponding to the same word or phrase. For example, if you look at the sentence *This will make you smart*, the word *smart* is ambiguous because the same word may mean 'intelligent' while it may also mean 'good looking/well dressed'. Moreover, it is not clear what the word this is referring to.

Activity 14: Learning outcomes 2–3

1. For each of the word relations, come up with more examples besides what have already been given.

2. Discuss the relevance of these word relations to the teaching of language.

Teacher educator guidance

The idea here is for student teachers to see how they can use some of these word relations to teach vocabulary, how they can teach and answer comprehension questions, and how they can teach rewrites, etc.

Chapter summary

This chapter has looked at the levels of linguistic analysis such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. It has been clear that phonology as a study of speech sounds in combination starts where phonetics leaves off. But what has been central is that the knowledge of both phonetics and phonology (phonological awareness) is crucial to the art of literacy teaching and learning. It has been revealed that while morphology studies the structure of words, syntax studies the structure of sentences. All these are relevant to both the teaching of literacy and language respectively. Finally, semantics as a study of meaning forms the hallmark of language teaching and learning because while classroom interaction is itself an exchange of meaning, language use and language learning entails that meaning is being constructed and decoded. Overall, the chapter has shown that one's appreciation of language, especially as a teacher, helps one teach language and literacy both correctly and appropriately.

Assessment of learning

1. Explain the meaning of linguistics.

2. Learning outcome 1: Define the levels of linguistic analysis (a–e), and then answer the following question: How does a teacher's knowledge of the following levels of linguistic analysis relate to language and literacy teaching?

   a. Phonetics

   b. Phonology

   c. Morphology

   d. Syntax

   e. Semantics

Teacher educator guidance

Here, students should discuss specific elements of the above levels of analysis, and they should relate those aspects to the teaching of language and literacy respectively.

Branches of Linguistics

Branches of Linguistics

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we learnt about the levels of linguistic analysis which simply explain how language is constructed from sounds through words to sentences. In this chapter, we expand our view of language to consider, firstly, stretches of talk or texts longer than sentences in **discourse analysis**; how language is used and abused in society in various social-cultural contexts in **pragmatics** and **sociolinguistics** (Edwards, 2013; Ishihara & Cohen, 2010), respectively and finally, we consider the interface between language and the mind in **psycholinguistics**. The latter includes aspects of what was discussed in language acquisition but also more about language processing and comprehension (Field, 2011). These are what we call branches of linguistics which are actually interfaces (meeting grounds) between language and society and language and the mind. As may have become clear in some of the chapters already worked through, language is not just structure or grammar, it is a tool of communication. Communication involves interactions among speakers and listeners who have to use their linguistic knowledge, their understanding of the social-cultural contexts, and social relationships to reach communication goals. It is thus important for the teacher to know how to enable learners to communicate effectively both in writing (literacy) and speaking and these branches help teachers to achieve this goal.

The figure below illustrates the main foci of this chapter. While pragmatics and sociolinguistics are related quite closely to discourse analysis because they provide for the context and the learner's ability to use language appropriately, they're represented separately to indicate their importance to the overall discussion in this chapter.
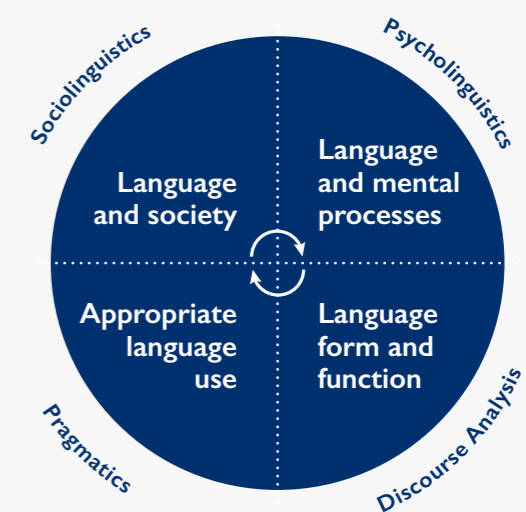

Figure 6.1 Branches of linguistics

Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.2.6   Linguistics and its branches

1.2.6.1   Describe the different branches of linguistics

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1   define the following branches of linguistics: discourse analysis, pragmatics, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics

2   demonstrate understanding of the branches of linguistics by providing examples of language use

3   apply the concepts of the branches of linguistics to literacy and language teaching and learning

6.2

Instructional materials

- Student module
- Sample text to support Activity 4

6.3

Key terms

Discourse analysis

a branch of linguistics at a level higher than a sentence concerned with the study of language in its intra-linguistic context

Pragmatics

a branch of linguistics concerned with how context shapes how we use and interpret language

Sociolinguistics

a branch of linguistics which studies all aspects of the relationship between language and society

Psycholinguistics

a branch of linguistics concerned with the study of the relationship between the mind and language

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

a type of discourse analysis which focuses on the relationship between power and language

Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis (CCDA)

a type of discourse analysis used within the classroom context to raise social and political awareness

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

a field of linguistics which studies the relationship between language's form and function

Conversation Analysis (CA)

a type of discourse analysis which analyses conversations; a useful tool for learning how language learners negotiate communication within social contexts

Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis studies 'how sentences and utterances pattern together to create meaning across multiple sentences or utterances' (Gee & Handford, 2012, p. 1). To get a better understanding of what is meant by this, consider the dialogue below between speaker A and B.

> **Speaker A:** *May I use your pen?*
>
> **Speaker B:** *Yes, you may.*

While Speaker B does not repeat the entire utterance (Yes, you may use my pen.), the response is acceptable because it is understood in relation to the one before it. What has changed in the next example?

> **Speaker A:** *May I use your pen?*
>
> **Speaker B:** *My purse has been stolen.*

In this exchange, there is no connection between what the two speakers uttered. We say there is no **coherence** between the two utterances, which is another way of saying that what the two speakers have said in relation to each other is not meaningful and unified. There is coherence in the first dialogue above because we can see that the second utterance answers what the first utterance asked for. *The search for this coherence in a stretch of language or a text is what is called discourse analysis.* In what follows we give a few examples of how this search for coherence is done, that is discourse analysis. We begin with an examination of how a text is made coherent through cohesive devices or formal (language) links.

Activity 1: Learning outcome 1

Define *discourse analysis*.
What are the characteristics of successful communication?

Teacher educator guidance

Engage teachers on the discussion question and also point out the relationship between the terms *transactional* and *interactive* communication.

Cohesion

Cohesive devices are words used in the language to provide links within and across sentences in a stretch of talk. These include the ones shown below. We have provided examples to illustrate each type of cohesive link.

a. **Reference:** Pronouns, especially third person pronouns, are used to link together sentences by referring back to subjects and objects (represented by nouns) in the previous sentences as in these two sentences: *John came late. He was drunk.* Notice how the pronoun 'he' is used to point back to the subject of the first sentence, 'John'.

b. **Substitution:** *She reads a novel every evening; it is the one left for her by her mother.* Notice how the noun phrase 'the one' has been used as a substitute for 'a novel'. Substitution can involve nominal (noun) structures, verbal, and clausal elements.

c. **Ellipsis:** A: '*Would you like coffee or tea?*' B: 'Tea, please.' In this example, B's answer omits the words *I would like...* and this does not lead to a breakdown in communication because it is understood in relation to what A asked. This demonstrates how ellipsis (omission) as a cohesive tie is manifested in a text. Like substitution, it can be nominal, verbal, or clausal.

d. **Lexical:** Repetition of words can also provide links similar to the use of pronouns. For example, in this text: *The fishing industry is very import to Zambia. Many people are employed in the fishing industry as fishermen, fish mongers and even drivers of vehicles that transport fish from fisheries to markets.* The phrase 'fishing industry' is repeated as well as related words such as fish and fisheries. These help to create links among the sentences.

e. **Conjunction:** There are many words in languages which are used to link parts of sentences such as clauses together or provide links across sentences. These are referred to as conjunctions. Some merely add information, but some can communicate various concepts such as time relationship, contrast or concession, reason, purpose and so on. For example, *John is rich. However, he is a very mean person.* This is an example of contrast.

Activity 2: Learning outcome 2

1. Construct sentences that use cohesive ties which are used to express the following:
   a. Reason
   b. Contrast
   c. Result
   d. Addition
   e. Time

2. Explain the usefulness of cohesive ties in writing (e.g. composition, summary, etc.)

Teacher educator guidance

In order to complete this activity, it is recommended that the lecturer provide an example for the types of sentences that the student teachers are being required to create.

It is important to note that sometimes a text can be coherent without involving any of the cohesive devices discussed above. For example, consider this situation: two people are sitting in a small poorly ventilated room, one of them seated away from the only window says to the one near the window: *'It is hot in here'*. The one near the window says: *'I will open the window'*. We can tell there is coherence here of a different type: it depends on the context (the physical situation) in which these two people find themselves. Coherence requires, more often than not, a consideration of the social and physical contexts in which people interact to work out the motives and functions of what they say. This is where discourse analysis links up with pragmatics, which deals with language use in contexts.

Activity 3: Learning outcome 2

There is a signpost near a small forest which has these two notices:

This forest is not a toilet. The forest is for members' use only.

After reading the signpost message, decide whether there is coherence between the two messages.

6.4.2
Organisation of information

Generally, information is organised in a manner that aids communication. As a result, the following are ways in which information is organised to increase uptake and processing:

a. **Given vs new information:** Ordinarily, the given comes first while the new comes later. In sentence structure, the subject is the given (old) and the predicate is the new information about the subject. For example, 'Nchimunya is unwell'; 'that man we visited last year has been arrested'. In both sentences the subject is assumed to be known by both the speaker and the hearer. However, the information in the predicate (the structure from the verb forward) is new to the hearer. And that's the essence of the communicative act in this given context to let the hearer know about the new start of affairs.

b. **Left – centre – right:** The left and right represent the given and the new respectively. However, the centre signifies the most important information or one that needs to be stressed or receive focus. No wonder, even in multimodal discourse analysis, the most important person is normally positioned in the centre when shooting photos.

Activity 4: Learning outcome 2

Identify the elements in the passage as outlined by the lecturer.

What would happen to the meaning of the text if the two pieces of information were interchanged?

Teacher educator guidance

Look for a passage where you see elements of given and new information. Then ask them to complete the activity above. Emphasise that the way the information is organised ensures clarity of meaning, completeness of ideas, and ensures cohesion and coherence. It also follows the English syntactic rules for SVO order, for example.

6.4.3

Critical discourse analysis and critical classroom discourse analysis

Echoing the sentiments from the introduction, the various linguistic branches allow for multiple perspectives on language to emerge and offer a more comprehensive vantage point. **Critical discourse analysis (CDA)**, although containing 'discourse analysis' in its title, also examines social aspects of language but from a critical standpoint. Fairclough (2010) describes CDA as being a transdisciplinary approach that is both dialectical and relational. Relational in that there is a relationship between discourse and a social context (things and persons) and dialectical meaning discourse between people of differing opinions or perspectives for the purpose of arriving at a consensus or reconciliation of ideas. Issues of power relations or hegemony along with the sustainment, hindrance, or naturalisation of ideologies are key themes studied in CDA.

What is important here however is how CDA is relevant to the classroom. Kumaravadivelu (2006), a second language acquisition theorist, posits that CDA linguists 'see language teaching as a prime source for sensitising learners to social inequalities that confront them, and for developing necessary capabilities for addressing those inequalities. Furthermore, CDA is an 'advocate for critical language awareness' in learners (p. 15). Kumaravadivelu's linguistic work led him to develop **Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis (CCDA)**. His theoretical framework focuses in on the ideological metalanguage embedded in discourse to help learners raise their own social and political awareness. CCDA asks key questions to guide pedagogy, which are summarised below (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, pp. 73–74):

- How can we study and understand the impact of social, political, and historical forces on discourse and its relationship to classroom interactions?
- How can we identify ways in which learners' backgrounds motivate the 'style and substance' of classroom interaction?
- How can we analyse and assess the extent to which critical engagement and effective language use is facilitated in the classroom?
- How do we include all learners with respect to their 'personal purposes, attitudes, and preferred ways of doing things' in the 'rules, regulations, instructional aims, and objectives' in the classroom?
- How do we manage classroom interactions so that everyone's 'beliefs, identities and voices, fears and anxieties' are handled with care and attention?
- How can we create a classroom environment that encourages the respect of multiple perspectives?

6.4.4

Conversation analysis

Conversation analysis (CA), another type of discourse analysis, is also important to the classroom. In the wider scope of CA, linguists study language within a broad range of social contexts (i.e. face-to-face communication, communication mediated through technology—phone, video), but the focus of CA is 'on the organization of conduct *within interaction*' (Clayman & Gill, 2012, p. 120). Within conversations, participants negotiate their 'social relationships through interaction', and this negotiation is important in the multilingual classroom context because 'it implies the use and constant refinement of both linguistic and pragmatic knowledge/ability' (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, pp. 33–34). When we get further into pragmatics, this will be made clearer. Kumaravadivelu (2006) presented three dimensions to negotiation as they relate to the multilingual or (L2) learning environment: 1) introspection, 2) interaction, and 3) interpretation. Introspection is understood to be a quality of the learner that is unobservable, which reflects their personal process of navigating through meanings and contexts. Through CA and within the L2 context, it has been found that the more L2 learners interact in classroom communication, the more successful they will be. Interaction helps learners notice the gap between their L1 and L2. Finally, not only do language learners need opportunities to interact, they also need opportunities that develop their interpretive abilities, their ability to use language pragmatically.

How can you apply the concepts of introspection, interaction, and interpretation to the teaching of English in primary schools in Zambia?

Teacher educator guidance

Group students together to discuss their responses to the question. Then have a whole-group discussion with volunteers to share their thoughts.

6.5

Sociolinguistics

Llamas (2011) defined sociolinguistics as a field that focuses on 'how language is actually used by speakers: how it varies, how it changes, how meaning is signaled and interpreted in social interaction' and that through sociolinguistics, we can more aptly understand the structures of language and society (p. 501). In the classroom setting, learners must not only have grammatical competence but also sociolinguistic competence. According to Oxford languages, sociolinguistics is the study of language in relation to social factors, including differences of regional, class, and occupational dialect, gender differences, and bilingualism. In addition, Nisa (2019) noted that sociolinguistics 'is the branch of linguistics that deals with the study of language in relation to society' (p. 2). She further stated that language and society are so related that they are like hand and glove. With this line of thinking, the belief is that language cannot exist without society. Thus, language defines society just like society reflects a language and how its language is used. To talk about social or regional dialects is to talk about the relationship between society and language. Other social variables which affect language are gender, class, age, attitudes, power, culture, identity, etc.

In this module and considering the scope of sociolinguistics, not all factors will be discussed. The major reason is that most of what is supposed to be covered under sociolinguistics is covered in chapter 7, which focuses on the language situation in Zambia. In chapter 7, many sociolinguistic concepts and issues are addressed, especially as they relate to education and instruction. Secondly, not every aspect of sociolinguistics is directly relevant to education and classroom instruction. Based on these two reasons, this chapter will focus on two aspects, namely language and identity, as well as language attitudes.

6.5.1

Language and identity

Vignoles (2017) defined identity as 'how people answer the question, Who are you?' (p. 1). Thus, identity refers to who and how someone is. However, identity is not only 'Who are you' because this may mean that identity is what someone says he or she is. Identity can also be an answer to 'Who is he/she' or 'Who are they'. In fact, an identity of a person is something formed by different social actors and perceived differently by different people. Merriam-Webster (2021) defines identity as 'the distinguishing character or personality of an individual' (para. 1). Note that character or characteristics of an individual may be natural, social, cultural, economic, or political. At most, identities overlap, and one individual will have multiple identities. While literature classifies identity differently, in this module, only four types of identity will be discussed as they relate to language and language teaching. These are:

a. **Ascribed identity:** This is a type of identity people are born with or which they gain through involuntary action. For example, sex, race, tribe, height, parents one is born from, etc. These are natural, and one has no control over them; they did not choose them, yet they form almost an indispensable part of their identity. It is important that teachers take note of these identity markers so that no learner is discriminated against or excluded based on identities they cannot change and which they did not deliberately choose in the first place. Girls and boys, for example, should be treated equally without favoring one over the other. Learners from poor and rich parents should all be treated with respect and the teacher should promote mutual respect between and among learners despite their different identities. In addition, teachers should design and deliver lessons with full recognition and respect for these identities. The language of instruction and examples given should resonate with the identity or identities present in the classroom.

b. **Imposed identity:** This is a type of identity which others place or assign to an individual. This may be due to experience or mere perception. Sometimes, people can assign or place an identity because of stereotyping of someone or a group, depending on where an individual belongs or with whom s/he associates. For example, it is an imposed identity to claim that all girls are dull in mathematics and, to extend this to an individual, say Jane, when she fails maths that it is expected because she is a girl. Firstly, it is only a stereotype that girls are not strong in mathematics. Secondly, the reason Jane might have failed mathematics may have been that the teacher tested the class on topics they did not discuss in class. Further, to think that poor children or children from poor families cannot make it in education is equally an imposed identity because there is no one-to-one correspondence between poverty and success in

school. Another example would be a case where a teacher does not scaffold a learner who failed an end-of-term assessment because he concluded that the learner was dull and not serious. From that point on, the teacher treats that learner as dull and irresponsible. This stereotype based on experience may be detrimental to the learner, who has since started working hard and is no longer failing, etc. It is important that teachers do not impose or enact imposed identities on learners because they can have a long-lasting impact on learners.

c. **Negotiable identity:** This is a type of identity which a person thinks s/he is and makes attempts to portray or explain to others. This may be different from an imposed identity, which is what others think you are. Negotiable identity is one with which a person strives to identify. For example, if a learner thinks you mistake him/her for someone who is not serious, s/he may deliberately start coming to you for consultation to negotiate a different identity. The learner may equally start studying in your presence or in a place where you will notice just to negotiate the identity of a serious person. Equally, if parents think their child is unmotivated and not serious at school, the child may explain to the parents that contrary to their view, he is serious, etc. Further, the child may start to keep lights on at night to just show that he is reading in order to negotiate the identity which s/he thinks is the correct identity. In the school set type, it is important for teachers to support learners when they are negotiating identities, especially those identities which support academic achievement. Thus, instead of ignoring or rebuking the learner based on your imposed identity, you need to support the learner to become even better.

d. **Achieved/assumed identity:** this is a type of identity which comes through effort or deliberate action. People work hard to achieve some identities. For example, Cristiano Ronaldo's identity as arguably the best footballer of all time is an example of achieved identity. Wealthy can also be an achieved status just like academic success. It is important for teachers to ensure that these identities are used and enacted productively and in a way that they don't impede the progress or wellbeing of others in school.

As it can be observed from the four types of identity above, the four types overlap, and one person can have all the four types of identities. What is also clear is that all learners have identities, and the classroom is full of different identities. The fluid nature of identity means also that a person may have several identities which might be contrasting. Crucially, most identities are not permanent as they can change from time to time, and one person may be perceived differently by different people. The dynamism of identity also means that teachers should be aware of this fact and never treat learners based on their one-off negative experience. People are in constant change, especially as they grow and gain

more experience. Thus, labelling learners is not encouraged because of its negative effects, including the fact that some learners may end up accepting and enacting negative identities/stereotyping which may have been forced on them.

Activity 7: Learning outcomes 1 and 3

1. Define sociolinguistics.
2. Reflect on your own identities while you were in primary school.
3. Based on your own experiences, how do you think these identities affected how teachers treated you?
4. How do you think this affected how teachers related with fellow learners based on their identities?
5. How will you handle these types of differences among the learners in your classroom?

6.5.2
Language attitudes and classroom teaching

Chaiken (1993) defined an attitude as 'a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor' (p. 1). Put differently, attitudes involve deciding in terms of liking versus disliking, approving vs. disapproving or favouring vs. disfavouring a particular issue, object, or person. It can be asserted that language attitudes refer to one's judgment or evaluative decision of liking or disliking, approving or disapproving, as well as favouring or disfavouring of a particular language or languages. Clearly, not all languages are perceived in the same way by everyone. Whether someone will favor or not depends on the advantages associated with a particular language and how one associates themselves with one language over another. Generally, there are three manifestations of attitudes as follows:

a. **Positive attitude:** A feeling or response of favor, agreement, liking, or approval towards a language. Literature has shown that some learners in Zambian even at high school hold positive attitudes towards English because they perceive it as the language of higher education, employment, and social mobility. They are normally motivated to learn the language and use it as a medium of instruction because of the perceived advantages of the language (See Mwanza, 2016).

b. **Negative attitude:** A feeling or response of disfavour, dislike, disagreement, or disapproval towards a language. This may be because of the experience of the language, lack of economic advantages of the language, low social status, and lack of official functions assigned to the language. Some of the reasons why some learners and parents hold negative language attitudes towards Zambian languages is that they perceive Zambian languages to lack economic power. Such learners or parents, including teachers, may not want Zambian languages to be used in class, even as a medium of instruction.

c. **Neutral attitude:** A feeling or response which neither favours nor unfavours, likes or dislikes a particular language. This may be because of ignorance or because according to present knowledge, both options or all languages are known to be of equal status.

Language attitudes are always present in the classroom. They may be positive, negative, or neutral. In terms of languages as the language of instruction (LOI) and as languages of learning in schools, teachers ought to cultivate a positive attitude to every language in the classroom because functionally, all languages are used for communication. The implication of this is that multilingual-based instruction such as translanguaging should be seen as normal and progressive language practices which recognise the linguistic identities of the learners, and they are used as steppingstones to acquiring official knowledge in the classroom.

Activity 8: Learning outcome 3

1. What are the educational disadvantages of teachers having negative attitudes towards some languages in a multilingual classroom?

2. How can you change learners' negative attitudes in school and in the classroom?

3. What is the relationship between language attitudes and translanguaging?

6.6

Pragmatics

According to Grundy (2000), pragmatics studies language as it is used in contextualised communication and the principles that are associated with it. Pragmatics has much in common with what is discussed under discourse analysis and sociolinguistics. It is concerned with features of talk such as the appropriacy of what is said to the context or situation in which it is said and relevance of language use. It deals with how people make sense of indirect utterances through inference making, among others. For example, the dialogue we had at the beginning of the discourse analysis sections which appeared to be incoherent can be given a different interpretation:

> **Speaker A:** *May I use your pen?*
>
> **Speaker B:** *My purse has been stolen.*

We normally expect that people's responses will be *relevant* to what has been said before but when they appear to be ignoring this maxim (or rule) of conversation (Grice, 1975), we have to find an alternative explanation. In this case, the fact that speaker B is avoiding answering the request might be taken to mean she doesn't want to lend him her pen. This is what we call a *conversational implicature* or what is implicated in the conversation. Pragmatic competence takes some time to acquire in children because they have to experience life; they have to see how people handle different situations and how they use language in those. It is particularly harder to learn the pragmatics of a second or foreign language because it is connected to the culture of that language.

The field of pragmatics has direct implications for the multilingual classroom context or the L2 learning environment. It can be understood through a sociolinguistic frame in that pragmatics is not only a 'cognitive process but also a social phenomenon', and through pragmatics we can learn how 'L2 speakers construct and negotiate their identities as they become socialised into the L2 community' (Ishihara & Cohen, 2014, para. 6). Teachers can help their learners develop their pragmatic ability or competence. Pragmatic ability refers to our knowledge of pragmatics and our ability to apply pragmatics across listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Being pragmatically successful depends on each learner's language proficiency, demographic characteristics, and prior experiences with language(s) and competent language speakers (Ishihara & Cohen, 2014). The table below summarises the skills we need to demonstrate pragmatic competence.

Table 6.1 Pragmatic competence and communication skills

Skill	To be competent, we need to…
Listening	interpret what is said and what is not said including verbal and non-verbal cues
Reading	comprehend text, structure, genre, nuances in tone or attitude
Speaking	know how to say what we want to say, formally or informally, and how to communicate non-verbally
Writing	know how to write, informally or formally, with appropriate form/structure

As we learnt in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), we use speech for a variety of purposes, and as it applies here, our pragmatic ability or competence facilitates how well our speech is executed, whether that is through, for example, declaring, apologising, promising, refusing, requesting, complaining, complimenting, inviting, etc. The next section, Speech Act Theory, outlines speech as a performance and interaction between the speaker and the hearer and a brief overview of the conditions that must be met for speech to be well-executed.

6.6.1

Pragmatics in the multilingual classroom

In chapter 3, we learnt about the functions of language and how supporting learners' metalinguistic awareness supports literacy and language learning. Understanding how to use language appropriately by context, pragmatics, is part of this. In the multilingual classroom, there may be learners who are unfamiliar with the LOI, and their rate of learning will be different than those whose Mother Tongues (MT) or L1 are the same as the LOI. It is therefore important for teachers to be proactive in understanding what may prevent pragmatic competence in L2 learners. There are numerous reasons why learners may have difficulty using language pragmatically when their language differs from the LOI (Ishihara & Cohen, 2014). For one, pragmatic norms may not have transferred positively. This negative transfer may be due in part to a misunderstanding of how the norms in their L1 apply in the L2 or target language, which would be more prevalent in the case where the cultural norms between languages are quite different. What is acceptable to say in one language may not be acceptable to say in another. Another cause for divergence may result from the learners' grammatical ability. While learners may have a strong grammatical ability, this doesn't mean they are able to respond in a pragmatic way. They may be unable to adequately form

a grammatical sentence that matches the complexity of an appropriate response. Learners may also overgeneralise rules in their L1 and incorrectly apply those rules to the L2. As well as this, the instruction itself and the learning materials in the classroom may not be sufficient for supporting pragmatic competence. Finally, pragmatic divergence may occur when learners are resistant to using the pragmatic norms of the L2. It is believed one reason for this may be due to learners feeling conflicted with their own identity and the L2.

Knowing that there are challenges in learning a new language and that some of these challenges are found within pragmatic ability, teachers can help remedy these challenges by providing both explicit and implicit instruction in pragmatics. Explicit instruction in pragmatics is quite similar to explicit instruction in metalanguage. Ishihara & Cohen (2014) suggest numerous tasks that teachers can implement in their classroom to build pragmatic competence. The list below includes some of their suggestions:

- *Analysing and practising content-specific vocabulary*
- *Identifying and practising grammatical structures*
- *Identifying and practising a variety of speech acts*
- *Analysing and practising speaking and writing in a variety of formats (informal, formal/academic, presentations)*
- *Noticing and practising the use of different tones*
- *Identifying and using a range of cultural norms*
- *Identifying and using possible cultural reasoning*
- *Analysing and practising different levels of formality in interaction (i.e. directness, politeness/deference)*
- *Remain culturally sensitive, support and encourage learners' L1*

While teachers must be aware of learners' pragmatic abilities and personal characteristics (cultural backgrounds, language), teachers must also be aware of the psycholinguistic factors and processes that contribute to learners' success (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). In the following section, these factors and processes are explored.

Activity 9: Learning outcome 3

1. How can we ensure that learners who are not able to speak and understand the second language and language of classroom communication are helped to access learning?

2. With examples, how can you apply the pragmatic tasks listed above in classroom interaction?

6.7

Psycholinguistics

Psycholinguistics is the interface between two disciplines, namely psychology and linguistics. While psychology is the study of the mind and behaviour, linguistics refers to the study of language. Therefore, Psycholinguistics is defined as 'a study of the psychology of language' (Purba, 2018, p. 47). Psycholinguistics has also been defined as 'the study of the relationship between human language and human mind' (Maftoon & Shakouri, 2012 as cited in Purba, 2018, p. 47). Three processes are investigated under psycholinguistics, namely: (a) language production, (b) language comprehension, and (c) language acquisition. As you observed in chapters 4 and 5, these three processes were discussed to a large extent. As a discipline, Psycholinguistics is a multidisciplinary field of linguistics including but not limited to cognitive psychology, speech science, neurolinguistics, and computer modelling (Field, 2011). Linguists in this field study the 'cognitive processes that underlie the storage, use, and acquisition of language and their correlates in observable neural activity' (Field, 2011, p. 472).

Our ability to store and retrieve language depends on our working memory (WM) and long-term memory (LTM). WM and LTM processes are controlled by a 'central executive' which directs how much attention is needed and how attention is distributed. WM is different from LTM in that its capacity is limited; LTM 'enables the language user to command phonology, to retrieve lexical items and to produce utterances that are grammatically correct' (Field, 2011, p. 475). Some children have difficulty with memory retrieval, but teachers can help learners build their memory skills. Here are some helpful ways.

Teachers may:

1. Give directions to students in both visual and verbal formats and ask learners to repeat directions and explain the meaning of the directions.

2. Teach learners to overlearn material or repeatedly review material even when it is assumed that the material has been learnt.

3. Teach learners to use visual images to help them memorise vocabulary words.

4. Provide printed directions to learners to follow and refer to as needed. These directions can also be accompanied by visuals.

5. Teach learners to highlight, underline, or make notes in text to show that they are actively reading.

6. Provide graphic organisers to learners to help them organise information visually and to be used as a guide or tool for future reference.

7. Provide memory games in the classroom so that memory practice feels like play.

6.7.1

Psycholinguistics subdisciplines

There are subdisciplines under psycholinguistics, each of which attempts to respond to different language concerns. Below are the seven subdisciplines of Psycholinguistics according to Chaer (2015), as cited in Purba, 2018, p. 48:

a. **Theoretical psycholinguistics:** Focused on theories of language relating to human mental processes in language, such as phonetics, diction, syntax design, discourse, and intonation.

b. **Developmental psycholinguistics:** Related to language acquisition, both first language acquisition (L1) and second language acquisition (L2); examine phonological, semantic, and syntactic acquisition, emergent through processes in stages that develop gradually and become integrated.

c. **Social psycholinguistics:** Related to the social aspects of language, including social identity.

d. **Educational psycholinguistics:** Discusses general aspects of formal education at school, including the role of language in teaching reading proficiency and improving language ability to express thoughts and feelings.

e. **Neuro-psycholinguistics:** This subfield focuses on the relationship between language, language production, and the human brain. Neurology experts have managed to analyse the biological structure of the brain and how the input and output of language are processed in the brain.

f. **Experimental psycholinguistics:** Concerned with conducting experiments of how language is processed in the brain to better understand the processing of language in the brain.

g. **Applied psycholinguistics:** Concerned with the application of the findings of six subdisciplines of psycholinguistics explained before in certain areas that require them, including psychology, linguistics, language learning, neurology, psychiatry, communications, and literature.

In terms of their relevance to language teaching, developmental psycholinguistics and applied psycholinguistics contribute to the formulation of language teaching approaches such as the cognitive code approach, natural method, total physical response, suggestopedia, and audiolingual approaches.

Teacher educator guidance

Though these different approaches are not fully discussed in this chapter, you may choose to provide more resources for your student teachers on the approaches or encourage them to learn more about them on their own.

For example, the audiolingual method was influenced by behavioural psychology. Language learning is patterned on the habit formation and conditioning in behavioural psychology. Social psycholinguistics is useful in understanding the psychosocial condition of the learner and how that condition informs as well as affects teaching and learning. It also shows how the social conditions of the learners form their identity, which later creates a basis for which the child will feel accepted by a social group or how the learner will psychologically feel outside the social group—all of which affects learning. Mitigating these issues becomes central to classroom success both on the part of the learner and the teacher. Similarly, educational psycholinguistics explains the role of language in teaching reading proficiency and how to use language to improve a learner's expressive skills. Since educational psycholinguistics studies the role of psychology and language in formal education settings, it is imperative that teacher educators and teachers of literacy and language possess a thorough knowledge of the relationship between psychology and language from different perspectives to position themselves as competent teachers of language and literacy respectively. In short, all the seven subdisciplines are important to language and language learning and acquisition. This may become even clearer as attention is drawn to psychological factors affecting language learning in the next section.

Activity 10: Learning outcomes 1 and 3

Define *psycholinguistics*.

Discuss the relevance of the above subdivisions of psycholinguistics to language and literacy teaching.

6.7.2
Psycholinguistic factors affecting language learning

It is well established that teaching and learning does not take place in a vacuum. These two processes are affected by several factors. In this chapter, the concern is on psycholinguistic factors which affect language teaching and learning. Consider the following factors from Lightbown and Spada (2006, pp. 58–74):

a. **Intelligence:** Intelligence refers to one's ability and performance on tests, which are often linked with school success. In second language learning, intelligence has been known to play a key role in one's performance in all the four language skills of listening, speaking, writing, and reading.

b. **Aptitude:** Aptitude is understood to mean one's ability to learn quickly and easily. It is therefore argued that high aptitude helps a learner to learn the language quickly and easily and at high speed, including high levels of endurance on a language learning task or situation.

c. **Learning style:** The term learning style is understood to mean different things to different people. According to Purba (2018), learning style refers to 'an individual's natural, habitual, and preferred way of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills'. While some learners learn better with visual materials, others learn better with an oral explanation. Yet, there are learners who learn better through practical activities. All of these are learning styles. What is important to realise is that language and literacy classrooms have all these types of learners. Thus, teachers are encouraged to be eclectic in their teaching so that they reach out to all learners.

d. **Personality:** Different learners have different personalities which all affect their learning of language and literacy. Some learners are extroverts, which is said to be a very helpful personality in language and literacy learning. Other personality traits which affect language and literacy learning in different ways include but are not limited to the following: worry, nervousness, stress, self-esteem, empathy, dominance, and talkativeness.

e. **Intrinsic motivation:** This type of motivation is engendered through a learner's communicative needs and attitudes towards second language. In case of communicative needs, if a child sees English as a steppingstone to higher education and employment, he or she is likely to work hard to learn the language. In the case of attitudes towards second language, positive attitudes towards second language is considered to be helpful. In fact, it has been found that most learners in Zambia have more positive attitudes towards English over Zambian languages, and this varying response affects their response to language learning (Mwanza, 2017).

f. **Extrinsic motivation:** These are environmental factors, including the teacher and parents who encourage and motivate learners to learn a second language or with literacy. These could even be role models and celebrities who are successful, speak the language well, etc.

g. **Culture and status:** Purba (2018) explained that there is some evidence that students in situations where their own culture has a lower status than that of the culture in which they are learning the language make slower progress. Other related social factors include the status of the language being learnt. For example, it is possible that learners may find literacy in English more important than literacy in Zambian languages. When this is the case, learners may be motivated to learn reading and writing in English more than they would be motivated in Zambian languages. Similarly, it is not surprising that some parents may prefer their children being taught in English, even without prior exposure to the language, simply because of the perceived status and advantage of English over other languages. Social factors at a more general level can affect motivation, attitudes, and language learning success. In all this, the social dynamic or power relationship between the languages play a big part.

h. **Age:** Second language learning is influenced by the age of the learner. Children, who already have solid literacy skills in their own language, seem to be in the best position to acquire a new language efficiently. Motivated, older learners can be very successful too, but usually struggle to achieve native-speaker-equivalent pronunciation and intonation. Research has found that age distinguishes children and adults in learning a second language in certain aspects such as phonology, morphology, and syntax.

Activity 11: Learning outcome 3

How can the following factors affect language and literacy teaching in primary schools, and what should teachers do to mitigate the effect of the listed factors?

  a. Intelligence

  b. Learning style

  c. Personality

  d. Intrinsic motivation

  e. Extrinsic motivation

  f. Culture

  g. Age

Psycholinguistics approach and four language skills

Psycholinguistics is helpful in understanding how an individual perceives and produces language. Perception or language reception is concerned with the skills of listening and reading while language production is concerned with the skills of writing and speaking. Thus, there is a relationship between psycholinguistics with the skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Below is an explanation of this relation (Demirezen, 2004; Purba, 2018, pp. 52):

a **Psycholinguistics approach and listening skill**

When teaching listening, intrinsic motivational factors (such as the speed of the speech, number of unknown words, and prior knowledge about topic) as well as extrinsic factors (such as a learner's interest, motivation, purpose of listening activity, and noise in the environment) all need to be controlled for the teaching of listening to be successful. In addition to this, teachers can increase the level of motivation to listen by designing an engaging and relaxing/comfortable learning space.

b **Psycholinguistics approach and reading skill**

According to the psycholinguistics approach, the text-based approach is both bottom-up processing as well as top-down processing. As a bottom-up process, the idea is to emphasise comprehension, while top-down will be aimed at stressing the point that comprehension of text is dependent on the learners' knowledge base. In practice, bottom-up processing happens when a reader tries to understand the text by first focusing on the individual meanings of the most basic units of the text and then moves from these basic units to understanding the whole text. On the other hand, top-down processing of the text takes place when a reader uses background knowledge to predict the meaning of the language they are going to read. Thus, instead of depending on individual words, they make predictions of what they will read and later confirm or refute these expectations as they read. This emphasises the importance and use of learners' prior knowledge to understanding text. The role of psycholinguistics is also in reducing learners' intrinsic challenges by arousing learners' interest in the text and reading it. To do so, teachers need to use authentic and contextually relevant and interesting reading materials. A lack of contextualisation may more likely result in learners being disinterested in the text and reading as a whole.

c Psycholinguistics approach and writing skill

Psycholinguistics is helpful to teachers in understanding learners' mistakes in writing, especially that the spelling system in English is not transparent. This is difficult because storing and retrieving correct spelling on demand is challenging. Some writing difficulties are because of agraphia (Hux & Mahrt, 2019). To help learners to write with ease and success, teachers should find interesting topics to write about, as this has been found to decrease writing difficulty among learners. This also helps to solve the mechanical mistakes on punctuation, etc.

d Psycholinguistics approach and speaking skill

Psycholinguistic approach is very relevant to the teaching of speaking. Some learners have psychological disorders which have affected their speaking ability. Conditions such as aphasia, autism, stuttering, and disarticulation all affect speech and the teaching of speaking (Beals et al., 2015; Lavid, 2003; McLeod & Goldstein, 2012; Soskey et al., 2017). The role of the teacher is to identify learners with these difficulties and find measures for how to help such learners. One of the ways is to choose interesting topics for discussion so that learners are motivated to speak.

Activity 12: Learning outcome 3

How does psycholinguistics relate to the teaching and learning of writing, speaking, reading and listening?

Teacher educator guidance

Ensure that student teachers give their own answers in addition to what has already been explained in the chapter.

6.8
Language disorders

There are a number of disorders which have a huge impact on language acquisition, learning, and use. It is important to discuss these conditions so that teachers find ways of appropriating their instruction so that both teaching and learning are learner-centred. Inclusive teaching implies that teachers are aware of both the language deficits learners have and how they can be helped. Below are some of the language disorders and their characteristics according to Schirmer et al. (2004):

Table 6.2 Language disorders and associated characteristics

Name of difficulty	Characteristic(s)
Autism	Immediate or late echolalia, perseveration (inappropriate persistence on the same subject) associated to alterations of non-verbal communication, stereotyped and persistent behaviour, and restricted and/or unusual interests may occur. Social capability is also affected. He or she may also be hard to understand, use a robotic voice, and speak very little or not at all.
Phonological dyslexia	Phonological decoding incapacity. Damages on grapheme-phoneme conversion. Difficulties in performing tasks that involve phonologic memory. Very bad performance on reading of nonfamiliar stimulus and pseudowords (non-real words).
Literal dyslexia (pure)	Letter-by-letter reading is maintained.
Neglect dyslexia	Difficulties in reading on the visual field of the contra-lateral side of brain injury.
Attentional dyslexia	Ability to read single words is maintained. Difficulties in reading multiple items when simultaneously displayed.
Deep dyslexia	Absence of non-word reading. Ability to read concrete and frequent words.
Surface dyslexia	Impairment of the lexical route. Stimuli are read through a phonologic process e.g. reading *pint* to rhyme with *hint*, etc.). Orthographic treatment of information is impaired.
Stuttering	There are several ways in which stuttering manifests itself, including speech characterised with long pauses, stretching a sound, and repetitions—including repetitions of a word within a word. It must be mentioned that stuttering can be triggered by nervousness.
Selective mutism	Normally, a child with selective mutism may keep quiet and fail to speak or communicate in class. This is sometimes triggered in certain social situations. Thus, selective mutism may come up in certain situations and not in other situations.
Attention hyperactive disorder	Learners fail to pay attention and control their behaviour in class. Learners may also have problems with sitting still.

How can teachers design and provide instruction in the classroom if there are learners with each of the language disorders explained in the table above?

Teacher educator guidance

Ensure that student teachers answer this question by suggesting how they can provide an inclusive classroom.

6.9

Putting it all together: Communicative competence

In Zambia, the goal of teaching English is to develop communicative competence in learners. Hymes (1972) explained communicative competence as knowing when and how to say what to whom. As such, Widowson (1990) argued that the need to develop communicative competence in learners has also led to a shift from teaching from linguistic structure-centred approaches to a communicative approach. Mwanza (2016) noted that 'Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT) refers to both the processes and goals in classroom learning and the fact that communicative competence comprises abilities in expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning' (p. 10). This method is influenced by functional linguistics (Savignon, 2002; Halliday, 1978) and it arose from Dell Hymes' concept of 'communicative competence'. Hymes' classic utterance states, 'There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless' (Hymes 1972, p. 279). The utterance does not mean that grammatical or linguistic competence is not significant in language teaching but that for a teacher to be successful in language teaching, he or she should consider both the grammatical rules and the rules of use, which are also referred to as rules of appropriateness. To this, 'one has to take the whole context and communicative situation into account when determining whether an utterance is successful or not' (Mwanza, 2016, p. 10).

The concept of communicative competence is helpful in showing the link between Sociolinguistics, Discourse analysis, Pragmatics, and Psycholinguistics, including syntax, which was discussed in the previous chapter. The idea is that all these branches of linguistics discussed are relevant to the teaching of language. This link between these branches, including a level of linguistic analysis of syntax, is best understood through

the lens of the four dimensions of communicative competence, which is itself the goal of teaching language in Zambian primary schools. Mwelwa and Mwanza (2020) explained the four dimensions of communicative competence as follows:

a. **Grammatical or linguistic competence:** This type of competence includes the linguistic forms which are traditionally subsumed under the category of grammar; including rules of sentence structure, word formation, and pronunciation. In short, it looks at words and rules. This type of competence directly relates to syntax and rules of discourse, including grammatical agreement, substitution, etc. Thus, what one sees is that for one to communicate competently, they need the knowledge of syntax and discourse rules.

b. **Sociolinguistic competence:** It is also called pragmatic competence. It refers to an 'understanding of the social context in which communication takes place, including role relationship, the shared information of the participants, and the communicative purpose for their interaction' (Richards & Rodgers, 1986:71). This type of competence clearly relates to sociolinguistics. This means that the teachers' knowledge of sociolinguistics is crucial in situating not only communication but teaching language appropriately.

c. **Discourse competence:** This is understood in terms of the interaction of individual message elements in terms of their interconnectedness and of how meaning is represented in relationship to the entire discourse or text. The implication of having this linguistic knowledge is that teachers should teach language as a whole or as discourse instead of focusing on sentences and words out of context. Reading and reading comprehension require one to have discourse competence. In relating communicative competence to branches of linguistics, it is clear that discourse competence relates to discourse analysis.

d. **Strategic competence:** This basically refers to the coping strategies that are employed by communicators to initiate, maintain, repair, and terminate or redirect communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). This is a very important aspect of communicative achievement and communicative competence. This type of competence requires one to possess psycholinguistic as well as pragmatic knowledge to read the interlocutor and context of communication to decide what and how to communicate.

From the dimensions of communicative competence above, all the branches of linguistics discussed in this chapter converge on developing a communicatively competent learner. The knowledge of syntax alone does not result in successful communication without the sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. The four dimensions are so interdependent in the same way the branches of linguistics co-work to create an effective communicator.

Activity 14: Learning outcome 3

"Write a lesson description on a topic of your choice to show how you can teach that topic in a way that all the four dimensions of communicative competence are covered.

Teacher educator guidance

Divide the class into groups. Let the group representatives report the lesson description to the class. They should be able to analyse their own lesson description to show how and where in the lesson a particular dimension is being covered.

6.10

Chapter summary

In this chapter, we have explored discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and psycholinguistics. It has been shown that these branches of linguistics all have a bearing on language and literacy teaching, and when taken into consideration together, form a more comprehensive perspective of how we learn and use language, how language is affected by a variety of factors. It is hoped that student teachers will understand the meanings of the respective branches of linguistics and possess the skills of applying the knowledge into classroom instruction and behaviour.

6.11

Assessment of learning

1. What do we mean by branches of linguistics? How do they differ from levels of linguistic analysis?

2. Write brief definitions of the branches of linguistics.

3. Discuss the relevance of branches of linguistics to language and literacy teaching.

Language Situation in Zambia

Language Situation in Zambia

INTRODUCTION

Language situation refers to the number of languages spoken in a country and the relationships among them. Zambia, like many other African countries, is a multilingual country which means that it has many languages spoken within its borders (Kashoki, 2018). In addition, many people in Zambia are either bilingual, that is, are able to speak at least two languages or multilingual, they speak more than two languages. Others may be classified as polyglots (Greek: *poly* = many and *glot* = language). This is in sharp contrast with many European countries where monolingualism is common: only one dominant language is spoken, such as English in the United Kingdom. It is important to understand the language situation because it provides the context in which education is conducted and, more importantly, it has implications for the teaching of languages and literacy especially in relation to which languages are taught or excluded from the education system.

Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.3.1   Language policy in Zambia

    1.3.1.1   Explain the language policy changes in Zambia before and after independence

1.3.2   Language and dialect

    1.3.2.1   Distinguish differences between language and dialects, language and ethnicity, language and gender, language and identity

    1.3.2.2   Explain the following terms: Mono-lingualism, Bi-lingualism, polyglot, multilingualism, foreign language, official language, local language, familiar language, *lingua franca*, register, diglossia, endoglossia, exoglossia, and national official language

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1   describe the relationship between language and ethnicity

2   explain the following terms: monolingualism, bilingualism, polyglot, foreign language, official language, local language, familiar language, *lingua franca*, language register, diglossia, endoglossia, exoglossia, and heteroglossia

3   distinguish between language and dialect

4   use lexical similarities to determine which of their languages are related

5   demonstrate understanding of the relationship between language and ethnicity

6   explain the number of languages spoken in the country

7   describe the language situation in Zambia using sociolinguistic terms

8   discuss the implications of the language situation on language policy and language and literacy education.

7.2

Instructional materials

Student module

7.3

Key terms

Language

A conventional, structured system human use to communicate by sound, written text, or gestures.

Dialects

Related varieties of the same language. People speaking dialects of the same language have mutual intelligibility, that is, they understand each other.

Mutual intelligibility

Able to understand each other. A characteristic of dialects that while different are so similar that people can understand each other.

Register

Variations in language used in different social situations.

Ethnicity

Refers to the ethnic group/tribe that a person self-identifies with due to a shared culture, norms, values, and language.

Cognates

Shared words across languages as a result of their similar ancestral language origin.

Status language planning

A process for determining which languages or dialects should be officially used in different social domains.

Corpus language planning

A process of developing a language including the development of an orthography, literature, and even vocabulary creation.

Official language(s)

A language prescribed by law to be used as the language of government administration, education, and so on (e.g. English in Zambia).

Mono-, bi-, multi-

Prefixes joined to -lingual (language) to refer to the number of languages spoken in a country or by individuals; *mono* = one, *bi* = two and *multi* = many.

Polyglot

A Greek word (*poly* = many, *glot* = tongue/language) which refers to a person who has command of many languages.

Endo-, exo-

Prefixes jointed to -glossic (language) to refer to the adoption of language policies that include either: an inside or native language (endoglossic) as an official language; a foreign language (exoglossic) as an official language.

Heteroglossia

Refers to the presence of multiple varieties of the same language.

Diglossia

Refers to the existence of two forms of the same language in which one is used for formal/official purposes and the other for ordinary communication.

Foreign language

A language which is not indigenous to a country such as French in Zambia.

Familiar language

A language of the community which may or may not be a mother tongue but is familiar to learners, for example.

Lingua franca

A language commonly used by speakers of different languages for communication in a region. For example, Nyanja is a lingua franca in Lusaka province.

The difference between language and dialect

In this chapter, we discuss language from the social point of view, how we identify languages we or other people speak, and how we communicate with each other. Most of us are able to name the language that we speak when asked. For example, a person from Namwala might say he/she speaks Ila while another from Gwembe might say Tonga. If the two were to engage in a conversation, they would discover that they spoke similar languages. This is because they would understand each other to some extent. If, however, a Tonga speaker was to meet a person from Chipata who claimed to speak Nyanja, they might have difficulties in understanding each other. These examples show the differences between languages and **dialects**, related varieties of the same language, sharing to a large extent, linguistic features like words, grammar, and pronunciation. Where people can understand each other in spite of speaking 'languages' with different names, we say there is **mutual intelligibility**. This is the most important test that linguists use to distinguish between one language and another, as opposed to dialects of the same language. In order to have mutual intelligibility between language varieties, lexical (word) similarities between the languages should be 85% or higher with percentages of 70% or lower being less satisfactory (Swaka et al., 2019). (From the Tonga and Ila example, we can tell that the two are dialects of each other, but the relationship of Nyanja to Tonga is that of two distinct languages.) To explore the differences between language and dialect deeply, this section is divided into further subsections that differentiate between regional dialects, social dialects, and standard language.

7.4.1

Regional dialects

Since all indigenous Zambian languages belong to the Bantu language family, we expect that they should share many **cognates**, words which historically came from the same ancestral language which in the case of Bantu languages is called **Proto-Bantu**. However, when people speaking the same language drift apart and live long distances from each other or come into contact with speakers of other languages, their languages undergo some changes. They either create (innovate) new words, for example, to talk about new things in their environment or they borrow words from other speakers of different languages. In this way **regional dialects** are created. For example, the Bemba spoken in Luapula province differs in minor ways in terms of pronunciation to the one spoken in the Northern Province. A Luapula speaker (e.g. Aushi) calls a 'rubbish pit' *ikishala* while one from the Northern Province (e.g. Bemba) calls it *icishala*. In Valley Tonga 'to wash' is pronounced as *kusanzya* but in Plateau Tonga it is *kusanhya*. This difference in pronunciation is said to be a one of

accents (the way words are pronounced). Accents do not cause serious breakdown in communication but differences in words (lexical differences) do. In order to have good mutual intelligibility between language varieties there must be as much as 85% and above lexical similarities between them according to Grimes (1988). Below 70% communication becomes less satisfactory.

Below, in Table 7.1, are some findings from studies that examined lexical similarities among a number of languages in Zambia (Kashoki & Mann, 1978; Swaka et al., 2018).

Table 7.1 Lexical similarities

Language pair	Percentage of similarity
Nsenga – Kunda	78%
Tonga – Ila	67%
Tonga – Toka-Leya	62%
Tonga – Lenje	53%
Ila – Lenje	51%
Ila – Toka-Leya	50%
Bemba – Mambwe	63%
Bemba – Namwanga	58%
Bemba – Tonga	59%
Namwanga – Mambwe	75%

Activity 1: Learning outcomes 3 and 4

Ask student teachers to review the table above and determine:

Which languages qualify to be dialects of each other?

Which languages are considered to be independent languages?

Teacher educator guidance

The lexical similarities referred to above are worked out by comparing some basic words which are words that are unlikely to be borrowed across languages such as names of body parts, common verbs like 'eat', 'walk', 'talk', etc. The figures of lexical similarities above do not necessarily reflect individual speaker's knowledge of words from other languages. If they live nearer to speakers of other languages, they may know many more words than is indicated by the lexical similarities. Students can be asked to compile a list of basic words in English and translate them into the languages that they speak. From such translated words they can work out the percentages of lexical similarities across their languages.

7.4.2

Social dialects

Apart from regional dialects that develop because people move further apart, there can also be **social dialects** which reflect differences in the speech varieties of say, different social-economic classes. People of a higher economic status or power are said to speak 'better' (more prestigious) forms of the language compared to the poor or less powerful people. It is thus claimed that the language spoken in the palaces of chiefs and in the surrounding areas are more prestigious forms or 'purer' forms of language compared to the others (Sawka et al., 2019).

Related to social dialects are the language phenomena **diglossia** and **heteroglossia**. In diglossic contexts, there may be two variations of the same language that coexist with each variation possessing specific functions that when used in the incorrect situation would be considered socially inappropriate (Nordquist, 2018). Diglossic situations may also refer to the contrast between languages spoken at home when they are different than the officially established languages of a country (Nordquist, 2018). In Zambia, there are also urban and rural dialects of some languages (e.g. Town Bemba or Town Nyanja). When multiple varieties of the same language coexist, linguists call this **heteroglossia**. Town Bemba has been termed the 'language of the city' and has borrowed words from English, Nyanja, the mining pidgin Fanaglo, and others (Spitulnik, 1999). Our **linguistic register** is what we draw from when we are able to vary our language communication according to the social contexts (Wagner et al., 2010) like in diglossia or heteroglossia situations but also how we may change our speech according to who we are communicating with (i.e. friends, colleagues, our children, siblings, etc.). Therefore, when we think about language, we are not only thinking about language as it is universally acknowledged but the variations between speakers of the same language, language dialects, multiple variations of the same language, and how our use of language may change to accommodate our purposes or audience.

Activity 2

Which of the two (rural or urban) dialects are preferred by the people and why?

7.4.3

Standard language

For many ordinary people, when a language is referred to as a dialect, they take it to be inferior to what is called a language. But linguists do not make these value judgements. For example, they can call Lenje a dialect of Tonga or vice-versa, although Tonga is a standardised language (see below). We have seen that dialects are varieties of the same language; the problem, however, is in deciding how to refer to this 'same' language: Which dialect can we choose to represent the rest? Different criteria have been used to do this. For example, the dialect that has the highest number of speakers might be chosen as representative because it is well known. Alternatively, a dialect that has some literature and can thus be said to be 'more developed' might be selected. The selection of a dialect to represent all related ones is usually a political decision. It is part of what is called **status language planning**. This is the process of selecting a language variety and assigning it functions in various social domains. For example, it can be used in education, government administration, judiciary, media, and so on. It is these roles or functions the selected dialect performs in society that elevates it among other dialects.

Once a dialect has been selected as a **norm** (standard) it might undergo **corpus language planning**. Corpus language planning is where decisions are made concerning how the language is to be written, e.g. by developing an orthography (spelling rules), a grammar, dictionary, and eventually books that can be used to teach it. Sometimes, new vocabulary can be developed to enable the language to be used for specialised purposes, e.g. in teaching sciences and mathematics. When all these things are done, and the dialect selected is accepted by the community, it becomes the **standard language** that has to be used officially by speakers of other dialects, e.g. in education, the media, the judiciary, and so on. The seven regional official languages: Bemba, Kaonde, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Nyanja, and Tonga underwent the processes mentioned above and became standard languages. Speakers of related dialects have to use the standard language for official purposes.

Activity 3: Learning outcome 8

What are some of the challenges faced by learners in urban schools who have to learn the standard language, which in most cases is based on a rural dialect?

What implications does this have for teaching and learning in the language and literacy classroom?

Teacher educator guidance

For this activity, pair or group students together. After they discuss the question, have some students volunteer to share their answers.

7.5

Zambia's languages

From the discussion above, we can tell that many of the languages in Zambia, claimed to be around 73 (Central Statistics Office, 2012), can be grouped together into clusters of related varieties or dialects. Kashoki and Mann (1978, pp. 19–21) attempted such a classification by considering lexical similarities among the languages. They came up with a list of some 15 language groups. These groups were further divided into clusters of closely related dialects where mutual intelligibility was possible. This resulted into 26 clusters or 'languages'. For example, the Bemba group has about 20 dialects (e.g. Aushi, Chishinga, Luunda, etc.). But these can be further divided into four closely related dialects such as the one between Bisa and Kunda or Lima and Lala. It is important to note that there has been considerable **dialectal levelling**, that is, dialects have grown much closer because of the use of the standard language, Bemba, for example, in education and the media. Those who speak non-standard languages (also called **vernaculars**) have learnt to speak the standard language. So mutual intelligibility among the dialects has increased. Another estimate of the number of languages in Zambia is by Eberhard et al. (2021) who claims the country has 37 indigenous languages.

Activity 4: Learning outcomes 5 and 8

What implications does the variety of languages spoken in Zambia have on teaching and learning in the language and literacy classroom?

What are some specific implications for learners who speak a minor language, a language other than a regional official Zambian language?

Make some suggestions as to what teachers could do in their classroom to help all learners feel included regardless of their mother tongue.

Teacher educator guidance

Pair or group students together to discuss the questions with each other and then create a list of their suggestions and comments to share with the class.

7.6

Language and ethnicity

Ethnicity refers to how individuals are identified as members of social groups and is closely associated with language (Swann et al., 2004). The 73 languages claimed to exist in Zambia are actually names of ethnic groups (the so-called tribes). For example, the Toka-leya, Totela, Fwe, to name a few, speak varieties of Tonga but they are considered separate ethnic groups. They are identified by being associated with a particular territory, traditional leadership, some cultural practices, and to some extent, language. For example, Toka-leya people would say their homeland is in districts such as Kalomo, Zimba, Kasungula, and Livingstone. They have their own chiefs such as Mukuni, and have an historical account of where they came from and how they became established, and so on. These features help to identify the Toka-leya as a social group; they also help create a sense of belonging (solidarity) to the ethnic group. The Zambia Central Statistics Office defines ethnicity as: 'The tribal group one identifies himself/herself with. Ethnic group is a self-perceived conception of social group membership' (CSO, 2010).

It has been a practice in Zambia since colonial times to recognise ethnic groups and their chiefs. In the colonial period, colonists used the system of indirect rule by using chiefs to control their subjects on behalf of the colonial administration. The independent government has continued this practice of recognising chiefs and encouraging traditional ceremonies for each ethnic group.

Activity 5: Learning outcome 1

How is language related to ethnicity?

Do the offspring of mixed ethnic marriages identify themselves?

Are there circumstances that motivate individuals to identify more with one group than another?

How should teachers perceive and treat learners of different ethnic and language backgrounds in the same classroom?

Teacher educator guidance

Discuss the relationship between language and ethnicity with student teachers, pointing out the nature of ethnicity and the role of self-perception in identifying with a particular ethnic group. Be sure to encourage tolerance, inclusion, and respect for all, despite ethnic and language differences.

7.7

Language in education policy

Choosing the seven official languages of Zambia was not an easy task, and as you may imagine, establishing which languages to be used in schools was also not so easy. In a multilingual country like Zambia, status language planning has been a contentious issue because there are many languages and dialects vying to be used in schools as the **language of instruction (LOI)**. In the following sections, we review the changes in the language in education policies beginning with the time missionaries settled in the country through the colonial period up to independence and beyond, to understand the history and evolution of language policies in Zambia. The timeline below outlines these main topics of discussion.

Figure 7.1 Significant periods in the evolution of language in education policy in Zambia

7.7.1

The missionary period

The earliest missionary group to set up a mission station was the Paris Evangelical Mission. In 1885, they made their first settlement in Sesheke located in the Western Province. Soon afterwards, other missionary societies followed such as the London Mission Society, White Fathers, Dutch Reformed, and the Society of Jesus. Their main purpose was to convert people to Christianity, but to do this, they realised they had to use the local people's language. As a result, they engaged in studying the Bantu languages of the people among whom they settled and further engaged in corpus language planning, which resulted in the development of orthographies which could then be used to produce written texts like dictionaries and Bibles. This was a major contribution to the development of Zambian languages.

Since the missionaries' essential purpose was to enable the local people to read the Bible, they also set up mission schools to teach children and even adults to read and write. This reflects the general view of missionaries at the time, that if they wanted to convert the local peoples to Christianity, the link between schools and church was paramount (Allen, 2005). Though rather than teaching the local people an unfamiliar European language, they thought it much more effective to teach the local people to read and write in their own languages. Therefore, the most widely acknowledged language in education policy for this time could be considered: *Teaching and learning should be conducted in a learner's local language or Mother Tongue.* However, there were some missions that did teach some European languages, but this was not their focus.

7.7.2

The British South Africa Company

Zambia was colonised by the British South Africa Company (BSAC) in the 1890s (as a proxy of the British Government). Their purpose originated from an interest in exploiting minerals in the territory. During their time of governance, they built only one school for African children, the Barotse National School at Sefeula in 1910, funded by taxes collected from the African population. This was part of a treaty signed through the Lochner Concession with King Lewanika of the Lozi on 27 June 1890, which gave the BSAC rights to trade and exploit the mineral resources of Barotseland (Allen, 2005). Since the BSAC's relationship with Zambian education was limited to only one school, the language in education policy remained the same, as the remaining 1,500 schools continued to be led by missionaries. In 1924, things began to change as the British Government took direct control of Zambia which is where our discussion continues next.

7.7.3

The colonial government

When the British Government assumed direct control, an American philanthropist organisation called the Phelps-Stokes Fund was visiting African territories to examine the existing educational system and make recommendations for improvement (Allen, 2005). They made several recommendations including the importance of teaching both African and European languages but for different reasons. In the context of African languages, they took a more language rights approach, arguing that African languages were an important part of the people's cultural heritage. They felt that teaching them was a way of preserving them and all that was good in the people's customs, traditions, ideas, and more importantly, the self-respect of Africans (Phelps-Stokes Report, 1925).

As could be expected, they were aware of the difficulty of choosing among the numerous languages or dialects and urged the colonial governments to conduct scientific linguistic surveys to help them determine which languages to adopt officially. In terms of the place of European languages in the educational system, the Phelps-Stokes Commission believed that their purpose would afford African's opportunities such as the access to information and learning and that it would unite Africans with 'great civilizations of the world' (Phelps-Stokes Report, 1925). The Phelps-Stokes Commission recommended the Three-Language Policy as outlined below.

7.7.4

The three-language policy

Language in education policy changed because of the recommendations put forth by the Phelps-Stokes Commission. They recommended that:

1. in the first two grades of primary school the child's mother tongue or local language of the area was to be used as the language of instruction (LOI).

2. in the third grade of primary school, children should shift to a **lingua franca**— the widely spoken language in a multilingual area – if the children's language was not the regional lingua franca.

3. in the fifth grade, a European language would be introduced as the LOI.

In 1925, without consulting the Zambian people, 'four principal native languages' were adopted to be used officially (as the lingua franca) in educational contexts (Ohannessian & Kashoki, 1978, p. 278). Listed in the table below are the four adopted languages and their territorial locations according to the zonal boundaries of the time.

Table 7.2 Official LOI during the colonial period

Territorial language zone	Language
North-Eastern Rhodesia (west of the Luangwa River)	Bemba
North-Eastern Rhodesia (east of the Luangwa River)	Nyanja
Barotseland (a portion of North-Western Rhodesia)	Lozi
North-Western Rhodesia	Tonga

Thus, the Three-Language Policy was underway but within the context of the four established regional languages. Children began their education in their native language, but if their native language was not one of the four principal languages, they shifted to the regional language after the third grade of primary school. Then, in fifth grade, English was introduced. From what we have learnt about the language situation of Zambia thus far, we can tell that the four adopted languages were not adequately representative of the language context. One region that was totally unrepresented was the North-Western Province, but this was corrected after Zambian independence.

Despite the language policy of the time, there were calls by some white settlers and Africans themselves to begin introducing English much earlier in primary schools. This was to meet the demand for people who could speak and write in English, to work in professions in which English was deemed necessary (e.g. clerks, shopkeepers, roles in government, and private companies). Africans also felt that knowledge of the colonialists' language was advantageous for children as it would give them employment opportunities in white-owned enterprises and government work.

In 1930, the Central Advisory Board of Native Education also encouraged schools that had qualified teachers to teach English to be used as a lingua franca because there was no language that could be used throughout the territory. They felt that English could serve as the language of wider communication, not just between Africans and Europeans, but also among Africans themselves who spoke different languages. In general, the colonial government advised that English should be used as a medium of instruction, but only after the initial literacy instruction was achieved (Ohannessian & Kashoki, 1978). Even so, pressure to incorporate English earlier in education led to its introduction in grade 2 as early as 1956 in urban schools, and by 1962, English began to be included as early as grade 1 in urban schools (Ohannessian & Kashoki, 1978). This marks a turn in language policy leading up to Zambia's independence which we turn to next.

7.7.5
Independence and beyond

In 1965, a year after Zambia gained independence, the Zambian Government abandoned the Three-Language Policy and opted for English to be used as the LOI from the beginning. This was in part due to recommendations by a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) team led by Dr Radford, an Australian educationist and that of another specialist from the British Council by the name of Hardman. They argued that children's spoken and written language would be better the earlier English was introduced, and felt that it would make it easier for children to learn content subjects in upper grades since English was to be introduced as the LOI in upper grades anyway. They further supported their argument (also in accord with the Phelps-Stokes Commission despite their policy beliefs) that English had a larger store of information and knowledge which would benefit the Zambian population, and they believed that the literacy skills acquired in English would transfer to literacy skills in Zambian languages. Thus, set in motion, the adoption of English as the LOI albeit the fact that it was a **foreign language**, a language indigenous to another country, and resulted in what is called an **exoglossic** language policy (*exo* = outside, *glossic* = language).

Activity 6: Learning outcome 8

Review the two discordant language polices:

> *Policy 1:* Instruction in primary grades should begin with children's native language or mother tongue.

> *Policy 2:* Instruction in primary grades should begin with instruction in English.

Then answer the following questions:

Was the argument that instruction in primary grades should begin with instruction in English a viable or workable policy given the Zambian context at the time?

From what we know about research in language and literacy development and instruction, is the transfer of literacy skills easier from English to Zambian languages or vice versa?

Teacher educator guidance

Be sure that the student teachers acknowledge the advantage of using mother tongues in early literacy instruction.

The decision to use English as the sole LOI was not only because of its perceived advantages but was also motivated by fears of ethnic rivalries. Adopting an exoglossic language policy averted possible controversy over choosing one language or dialect amongst the numerous competing languages which may have resulted in clashes between different ethnic groups. English was seen to be a neutral choice, and during this time in history, there were indeed politicians who were interested in adopting an **endoglossic** (*endo* = inside) language policy to promote one or more of the local languages like Tanzania's adoption of Swahili as the LOI in primary schools.

As a result of the inclusion of English as the LOI, Zambian languages suffered serious neglect within the educational system. In fact, in many urban primary schools, they were hardly taught. Some improvements to the situation occurred several years later. In 1970, Lunda, Luvale, and Kaonde were included in the list of official regional Zambian languages for the North-Western Province, but they were not, like the other regional languages, used as LOIs. However, over time, the use of English as the LOI resulted in further detriment to the acquisition of literacy skills in the Zambian population. These implications follow next.

7.7.6
The implications of the use of English as the LOI

English was used as the sole LOI for 30 years (1965–1996). According to Kelly (2000), this resulted in negative effects that led to a 'schooled but an uneducated generation' (p. 7). Unlike in the colonial period, the transition from home to school for children could be described as none other than *traumatic*. Children found themselves rote learning and memorising concepts in a language they could not understand, a language they did not use for thinking and communicating with others. School was an alien place for them, totally unrelated to their lived experiences. Literacy was introduced in a language whose sound system was foreign, unrelated to their Bantu languages, and research tells us that second language acquisition, or the development of language and literacy skills in a language besides a children's native language (L2), is more effective when children become proficient in language and literacy skills in their mother tongue or first language (L1) first (Billings & Walqui, n.d.; Madrinan, 2014). These problems were further exacerbated by the predominant method of literacy instruction of the time which favoured a whole-language approach to literacy instruction. Whole-language methods (also known as a top-down approach) teach children to read by recognising words as whole units of language as opposed to phonics-based (or bottom-up approach) methods, which teach children to segment and blend sounds that form words (synthetic phonics) or recognise common spelling patterns (analytic phonics), which are evidenced to be more effective in teaching children how to read (Foorman, 1995). So, not only were children being taught literacy skills in an L2 when these skills were not yet developed in their L1, but this was also within the context of a pedagogical approach deemed less favourable than what research proves to be more effective.

7.7.7
Educating our future

The shortcomings of English as the sole LOI policy were highlighted in a number of educational reform and policy documents such as in *Focus on Learning* (Ministry of Education, 1992) where it was stated that '[T]oo early an emphasis on learning through English means that the majority of children form hazy and indistinct concepts in language, mathematics, science, and social studies' (p. 28). Nothing, however, was done to rectify this problem, though there had been suggestions (unimplemented) that Zambian languages should be reintroduced in the lower grades to improve the uptake of literacy skills among the children.

However, the continued decline in the quality of education and the falling levels of literacy among primary school learners, forced the government to rethink its language policy. In the educational policy document *Educating Our Future*, it was decided that Zambian languages would be used as languages of literacy instruction in the first grade, but English would still be continued as the LOI for all the other subjects. Following this, a new literacy programme called Breakthrough to Literacy was introduced in which learners were taught initial literacy skills in grade 1 in the seven regional languages before making a transition to English in grade 2.

In spite of the initial success of the Breakthrough to Literacy programme, it soon proved to be unsustainable because of the high cost of teaching and learning materials. The short period between the transition from Zambian language literacy to English also meant that children were unable to develop fluency in reading Zambian languages. These, among other factors, meant that reading levels were not improving among the learners and further prompted the government to introduce the Primary Literacy Programme (PLP) in 2013, which caused three changes to literacy instruction: 1) It delayed the transition from literacy in Zambian languages to literacy in English from the second year to the third year; 2) Synthetic phonics became the mode of instruction instead of the whole-language or language experience approaches; and 3) The seven regional languages became the LOI for all the other subjects (except English) in the first four grades of primary school. The inclusion of seven languages was meant to ensure that children would be more exposed not only to reading Zambian languages in the literacy component, but also in the other subject textbooks leading to a better understanding of the concepts included in those subjects.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, we have explored the language situation in Zambia. We have seen that Zambia is a multilingual and multi-ethnic country. Numerous languages and dialects abound in Zambia, but over time, some dialects were developed into standard languages and became the seven official languages of the nation. The evolution of language in education policies in Zambia was greatly shaped by the missionaries who came to convert Zambians to Christianity and the British who came to benefit from the nation's resources and later colonised the country. Additionally, through experimentation with language policies and evidential weaknesses, language policies were later improved to include best practices for literacy and language as well as literacy teaching and learning.

Assessment of learning

1. What is the difference between a language and a dialect?

2. What is the relationship between language and ethnicity?

3. The language situation in Zambia is different from that of other countries because it is a multilingual nation as opposed to countries where monolingualism is the norm. Zambians may be multilingual, bilingual, or even considered to be polyglots. In your own words, describe what this means by including the key words in your explanation (learning outcomes 2 and 7).

4. In Zambia, there are various dialects, regional languages, minor languages, and official languages. Explain what this means to the language situation in Zambia by including these key words (learning outcomes 2 and 6) and references to specific languages as appropriate.

5. Explain the differences between the following terms: foreign language, official language, local language, familiar language, and lingua franca (learning outcome 2).

6. How does linguistic register help us to communicate in a variety of contexts?

7. Describe the difference between endoglossic and exoglossic policies (learning outcome 2).

8. Explain the phenomena of diglossia and heteroglossia and describe the relationship between our linguistic register and these phenomena (learning outcome 2).

Zambian Languages Orthography

Zambian Languages Orthography

INTRODUCTION

A child who learns to read essentially learns how to understand speech when it is written (Goswami, 2010). In other words, the child learns to relate letters of the alphabet to the sounds in her language. This is how the alphabetic writing system works. In chapter 9 of the literacy module, it was learnt that the alphabetic principle is the requirement that one letter must correspond to only one sound (or **phoneme**) in a language. An **orthography** provides the rules that are followed in relating sounds to letters in a particular language. From this brief discussion, it can be deduced that for a teacher to effectively teach literacy (and also language) he/she must have a clear understanding of the orthographic rules in the language of literacy instruction. This knowledge of the orthography includes an awareness of the phonology, morphology, and syntax of a language because these influence word formation and division as will become clear in this module. In this chapter, we will give a brief explanation of what an orthography is and how it is created after which we consider the orthographies in Zambian languages. We will do this by first considering why the Ministry of Education (MOE) decided to standardise the orthographies in the seven regional languages which were originally created mainly by missionary societies. Then we will look at the similarities and differences across the seven orthographies. Finally, we will consider the implications of this orthographic information for the teaching of language and literacy in Zambian languages.

Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.3 Language situation in Zambia

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1 define orthography

2 compare the orthographies of the seven regional Zambian languages

3 discuss how orthographies are developed

4 evaluate the relevance and importance of orthographies in teaching literacy.

8.2

Instructional materials

- Student module

- MOE (1977) *Zambian Languages: Orthography approved by the Ministry of Education.* (Or later reprints.)

8.3

Key terms

Orthography

The spelling system of a language or a set of rules that are followed in writing words in a language.

Phoneme

The smallest unit of sound that signals a difference in meaning in a word.

Grapheme

A symbol or letter (used in a similar way to the phoneme) that represents a sound in a spoken language.

Opaque orthograph

Orthographies where the correspondences between letters and sounds are inconsistent (e.g. English).

Agglutinative languages

Languages in which words are made up of linked morphemes expressing different meanings and grammatical functions.

Transparent orthographies

Orthographies where there is a clear correspondence between letters and sounds in a language (e.g. Zambian languages orthographies).

Syllable

A unit of pronunciation usually larger than a sound but smaller than a word (Crystal, 2008:467). It can consist of a single vowel or a combination of a vowel and one or two consonants. Open syllables end with vowels (e.g. *ba*) while closed syllables with consonants (e.g. *cat*).

Aspirated sounds

The audible release of air when articulating or pronouncing stop sounds (e.g. [pʰ])

Unaspirated sounds

The release of a stop without an audible puff of air (e.g. [p]).

Vowels

Sounds produced without interruption in the vocal tract, principally the mouth
 (e.g. *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*).

Consonants

Sounds produced by the narrowing or blocking off and release of the airflow (e.g. *p*, *t*, *f*).

Consonant clusters

A combination of consonants which are not digraphs or trigraphs (e.g. *nd* (nasal plus a
stop) called a nasal cluster).

Reduplication

A process by which whole words or stems are repeated or written twice.

Ideophones

Words and/or phrases that may depict a variety of sensory experiences (i.e. sound,
taste, movement, inner feelings) but also have specific marked orthographic features
(i.e. reduplicated roots).

Alphabetic principle

The requirement that one letter represents only one sound.

Phonological awareness

An awareness of the fact that words are composed of individual sounds (phonemes)
that can be manipulated in various ways.

Fluency

The ability to read a text accurately with appropriate speed and intonation.

What is an orthography?

Writing systems are ways in which language is represented in graphic form (writing).
Throughout written human history, languages have been represented in writing at three
different levels: the word or morpheme, the syllable, and the individual meaningful
sound or phoneme. A writing system that represents language at the morpheme level
is called a *logographic* writing system. Mandarin Chinese, *Zhong wen*, is written using
this system: each symbol, known as a character, represents a morpheme (although even
syllables can be represented). In a syllabary, like the one used in writing Japanese, *Hiragana*,
a symbol stands for an individual syllable (e.g. ba). Finally, in the alphabetic writing
system, which is used for writing most European languages and also Zambian languages,
each symbol (or letter) represents a phoneme in the language. We referred above to the
alphabetic principle: the requirement that only one letter or grapheme should correspond
to one phoneme.

The word *orthography* is made up of two Greek words: *orthos* meaning 'correct' and *graphia*
'writing'. Thus, it can be said to mean 'correct writing'. Orthographies, as mentioned above,
are ways of implementing the writing system to a specific language (Perffetti & Dunlap,
2008). They are sets of rules of how to write words. In languages where the alphabetic
principle is strictly followed, the orthographies are said to be **transparent** (also known
as **shallow**); one can see clearly how sounds relate or correspond to letters. Zambian
languages have largely transparent orthographies. In languages where the correspondences
between sounds and letters are not very consistent, we have what are called **opaque** or
deep orthographies because it is not easy to see how sounds relate to letters. English has a
largely opaque orthography. For example, the same sound /f/ can be represented in words
as [ph] in *phone* or as [gh] in *enough* and as [f] in *find*. There are equally cases where the
same letter can represent different sounds like 'c' in *receive* and *conscious*. There are also
cases of over-presentation of sounds by letters, for example the 'f' in *effect*. These do not
occur in Zambian languages.

Activity 1: Learning outcomes 1 and 4

1. Define orthography with your partner.

2. From what you have read so far, why is knowledge of an orthography important for a teacher?

Teacher educator guidance

Arrange student teachers in small groups or pairs. After student teachers answer the questions with their partner, have volunteers share their thoughts. At the end of the chapter, you will revisit the question of orthography's importance to see how their understanding may have evolved or whether there are still questions.

8.4.1

The orthographies of the seven official Zambian languages

In chapter 7, we learnt that different missionary societies reduced some Zambian languages to writing. They, therefore, were the ones who did the corpus planning for these languages. They not only developed orthographies but also produced some learning and teaching materials to teach the African population literacy. However, the orthographies they developed were of mixed quality. Some of these missionaries had skilled linguists among them who were able to produce orthographies that accurately reflected the phonological and morphological features of the languages but there were also some who lacked expertise. The latter produced orthographies that in some cases were based on the way their European languages were written. In some languages, different orthographies were produced in the same language or in related dialects of the same language.

After independence, the Zambian MOE realised that there was need to standardise the way the seven regional languages were being written to avoid having different ways of spelling words in the same language. For example, publishers were producing books with conflicting spelling systems. The MOE set up seven independent language committees to produce the standard orthographies for each language (1977). In this chapter, we will review the main rules put forward by these committees in the book entitled: *Zambian Languages: Orthography approved by the Ministry of Education* (MOE, 1977). We will look for areas of agreement and disagreement among them keeping in mind that they were proposing ways of writing languages which are from the same Bantu family of languages.

In developing an orthography, linguists study the phonology of the language which is to be reduced to writing. They work out a list of all phonemes, that is, sounds that make a difference in the meaning of words. For example, in these two minimal pairs of Bemba

words: *pala* 'resemble' and *pela* 'grind', we can see that it is the two sounds /a/ and /e/ that create two different meanings in the words. So, we say that /a/ and /e/ are phonemic in this language. In similar ways, inventories of sounds are worked out for each language: vowels and consonants. Other sound features that create differences in the meaning of words such as tones are also considered. In addition, as will be noted in the discussion below under vowels, changes in sounds within words are also taken into consideration. Finally, and not the least, decisions are made concerning what should be considered a word. Bantu languages are **agglutinative**, that is, they consist of words which are made up of linked morphemes expressing different meanings and grammatical functions. It is therefore, not easy to tell where word boundaries are. For example, this verb in Tonga, *ndilamugwashya* ('I am helping him'), is a full sentence as we can tell from the translation. When we write it as a single *orthographic*[1] word as we have done, we say we are writing **conjunctively**. This is, in fact, what we hear in speech: the word is uttered without pauses. If we were to separate the morphemes as the English translation shows (*ndi la mu gwashya*)[2], we would be writing **disjunctively**. However, apart from the last morpheme, those separate morphemes would not represent any word in Tonga. In all Zambian languages, except for Lozi, words are written conjunctively. Lozi to some extent, adopted a disjunctive writing style of writing words.

In the Zambian Languages Orthographies approved by the MOE, all the areas in Figure 8.1 are discussed. In what follows, we will comment on them.
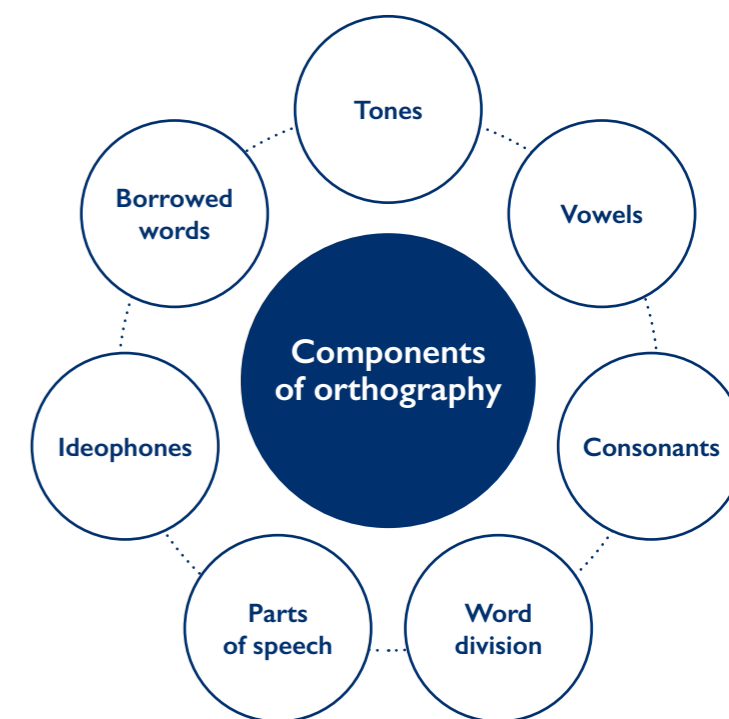
Figure 8.1 Components of orthography

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1   An orthographic word is the written form of a word with a space before and after it.

2   The morphemes are: subject marker + present progressive tense + verb root + final vowel ('I am him help'). The verb can also refer to the immediate future 'I am going to help him'.

Activity 2: Learning outcome 3

How are orthographies developed? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

8.4.2

Tone

Zambian languages are tonal languages which means that differences in tone in otherwise identical words can lead to differences in meaning. Tone refers to the pitch (how high or low a syllable is pronounced within a word). In Table 8.1 the pairs of words when uttered with a different pitch (tone) lead to differences in meaning as shown in the English glosses.

Activity 3: Learning outcome 2

Pronounce the pairs of words in Table 8.1 with different tones in a language that they are familiar with.

Table 8.1 Tonal differences and changes in meaning

Language	Examples
Kaonde	*mubanga* (jaw) *mubanga* (kind of tree)
Tonga	*cilundu* (a hill) *cilundu* (lump of tobacco)
Nyanja	*mtengo* (price) *mtengo* (tree)
Bemba	*akapanga* (small sword) *akapanga* (small stretch of bush) *akapanga* (a lamb)
Lunda	*kukula* (to grow) *kukula* (to scratch)
Luvale	*jila* (small path) *kajila* (bird)
Lozi	*matapa* (slates) *matapa* (insults)

In all the language committees, it was decided that tone would not be reflected in writing. They argued that the inclusion of too many diacritics (marks on words to indicate tone) would slow down reading fluency (MOE, 1977, p. viii). It is possible to tell which meaning of a word is expressed from its implied context.

8.4.3

Vowels

All the seven regional languages committees recognised five vowels: *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*. In addition, all the committees except the Luvale one, agreed to represent vowel length to reflect the differences in meaning arising from identical words in which one vowel is longer in the way it is articulated than the other. Table 8.2 shows minimal pairs, pairs of words which differ only in one item, here being vowel length. The difference between short and long vowels was symbolised by doubling the vowel letter for the long vowel and one letter for the short vowel. Some missionaries had used a bar or circumflex above a vowel letter to symbolise long vowels e.g. ā and â, respectively. These were not adopted in the orthographies.

Table 8.2 Examples of short and long vowels in Zambian languages

Language	Short vowels	Long vowels
Kaonde	*mona* (see)	*moona* (nose)
Tonga	*mali* (money)	*maali* (polygamy)
Nyanja	*fula* (dig out)	*fuula* (shout)
Bemba	*ukusala* (to choose)	*ukusaala* (to beg for mercy)
Lunda	*nkuku* (wrist)	*nkuuku* (crumbs)
Lozi	*bina* (dance)	*biina* (big men)

Activity 4: Learning outcome 2

List words in a Zambian language of your choice that differs in meaning because of vowel length.

Teacher educator guidance

It may be helpful to group or pair student teachers together who have the same mother tongue.

Zambian languages orthographies also represent this difference in vowel length in words that do not necessarily show differences in meaning as minimal pairs. For example, when two morphemes come together, the vowels at the morpheme boundaries might fuse. For example, in Table 8.3, the vowel /a/ of the class 6 noun prefix *ma* when combined with the vowel /i/ in *ino* 'tooth' in Kaonde, this results in a long [ee] as shown in *meeno* 'teeth'.

Table 8.3 Examples of fused vowels in Zambian languages

Language	Short vowels	Long vowels
Kaonde	*meeno* (teeth)	'*ma*' and '*ino*'
Tonga	*tuusiki* (cannot reach)	'*ta*' and '*usiki*'
Nyanja	*meeno* (teeth)	'*ma*' and '*íno*'
Bemba	*akooni* (small bird)	'*aka*' and '*oni*'
Lunda	*chaadi* (hen)	'*cha*' and '*adi*'
Lozi	*liiba* (dove)	'*li*' and '*iba*'

8.4.4

Consonants

When only phonemes that are found in native words (non-borrowed words) are considered, we find that the seven regional languages have different numbers of consonants as shown in Figure 8.2. The number of consonant letters in the Roman Alphabet is 21. This means that except for Bemba and Lozi, all the other language committees had to find additional ways of representing some additional sounds in their languages. In all the languages, 'q' and 'x' are not used from the Roman Alphabet. During the early missionary times, however, some Portuguese missionaries used 'q' for example in the name of a person, Maquina used in the North-Western Province. The 'qui' stood for the same sound represented currently as 'k' in Makina.
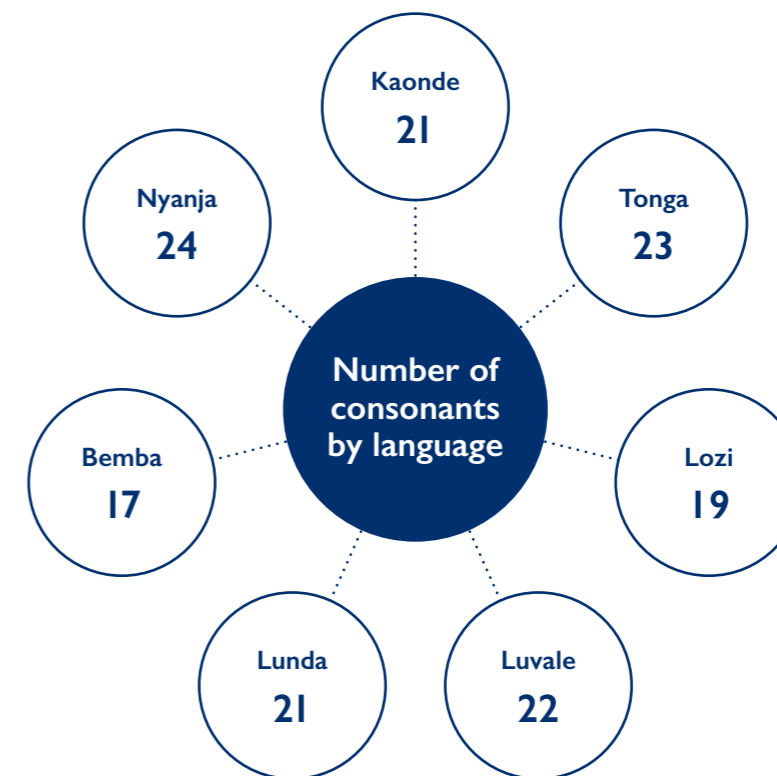
Figure 8.2 Number of consonants by language

8.4.4.1

Additional consonants

In order to represent additional phonemes or phonological features in the languages, different strategies were adopted. We consider those that are distinctive in some languages.

a. **Aspirated and unaspirated sounds:** This feature is usually associated with consonant sounds that are stops or plosives, e.g. 'p, c, t, k'. These are sounds which are produced by blocking air from the lungs at different points in the throat, mouth, and lips. For example, to produce /p/ we block air by shutting the lips and then releasing them suddenly. If we do this with a burst of air, explosively, we get an aspirated [pʰ], the small 'h' represents aspiration. (Put your palm in front of your mouth as you say 'put', you can feel a puff of air). If we do not produce the /p/ explosively we get an unaspirated [p]. In Nyanja and Luvale, aspiration can lead to differences in the meanings of words which are otherwise identical in every way except for aspiration. Aspiration is represented by inserting 'h' as shown in the examples in Table 8.4 below.

Table 8.4 Aspirated and unaspirated consonants

Language	Unaspirated	Aspirated
Kaonde	*kale* 'before'	*khale* 'seated'
Luvale	*keke* 'cool'	*kheke* 'mercy'

8.4.4.2

Soft and hard consonant sounds

b. In Tonga, identical words might differ in meaning because of the way a consonant is articulated. For example, some stops like /k/ and even a fricative like /h/ can be pronounced in a soft or hard way and this changes the word's meaning as in *kala* 'small intestine' and *kkala* 'sit down'; *hihi* 'a big log of firewood'; *hihhi* 'I don't know'. In the orthography, the hard sound is represented by doubling the letter, e.g. *kk*.

c. There are also additional symbols used to represent, for example, differences between closely related sounds which can be plosives or fricatives. For example, 'b' can represent a plosive or a fricative. To show this difference in Nyanja, the symbol 'ŵ' is used for the fricative and 'w' for the stop.

d. The velar nasal stop is represented by different letters in the Zambian languages as 'ng', 'ŋ', and 'ñ' in Nyanja, Bemba and Lozi, respectively. This is one of the areas where orthographies can be *harmonised* (written in the same way) so that only one symbol is used.

Teacher educator guidance

Discuss with student teachers the benefits of having a harmonised orthography in a multilingual country like Zambia.

8.5

Word division

The issue of word division is important in Bantu languages because of their agglutinative nature as we saw in Section 8.4 above. It is quite difficult also to decide in some cases where one word begins and ends because in normal speech, conjunctions, and some adverbs, might be uttered in one phonological word. By phonological word, we mean an utterance that has no pauses. For example, in Bemba a phrase like *umuntu na inkalamo* 'a person and a lion' is heard in speech as *umuntu neenkalamo*. The second word shows that the vowels in the conjunction *na* and the augment in the prefix *in* fuse to make *nee*. Should this be written as one word or do the two have to be separated? In the Bemba orthography, it is stated that the conjunction should be written separately except in cases where there is fusion of vowels as in the example here. Therefore, *neenkalamo* will appear as one word. In Lunda, the conjunction *na* is always added to the following noun except when the latter is a proper noun, e.g. *kawa namutupa* 'a dog and a lion'.

Activity 5: Learning outcome 2

Use the Zambian Languages Orthography to check what applies to the mother tongue of the students.

Is it a good decision not to separate conjunctions from nouns?

Teacher educator guidance

Discuss this with the students in relation to the concept of a word.

8.5.1

Locatives

Some common rules regarding word division are those concerning locatives which are prefixed to nouns but express prepositional meanings, e.g. *ku* 'to'; *pa* 'on' and/or 'at'; *mu* 'in'. These are added to common nouns but separated from proper nouns, e.g. in Kaonde, *pamuzhi* 'at the village'; *mumuzhi* 'in the village', but *ku Kabwe* 'to Kabwe', and *mu Kabwe* 'in Kabwe'.

Discuss with your peers examples of the use of the locative—*ku*, *mu*, *pu*, and *pa*—with proper and common nouns in your familiar languages.

Teacher educator guidance

Choose to group or pair student teachers together. Ensure that students understand the difference between these two types of nouns.

8.5.2
Noun prefixes

Noun prefixes in Zambian languages generally express a 'number' (singular and plural) and 'respect' (honorific) and indicate the class of the noun, e.g. class 1 and 2 as the grouping of human related nouns. In all the languages, noun prefixes are written conjunctively with the noun stem in common nouns but are separated from the proper nouns, e.g. *batu* 'people' [Lozi] but *bo Chanda*. The *bo* in the example is also honorific—a way of expressing respect. However, in Lozi and not in the other languages, this prefix is written separately from nouns of relationship like *bo malume* 'my uncle'.

8.5.3
Enclitics

Common to all languages are word particles called enclitics. These are actually locatives and thus express prepositional and adverbal meanings. They are attached to the ends of nouns—e.g. the *mo* in this Tonga word, *wali**mo*** 'he has been here'. In all the languages these are written conjunctively because they are phonologically part of the preceding word.

8.6
Adjectives

An adjective is word or phrase that qualifies or gives information about the noun. Adjectives thus occur in noun phrases, e.g. *musimbi mulamfu* '[lit.] girl tall'. Adjectives are dealt with in very similar ways as nouns because they have the same form as nouns. They consist of a prefix and a stem. Adjectives agree in number (singular or plural) and person (first, second, or third) with the noun they qualify. This is shown in the Lunda examples below (prefixes have been bolded):

> ***Mu****ntu **mu**wahi* 'a good person'
>
> ***Ba****ntu **ba**wahi* 'good people'

In Bantu linguistics, this agreement between a noun and adjective is called *concord*.

The same rule of joining the prefixes to common nouns and separating them from proper nouns apply here too. This is in cases where adjectives are formed from nouns. For example, *Khasu lamtengo* 'a wooden hoe', but *khasu la Phiri* 'Phiri's hoe'.

Table 8.5 presents some more examples of adjectives formed from common nouns which are written conjunctively with their prefixes.

Table 8.5 Orthographical rules for adjectives

Language	Example	Meaning
Nyanja	*Cisoti caudzu **not** ca udzu*	'a hat made of straw'
Kaonde	*Mwana wamulume **not** wa mulume*	'a baby boy'
Bemba	*Umukashana umusuma **not** umu suma*	'a beautiful lady'
Lunda	*Mpidi yayilehi **not** ya yilehi*	'a high hill'
Luvale	*Nyama yayivisu **not** ya yivisu*	'uncooked meat'
Lozi	*mibisi yemibeli **not** yemi beli*	'two roots'
Tonga	*Meso asalala **not** meso a salala*	'red eyes'

8.7
Compound and reduplicated words

In Zambian languages, some words are formed by reduplication. This is the process of repeating a whole word or the stem. For example, some adverbs are formed in this way, e.g. *msanga-msanga* 'quickly-quickly', i.e. 'hurriedly', where a whole word is repeated. Similar examples are found in the seven regional languages. Generally, in all the orthographies, reduplicated words are hyphenated as shown in Table 8.6.

Table 8.6 Reduplication in seven Zambian languages

Language	Example	Meaning
Bemba	*bwangu-bwangu*	'hurriedly'
Nyanja	*kukamba-kamba*	'talking anyhow'
Kaonde	*bitende-bitende*	'bit by bit'
Lunda	*tubila-bila*	'frequent calls'
Luvale	*kukwata-kwata*	'to keep on touching'
Lozi	*mafulo-fulo*	'many camps'
Tonga	*ino-ino*	'immediately'

In Bemba, however, when only the stem of a word is reduplicated, it is written conjunctively, e.g. *lucelocelo* 'early in the morning'. (Note that the stem in *lucelocelo* is *celo*.)

Compound words are formed by combining two words which may be from the same word category or different ones, e.g. noun and noun or verb and noun, etc. In most of the Zambian languages, compound words are written conjunctively, e.g. *ntengwamubili* 'slender but strong', *mfumukazi* 'chieftainess'. In Bemba, however, compounds formed from noun plus noun are hyphenated, e.g. *nkumba-bubili* 'sadly, despondently'.

8.8
Ideophones

An often-quoted definition of this part of speech, which is common in Bantu languages, is that by Doke who is credited for creating the term (but see Dingemance, 2011):

A vivid representation of an idea in sound. A word, often onomatopoetic, which describes a predicate, qualificative or adverb in respect to manner, colour, sound, smell, action, state or intensity (Doke 1935, p. 118).

The word *onomatopoeia*, a type of ideophone, refers to words that imitate the sounds made by people or things in the environment. For example, in English, the sound made by a duck is said to be *quack*. In all Zambian languages, there are words of this nature which represent what are said to represent different sounds made by people, other creatures, and things in the environment.

Activity 7: Learning outcome 2

Think of some onomatopoeic words in your mother tongue and produce them. Do we have the same words in all languages for the same sound, or do they differ? (For example: Are sounds said to be produced by cockerels the same across languages?)

Ideophones are also used to represent other ideas in the definition (e.g. sensory information). The examples in Table 8.7 give us some impression of the range of uses of ideophones in Zambian languages.

Table 8.7 Examples of ideophones in the seven official Zambian languages

Language	Ideophone
Tonga	*mwe mwe mwe* ('shining brightly')
Nyanja	*mya mya mya* ('stealth', 'swift movement')
Bemba	*fititi* ('very dark')
Kaonde	*ngee ngee ngee* ('sound of a bell')
Lunda	*ngwa* ('cutting', 'breaking across') (Kawasha, 2006, p. 19)
Luvale	*welewewee* ('cock's crow')
Lozi	*nga nga nga* ('shivering')

Most of the ideophones are like reduplicated words. However, each repetition is supposed to be represented as a separate word.

8.9

Borrowed words

In all the orthographies, there is an emphasis on people using indigenous words where they exist instead of borrowing from other languages. This apparently is to ensure that the languages are preserved. However, when a word is borrowed from another language, it must be pronounced and written in line with the phonology of the borrowing language. For example, a word like 'pot' is modified to sound and is written as *poto* in Lozi. Note that it is made to fit into the syllabic structure of Lozi, where, as in other Bantu languages, syllables are always open because they end with vowels. The English syllable 'pot' is a closed one because it ends with a consonant. So, 'motor car' is converted into one word, *motoka* in Luvale. Below are some examples of the way the same English word 'table' is pronounced in different Zambian languages. (The Nyanja 'th' indicates an aspirated 't'). Lunda appears to have borrowed the word for *table* from Portuguese, *mesa*.

Table 8.8 Zambian languages and borrowed words

Zambian language	Borrowed word	English
Tonga	*tebule*	'table'
Nyanja	*thebulo*	'table'
Bemba	*itebulo*	'table'
Kaonde	*Teebulu*	'table'

8.10

Significance of orthography in relation to literacy instruction

Orthographies play a vital role in the teaching of literacy. In the first place, children who learn to read or write, as earlier mentioned, learn to connect the sounds of their language to the written symbols or letters provided by the orthography. Secondly, the quality of the orthography determines, to some extent, the efficiency of learning to read. For example, a transparent orthography helps children to learn how to read quickly because it is easy for them to discover the alphabetic principle: the correspondence between letters and sounds. Furthermore, if the rules of spelling are simple and few, this too will speed up the learning process and make transfer of literacy skills to reading other languages written in the same

writing system. All that a teacher has to do is to help children acquire literacy skills, is to teach them how to sound out letters in a systematic way and blend them into words. This can be done by using, for example, only one method of teaching: systematic synthetic phonics where children learn to sound out letters and blend them into syllables and words. This is what is being done in teaching Zambian languages.

On the other hand, an opaque orthography can slow down the acquisition of reading skills. It is difficult for learners to see the relationship between sounds and letters. For such orthographies, different methods of teaching initial literacy are employed because there are bound to be many and often difficult spelling rules to follow. In teaching English, which has an opaque orthography, for example, children may be taught using phonics to sound out simple words where there are consistent letter sound correspondences, e.g. the word *bat*. They may be taught to memorise whole words that are difficult to sound out, e.g. *girl*, through the look and say method. They may learn by comparing words with similar letter patterns in onsets and rimes, e.g. b**right** and l**ight**. Therefore, children learning to read in opaque orthographies can do so at different grain sizes (Ziegler & Goswami, 2005): a phoneme, syllable, onset, rime, and word, compared to those using a transparent orthography. This makes learning more effortful and slower than for those who learn using only one grain size: the phoneme, for example. In fact, those who learn whole words have to eventually discover the alphabetic principle in order to be independent readers who can sound out words they have never met, or to read in other languages.

Orthographies also reflect considerable information about a language's phonology and morphology as we have seen above. The inventory of letters in an orthography is based on a rigorous study of the sound distinctions in a language, that is, working out sounds that make a difference in the meanings of words. Some sounds also arise from word formation processes, e.g. when prefixes join stems resulting, for example, in vowel fusion. All this information is important in understanding why words are written in the way they are. It underscores the importance of the teacher having secure knowledge and understanding of all the above-mentioned levels of linguistic analysis. These areas have been covered in the present module in different chapters.

Activity 8: Learning outcome 4

It has been argued that it is easier to transfer literacy skills from a transparent orthography, e.g. Zambian languages to an opaque one such as English (Mwansa, 2017).

Why should this be the case? Evaluate the relevance and importance of orthographies in teaching literacy.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, we have defined orthography by saying it is a way of implementing the alphabetic writing system in a particular language. An orthography provides rules of how words are to be written in a language. The quality of an orthography depends on how easy it is to interpret and to learn how to use it in communicating through writing. An orthography in which letters and sounds are consistently related is said to be a transparent one. One in which letter and sound correspondences are inconsistent is an opaque one. We have also discussed why the MO produced the standard orthographies in the seven regional languages: this was to ensure that in each language the same rules of spelling would be followed by the writers. We further considered the differences and similarities in the rules of representing letters, word division, and some parts of speech such as ideophones in the seven regional languages. Finally, we considered the importance of orthographies in the teaching of literacy.

Assessment of learning

1. What is a writing system and how does it differ from an orthography?

2. What makes a good orthography?

3. Why is it unnecessary to use a number of methods in teaching literacy in Zambian languages compared to English?

4. What is the relationship between orthography and the other key components of reading instruction?

5. How can you apply the knowledge learnt in this chapter to your future classroom?

Required reading

Zambian languages: Orthography approved by the Ministry of Education.

Supplementary reading

Schroder, B. (2008). *Bantu Orthography Manual*. SIL International eBook series 9.

CHAPTER 9

Figures of Speech

Figures of Speech

INTRODUCTION

This chapter looks at figures of speech, what they are and how they are classified and their importance in language teaching. Although figures of speech are considered to be special forms of language expression, much of ordinary language does involve figures of speech. Nevertheless, they are considered special because they add colour to otherwise mundane speech and create interest in listeners and readers. Learners are likely to come across figurative language in their reading and also even in conversations with fluent and expressive peers and elders in their first or additional languages. It is thus important that learners are made aware of this very important aspect of language use, so that they are better prepared to appreciate what this figurative or metaphorical language brings to communication: beauty and brevity of expression. It is also expected that learners will be able to use figurative language in their own writing and speaking in their language of instruction or the second language, as they mature.

Teacher educator guidance

....

The figures of speech included in this chapter are not the only ones. Student teachers can explore other figures of speech independently or to the lecturer's discretion.

....

Learning outcomes

Topics and outcomes from the National Syllabus:

1.15   Figures of speech

   1.15.1.1 Use figures of speech in stories or conversations

By the end of the chapter, the student teachers will:

1   define what the expression 'figures of speech' means

2   identify and classify figures of speech

3   analyse figures of speech to determine their meanings

4   demonstrate understanding of figures of speech by creating examples.

9.2

Instructional materials

- Student module

- Sample texts with figures of speech

- Examples of figures of indirectness

- Drawing paper

9.3

Key terms

Figurative language
A non-logical language which comprises words used in a new and non-literal sense, which departs from the logical usage of language in order to gain special effects

Figure of speech
A literary style or device that involves the use of words to effectively express a given concept

Idiom
A figure of speech that means something different from a literal translation of the words, would lead one to believe

Hyperbole
The use of deliberate exaggeration or overstatement for emphasis or to achieve a humorous effect, without any intention to deceive the reader or audience, but bring out some sense of humour

Personification
A figure of speech in which inanimate objects, animals or abstract ideas are endowed with human form, character, or sensibilities

Simile
A figure of speech that compares two different things in an interesting way using the words *like* or *as*

Metaphor
A figure of speech containing an implied comparison

Conversation
A talk or other form of discourse between two or more people in which news or ideas are shared

9.4

Figurative language and figures of speech

Figurative language includes 'words or phrases that mean something more or different from their literal definitions' (Rasinski et al., 2017, p. 4). It may also be referred to as 'non-logical language' because it comprises words used in a new and non-literal sense for it departs from logical usage of language to gain special effects. When referring to figurative language, we use the term **figures of speech**. Due to the non-literal nature of figurative language, noticing and interpreting figurative language correctly requires high levels of metalinguistic ability (i.e. the ability to analyse language as an object of study) dependent on a learners' mastery of the language of instruction (LOI) but also their age (Vulchanova et al., 2019; Wang, 2014).

According to Wang (2014) there is a pattern to figurative language development; it progresses on a U-shaped curve, with preschool-aged children using 'imaginative expressions' which then decreases during middle childhood and then increases during adolescence (p. 327). Children who already struggle with reading have a harder time with figurative language because they are paying more attention to reading individual words correctly and interpreting literal meanings (Rasinski et al., 2017). In the multilingual classroom, learners may have an even greater difficulty comprehending figurative language because each language has its own set of figures of speech that may not translate to other languages (Rasinksi et al., 2017). As such, a teachers' understanding of figurative language and the challenges learners may face is important.

Activity 1: Learning outcome 1

1. In your own words, what is figurative language?

2. What is the relationship between figurative language and figures of speech?

3. From what we have read so far, why do you think figurative language/figures of speech are relevant to literacy and language teaching and learning?

9.4.1

Classification of figures of speech

Language is used for communication either in transmitting information, building relationships, or entertaining. Figurative language plays a part in all forms of communication but more so in literary uses of language. Some would say that the use of figurative language is more effective than saying what we mean directly (Colston, 2015; Perrine, 1963). Again, figurative language refers to words or phrases that do not mean their literal interpretation, and these are specifically referred to as *figures of speech* (Gautam, 2014). There are several different types. Some common figures of speech are similes, metaphors, idioms, personification, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, oxymoron, alliteration, metonymy, and synecdoche. These are discussed next.

Linguists classify figures of speech in different ways. In this chapter, figures of speech are organised as outlined in Figure 1. The different categories are explored next along with the figures of speech that are included.
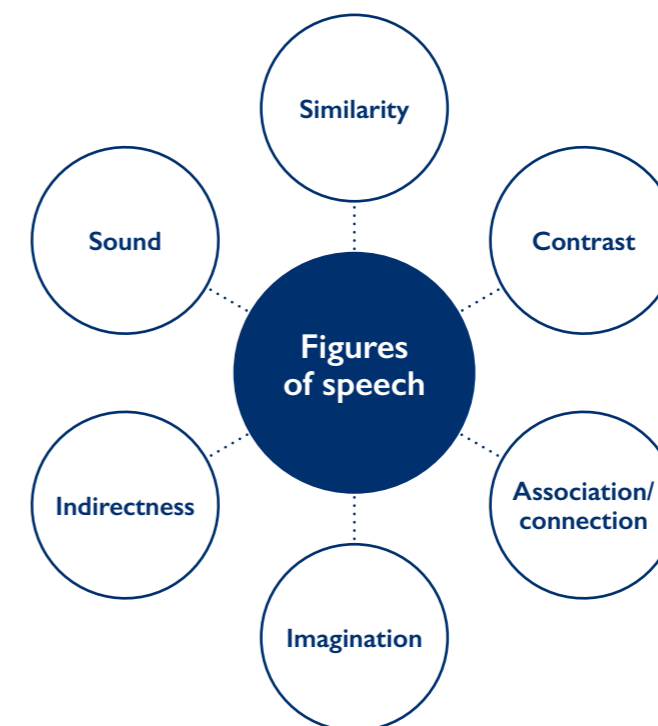

Figure 9.1 Figures of speech

9.4.2

Figures of similarity

Figures of similarity include **similes**, **metaphors**, **allegories**, and **parables**. A simile is one of the most common forms of figurative language, which explicitly compares two things using the words *like* or *as*, while metaphors also compare two things but without using the words *like* or *as* (Keraf, 2009). Thus, in a metaphor, the connection is implied rather than being explicit. Allegories and parables are represented as stories, poems, or art, as opposed to words or phrases but are still added here because they have metaphorical (non-literal) meaning versus literal meaning. Examples of similes and metaphors are given in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 Examples of similes and metaphors

Similes	Metaphors
John is as busy as a bee.	Handima is a bull.
Mundiwa talks like her mother.	His words cut deeper than a knife.
The boy is as brave as a lion.	He was a lion in the battlefield.
Her lip is as soft as a pillow.	That man is a beast.
My father's love is as deep as the ocean.	The warrior has a heart of stone.
Her face is as bright as the morning star.	Love is a battlefield.
The little boy swims like a fish.	Time is money.

Activity 2: Learning outcomes 2 and 3

With a partner, take turns interpreting the similes and metaphors by describing what is being compared. For example, we can interpret that John must be busy and that he is being compared to a bee.

Then be prepared to answer the following questions:

1. What is the key difference between a simile and a metaphor?
2. How can the use of similes and metaphors enhance our speech and writing?
3. What challenges do you think learners might face when reading similes or metaphors in text, and how do you think you can scaffold instruction to meet their needs?

Teacher educator guidance

If time, to extend the activity, you could ask student teachers to come up with their own similes and metaphors to share.

Allegories are metaphors that often deliver difficult messages in easy-to-read formats. At the heart of an allegorical story is a comparison of what is told to human life and behaviour. They often tell moral, religious, or political messages and may also have other abstract or spiritual meanings. For centuries, humans have used allegories to say things they felt they could not say any other way. Some famous allegories include George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, C.S. Lewis' *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies*. In *Animal Farm*, the surface story is about a group of farm animals who rise up, kick out the humans, and try to run the farm themselves. The hidden story, however, is about the Russian Revolution, and each of the characters represents some figure from that revolution. For example, the pigs represent Communist leaders like Stalin, Lenin, and Trotsky, the dogs represent the KGB, the humans represent capitalists, and the horses represent the working class, etc.

Parables are usually short metaphorical stories with the implied meaning parallel to the ordinary meaning. Two examples of a parable are the stories of the 'Prodigal Son' and the 'Ten Virgins'.

> *Jesus told a story about ten young women who went to a wedding. They waited for the bridegroom to come and let them in. They did not know what time he would come. The ten women had oil-burning lamps. Five of the women were wise. They had extra oil with them. The other five women were foolish. They only had the oil that was in their lamps. The bridegroom did not come for a long time. The oil in the lamps ran out. The five wise women had more oil to put in their lamps. The five foolish women had to go buy more oil. While they were gone, the bridegroom came. He let the five wise women into the wedding. When the five foolish women returned, the door was closed. They could not go to the wedding (Matthew 25:1–13).*

Activity 3: Learning outcome 2

1. Think about some allegories or parables you have read or heard.
2. Do you think the stories were best conveyed in allegory or parable form? If so, why or in what way?
3. What challenges might learners face when reading allegories or parables in the classroom, and how might you scaffold instruction to meet their needs?

Teacher educator guidance

If time and resources are available, student teachers could be provided with a parable or allegory to analyse in class.

Figures of contrast

Figures of contrast convey the opposite or difference between two things. These are outlined in Table 9.2 below.

Table 9.2 Figures of contrast

Type	Definition	Example
Antithesis	A rhetorical device that highlights opposing ideas or concepts in a concise and expressive way with contrast presented side-by-side with the same structure.	No pain, no gain. God made the country; man made the town. United we stand, divided we fall.
Parallel	An extended antithesis that involves prolonged comparison bringing into focus the difference between two people or things.	So shines a good deed in a naughty world. How far that little candle throws its beams.
Epigram	A brief witty story or poem that seems contradictory but on closer examination sounds correct and witty.	Clever men are good, but they are not the best. To look is much less easy than to overlook.
Oxymoron	An extreme form of an epigram that places two opposing words together to create a sharp contrast.	It was a bittersweet experience. She was faultily faultless.
Paradox	An expression that seems absurd at first but proves to be true on second thought.	The child is father of the man. More haste, less speed.

Teacher educator guidance

Thoroughly review the figures of contrast and examples. If possible, it would be helpful to find other examples to share with student teachers. Ask students to think of examples from their mother tongues.

Figures of association or connection

There are several figures of speech that convey figures of association or connection. The two described here are the **metonym** and the **synecdoche**. The metonym is a word, name, or expression that is used as a substitute for something else with which it is closely associated. The new name is formed from the accompaniment of the person or thing rather than the name. For instance, when one says, 'a bunch of suits were in the elevator' he or she is referring to businesspeople. A synecdoche also involves a change in name but by substitution, not accompaniment of the original thing or person. Table 9.3 below provides some examples of both.

Table 9.3 Metonym and synecdoche examples

Metonym examples	Synecdoche examples
The pen (writer) is mightier than the sword (soldier).	The man in him soon asserted itself. (To refer to his manliness.)
The 'dish' to refer to an entire plate of food.	She drank the cup. (To refer to her drinking of the cup's contents.)
The 'crown' to mean the power of the king.	He hit the bottle. (To refer to his drinking large quantities of liquor.)

Figures of imagination

Though there are various figures of speech that fall within this category, only two are discussed in this chapter—**personification** and **hyperbole**. Personification is a figure of speech in which inanimate objects, animals, or abstract ideas are endowed with human form, character, or sensibilities (Keraf, 2009). Thus, to personify an object or thing is to attribute to it human life or feelings; it is the commutation of human characteristics to an object. An example of personification is, 'The sun greeted me when I woke up in the morning'. The sun is a non-human object but has been given human characteristics since greetings can only be performed by living creatures. Hyperbole is the use of deliberate exaggeration or overstatement for emphasis to achieve a humorous effect, without any intention to deceive the reader or audience. It is the opposite of a *litote* or understatement. The exaggeration is not to be taken literally. As in common usage amongst friends, the user should be able to appreciate the deployment and effect of the exaggeration. Take,

for example, when you walk into your friend's room after a long day of back-to-back lecture hours and say, 'I want to eat a basin of *nsima*!' You know, certainly that you cannot eat that quantity of food, but you have made the statement simply to emphasise how hungry you are as well for a humorous effect. Table 9.4 below shows more examples of both personification and hyperbole.

Table 9.4 Personification and hyperbole examples

Personification examples	Hyperbole examples
June is the cruellest month of the year.	I would die for you.
The car brakes screamed all through the journey.	I have told you a million times to wash the dishes.
The car stopped with a groaning complaint.	You are so slender that the wind could carry you away.
The pen danced furiously on the paper.	The afternoon is so bright that the sun would have to wear sunglasses.
The sun smiled at me.	
The sea raged with anger.	

Activity 4: Learning outcome 4

Choose an example of personification and hyperbole from the list above or use one of your own. Illustrate a picture to depict the meaning of the figures of speech. Share your examples with a peer or group, to see if they can guess the meaning of your examples.

9.4.6
Figures of indirectness

Innuendo, irony, sarcasm, satire, euphemism, litotes, and idioms are all examples of figures of indirectness. In Table 9.5 below, definitions and examples are given for these figures of speech.

Table 9.5 Figures of indirectness: Definitions and examples

Type	Definition	Example
Innuendo	Also known as 'insinuation'; a way of saying something without showing appreciation but not stating it directly.	A word is enough for the wise. I never consult doctors, for I hope to die without them.
Irony	A deliberate attempt to say the exact opposite of what one intends to say; not to be taken literally.	The teacher taught the students very well that they all failed. His hands are so long that they cannot even touch his ears.
Sarcasm	Close to irony but used without disguise; made mockingly, ironically, or in a better contempt to show some foolishness on the part of the speaker; speakers vocal or physical cues are usually necessary to signal the sarcasm.	When something is uninteresting: I am delighted that I get to be here for the next three hours. When something bad happens: Oh, this is *exactly* what I needed today!
Satire	A brand of humour used to expose stupidity and human vice, especially among the high and mighty; makes fun of or ridicules some vices or mistakes in society often through hyperbole, understatement, sarcasm, or irony.	*Animal Farm* is a satire because it pokes fun at and exposes to ridicule with contempt, the leadership of the Soviet Union under Stalin's rule.
Euphemism	Used to express a mild or indirect word or expression substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt; expresses an unpleasant truth in an offensive but still agreeable manner.	He fell into a long last sleep. (*He died.*) He is between jobs. (*He is unemployed.*) Mary is economically disadvantaged. (*Mary is poor or impoverished.*) Mwaka is financially fortunate. (*Mwaka is spoiled.*)
Litotes	Can be regarded as the opposite of a hyperbole; an understatement used ironically to express emphasis.	During a windy, cold day: It is the best weather today!
Idioms	A figure of speech meaning something different than the literal translation.	It is raining cats and dogs. It is all Greek to me. It costs an arm and a leg. You are barking up the wrong tree. You should bite your tongue.

Thoroughly review the figures of indirectness and their examples to make sure student teachers understand what makes each one different from the other.

Activity 5: Learning outcome 2

Sort the examples of figures of indirectness according to their type. Refer to the table as needed.

Teacher educator guidance

Pair or group student teachers together. Provide examples of figures of indirectness that student teachers can sort according to whether they are idioms, litotes, euphemisms, etc. Then check students' work. Discuss any challenges students had during the activity and what implications for literacy and language teaching has arisen.

9.4.7

Figures of sound

Alliteration and **onomatopoeia** are both considered figures of sound. Alliteration is used to create special effects, especially in poetry by repeating the first consonant in a series of words. One example of alliteration is, 'Father Francis from France fried five fresh fishes for five famous friends from Finland'. Onomatopoeia names something or an action by imitating the sound associated with it. Examples of onomatopoeia include:

> *The fireplace **heater hissed** and cracked.*
>
> *The truck **engine roared** as it climbed the hill.*
>
> *The **alarm clock buzzed** at the time I was going to the bathroom.*

Activity 6: Learning outcome 2

1. Using the selected texts from the lecturer or a text of your choice, analyse the text for any of the figures of speech from this chapter and be prepared to share your examples.

2. Why is it important to explicitly teach figures of speech in the literacy and language classroom?

9.5

Uses of figures of speech and implications for the classroom

It is said 'necessity is the mother of invention'. This well-known proverb simply means that the primary driving force for most new inventions is 'need'. The most important purpose of any product is to satisfy a customer's need. It is easy to draw insight from the aforesaid that there is no doubt that speakers and writers apply figures of speech in the conversations and writing for a purpose. Tarigan (1982) said that speaking is an ability to produce sounds or words to express feelings, ideas, and opinions. It means that to express feelings, to share or to deliver ideas and to express opinions, people must be able to produce sounds or words to interact in their community. In conversation as well as in writing, as earlier alluded to, people include figures of speech, not for the sake of it but for a particular purpose. They are used across the gamut of literary genres, some of which were included here like stories, allegories, parables, and poetry but are also found elsewhere, like in dramas or debates. This is because figures of speech often provide emphasis, freshness of expression, or clarity. In primary schools, teachers must try to introduce learners to these figures of speech using the local language. The teacher should give examples and then discuss what they mean and why they are used. Learners from linguistically rich backgrounds (homes) will be familiar with some of these ways in which these figures of speech are used. They may be called upon to elaborate and give further examples. Most of the figures of speech will probably be met in what the learners read; for each instance, the teacher should use it as an opportunity to expand and compare with other related forms. For example, when they meet the expression: *ulya niinsoka* 'that one is a snake', the teacher might ask not only for an explanation but also another way of saying this such as the use of a simile: *ulya aba nga insoka* 'that one is like a snake'. In this way the teacher will help learners classify and differentiate different figures of speech.

However, clarity may also suffer from their use, as any figures of speech introduce an ambiguity between literal and figurative interpretation. Figures of speech are highly effective, for they add vividness, vigour, and beauty to our utterances. Though figures of speech are the ornaments of speech, they should not be used unless they are natural and appropriate and increase the effectiveness of what we have to say. In speech and in writing, when used effectively, figures of speech can:

1. Enhance description and expression

2. Create poetic meaning, comparisons, and expressions artistically

3. Entertain or engage, like in the case of invoking humour

4. Make writing or speech memorable

5. Heighten contrast

However, figures of speech are often challenging for learners to understand and use, especially when the level of text becomes more complex to read and/or they are unfamiliar with the figures of speech being read (Rasinski et al., 2017). As we learnt in chapter 3, explicitly teaching learners the metalanguage of text increases their metalinguistic awareness. It helps to develop their ability to see how languages' form contributes to its meaning. Teachers should not only teach children how to interpret the meaning of the figures of speech they encounter, but explicitly pay attention to their unique characteristics so that learners can differentiate between them. As well as this, when learners are proficient in identifying and interpreting a figure of speech in text, they should then be asked to use it in their writing because 'high-quality writing is marked by the use of figurative language' (Rasinski et al., 2017, p. 6).

9.6
Chapter summary

In this chapter, we learnt about figurative language and the numerous types of figures of speech that are used to add creativity to our speech and writing. Learners in the literacy and language classroom will encounter figures of speech in a variety of contexts. Their ability to notice them and understand them depends on their individual levels and experiences. Since figures of speech are non-literal, they are challenging to decipher. Teachers must explicitly teach figures of speech in the classroom, knowing that they may be difficult for learners to grasp. With explicit instruction and practice using figures of speech in oral and written communication, learners will be more proficient in identifying and understanding figures of speech independently.

9.7
Assessment of learning

1. What is figurative language and why do we use figurative language?

2. Why are figures of speech difficult for learners to identify and/or understand?

3. How could you scaffold instruction so that learners are more confident and capable of identifying and understanding figures of speech?

4. Think of one of the categories of figures of speech and design a lesson that exploits what the learners already know about those figures of speech.

Module Summary

Module Summary

Congratulations on completing the module! Over the course of this term, you have learnt about many important topics related to your teacher training and how you can best meet the needs of the learners in your classroom.

Chapter 1 introduced you to the two main ways language has been conceptualised— the formalist and functionalist perspectives. Both perspectives have positively influenced the methods of teaching language in the classroom. A formalist approach to teaching language focuses on grammatical form and the production of accurate sentences, whereas a functionalist approach is more concerned with meaning and how we use language appropriately to communicate in different contexts. You learnt that no single approach is best; rather, language teaching should include attention to both form and function.

Chapter 2 presented some of the nonlinguistic and linguistic evidence for the origins of language, as well as the design features of language and other ways language is manifested. Through the investigation of language's origins, scholars have sought to discover whether language derived from a single source (monogenesis) or multiple sources (polygenesis). Thus, you learnt of the mythical and theological accounts for the origins of language, some theories from linguistic scholars that have drawn connections between language and primitive man's need to communicate, and what comparative linguists have found from reconstructing ancestral languages. You also learnt about the ways in which human communication is unique compared to other forms of animal communication and other ways in which language is expressed (e.g. sign language, tactile mode). Understanding the complexity of language, the uniqueness of language, and the various ways human language is manifested helps you to gain a respect for language teaching and the language(s) of your learners.

Chapter 3 focused on Halliday's functions of language, which has informed our understanding of children's language development as well as language teaching methods. It was learnt that children develop language over three main phases; the first two phases include microfunctions of language while the final phase represents adult language development and the macrofunctions of language. Children's language development prior to formal schooling is one of the keys to their future academic success. Teachers must have knowledge about language development to align instruction to meet the needs of all learners, especially when learners come to school with weak language skills and/or their Mother Tongue (MT) differs from the Language of Instruction (LOI). This chapter also applied Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to teaching language by demonstrating how teachers can support learners' language development by explicitly teaching metalinguistic skills like providing the language to talk about language and creating instructional tasks that not only focus on the understanding of content but also how language is used to make meaning.

Chapter 4 concentrated on language acquisition, which you learnt was different from language learning because it is the unconscious process by which children acquire a first language as opposed to the formal or explicit teaching of language. Three major theories of language acquisition were explored: Behaviourist Theory, Nativist Theory, and Interactionist Theory. These theories helped to frame your understanding of how both nature and nurture play a role in language acquisition. You learnt that while all children have the capacity to learn language, you can support learners' language acquisition through language-centred activities like teaching dialogue skills and modelling challenging academic language.

Chapter 5 provided a broad overview of the levels of linguistic analysis, which include phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. The chapter demonstrated how the levels of linguistic analysis help us to understand how we can hear, perceive, and produce language through our speech organs, that all languages have a structure, and that all languages, though they may be similar, have unique characteristics and rules. You also learnt how to apply the levels of linguistic analysis to English and Zambian languages. Having a strong grasp of the similarities and differences of the languages that may be present in the classroom will help you to better design instruction that targets learners' needs.

Chapter 6 focused on the branches of linguistics and how each branch of linguistics examines language from a unique lens that, when brought together, help to form a more holistic understanding of language. You learnt that discourse analysis looks closely at how sentences cohere to create meaning and that a sociolinguistic approach to language investigates how language varies according to social factors like the identity or attitudes of the speakers in a given context or differences in dialect. Pragmatics taught you the need to be aware of the appropriacy of language use and that learners whose language is different from the LOI may have difficulties using language pragmatically. You also learnt of the contributions made by the field of psycholinguistics, which explores how language is produced, comprehended, and acquired as it relates to the connections between those processes and the mind. It is through psycholinguistics that we are better able to understand the factors or challenges that may affect teaching and learning in the classroom.

Chapter 7 presented the language situation in Zambia which also has direct implications for the classroom. As was learnt, Zambia is a multilingual country with seven regional languages but many other languages and dialects. The chapter also revealed how

educational policies have changed throughout the course of Zambia's history. You learnt how important it is to be knowledgeable about the language situation and the educational policies in practice today to be an effective teacher. Research has shown that children learn how to read best in their MT, which requires teachers in Zambia to be very skilled in both the theory and practice of language teaching in a multilingual learning environment.

Chapter 8 focused on the orthographies of the seven regional Zambian languages. You learnt some of the history behind the development of the Zambian orthographies and their components (e.g. parts of speech, word division, tone, ideophones) and were able to compare Zambian orthographies. This brought to light some of the differences and similarities that are present across the languages. You also learnt that orthographies can be opaque (English) or transparent (Zambian languages). This requires teachers to be knowledgeable of the best practices to teach specific orthographies and have the flexibility to accommodate instruction to meet all learners' needs.

Chapter 9 concentrated on figures of speech (also referred to as figurative language): the various kinds and their relevance to the language and literacy classroom. You were able to identify, classify, and analyse a wide range of figurative language like metaphors, similes, personification, and hyperbole. You learnt that interpreting figurative language is challenging because it requires a high level of metalinguistic ability. It's meant to be interpreted nonliterally, which is difficult for all learners regardless of language but especially for those learners who may have a harder time learning how to read. Yet figurative language is everywhere, and it adds creativity to language expression. With explicit instruction, you will be able to help your learners better understand how to use and interpret figurative language, but also how to notice it in speech and in text.

While you have completed this language module, there is more to learn in your programme to become an even more capable and effective teacher. Continue to return to this module as you build your repertoire of skills. With the knowledge you have gained in this course and the other courses in your programme, you will be well prepared to meet the needs of your learners.

Best wishes for your future and thank you for committing yourself to the honourable profession of teaching. Your hard work and dedication is worthy of recognition as you help to educate children who will be the future leaders of Zambia.

Appendix

Appendix 5A
The International Phonetic Alphabet Symbols and Their Sounds

The following section includes the symbols, letters, and the sounds associated with the International Phonetic Alphabet. Phonetic transcriptions of words are included with several of the phonetic symbols to assist the reader in understanding the pronunciation of the symbols. Each phonetic symbol is featured in block parentheses [ ] followed by the sound each symbol produces with examples of words to facilitate understanding.

[a]   Bright, forward vowel as in 'high,' 'light,' and 'quite'.

[ɑ]   Placed further back in the mouth, a dark vowel as in 'father', 'hall', 'hot', and 'body'.

[æ]   Bright, forward vowel as in 'cat', 'mast', 'family', and 'have'.

[b]   Stop-plosive, voiced bilabial consonant. [b] is a cognate of [p].

[c]   Consonant that makes a hark [k] sound or [s] sound, as in 'car' and 'cup' and 'coo'.

[ʧ]   Consonant combination that makes a 'ch' sound, as in the word *church*.

[d]   Stop-plosive consonant, tongue + alveolar ridge. [d] is a cognate of [t].

[e]   Forward, closed vowel found mainly in diphthongs, as in 'wait', and 'stay'.

[ɛ]   Forward, open vowel, as in 'fed', 'open', and 'extra'.

[f]   Fricative, unvoiced consonant made with the upper teeth and the lower lip and is a cognate of [v].

[g]   Stop-plosive, voiced consonant made with the back of the tongue and the soft palate. The consonant makes a hard [g] sound as in 'gust' and is a cognate of [k].

[dʒ]   Consonant combination found in words with 'dg,' as in 'judge', 'urge', 'jar'.

                                                           [dʒʌdʒ] [ɝdʒ] [dʒar]

[h]   Glottal fricative produced by sending air through the glottis before the vocal folds fully come into contact with each other.

[i]   Forward, closed vowel, as in 'heel', 'beam', 'green', and 'congeal'.

[ɪ]   Forward, open vowel, as in 'bit', 'quit', 'give', and 'oblivion'.

[j] Glide, as in 'yes', 'yellow', 'million', and 'halcyon'.

               [jɛs]   [jɛloʊ]   [mɪljən]   [hælsiən]

[k] Stop-plosive, unvoiced consonant. Cognate of [g].

[l] Lateral, voiced consonant made with the tongue and teeth ridge (alveolar ridge).

[m] Nasal, voiced bilabial (both lips) consonant.

[n] Nasal, voiced consonant made with the tongue blade (tip) and the alveolar ridge.

[ŋ] Nasal, voiced consonant made with tongue and the hard/soft palate,
as in 'sign', 'long', and 'clang'.

       [sɪŋ]   [lɔŋ]   [klæŋ]

[ɲ] Nasal, voiced consonant. The *enya* is found in the English word 'onion', and the
Spanish words *mañana* and *niño*.

[o] Back, closed vowel found in the words *obey*, *oblivion*, *okay*, and *over*.

[ɔ] Back, open vowel found in the words *bought*, *caught*, and *saw*.

[p] Stop-plosive, unvoiced and bilabial consonant. [p] is a cognate of [b].

[q] Stop-plosive consonant that typically makes a [k] sound found in the words: *quiet*,
quick, and *quart* = [kwɑɪ jət], [kwɪk], and [kwɔrt].

[r] A retroflexed, voiced consonant. The tongue pulls backward to produce [r] in English.

[ɝ] Stressed R-coloured vowel, such as: 'herd', 'burn', blur', 'jury'.

[ɚ] Unstressed R-coloured vowel, such as 'over', 'colour', 'underling'.

[s] Unvoiced, fricative consonant made with the tongue blade and the alveolar ridge,
as in the words *bus*, *simple*, and *bluster*.

[ʃ] Unvoiced, fricative consonant made with the tongue blade and the alveolar ridge,
as in the words *sure*, *wish*, *hash*, and *short*.

[t] Stop-plosive, unvoiced consonant that is a cognate of [d].

[θ] Theta, an unvoiced, consonant combination found in the words *maths*, *thin*,
and *zither*.

[ð] Voiced 'th', as in the words *wither*, *then*, *that*, *there*, and *they*.

[u] Closed, back vowel as in the words *coo*, *woo*, *strewn*, and *blooper*.

[ʊ] Neutral vowel, as in the words *book*, *could*, *stood*, and *pull*.

[ʌ] Stressed, central vowel, as in the words *up*, *butter*, and *huddle*.

[ə] Unstressed, central vowel, as in the words *batten*, *broaden*, and *carpet*.

[v] Voiced, fricative consonant that is a cognate of [f], as in the word *voice*.

[w] Voiced, bilabial consonant, as in the words *water*, *win*, and *wallet*.

[hw] Unvoiced, bilabial consonant, as in the words *which* and *whiff*.

[x] May be voiced or unvoiced. Unvoiced = 'excellent' [ɛk sə lənt].
Voiced = 'example' [eg zæ mpəl]

[y] Glide, as in 'yes', 'yours', and 'yawn'. [jɛs], [jɔʊrz], [jɔn]

[z] Voiced, fricative consonant, as in 'buzz', 'was', and 'cousin'. Cognate of [s].

[ʒ] Voiced, fricative consonant, as in 'azure', 'pleasure', and 'vision'. Cognate of [ʃ].

Glossary

Acoustic phonetics — the study of what sounds sound like and includes properties of pitch, length, or amplitude

Agglutinative languages — Languages in which words are made up of linked morphemes expressing different meanings and grammatical functions

Alphabetic principle — The requirement that one letter represents only one sound

Articulatory phonetics — the study of how and where within the vocal tract speech sounds are produced

Aspirated sounds — The audible release of air when articulating or pronouncing stop sounds (e.g. [pʰ])

Auditory phonetics — the study of how speech is heard and perceived

Behaviourist theory — A psychological theory of language acquisition which states that whatever children come to learn and know, they gain from the environment around them by imitation and reinforcement

bi-, mono-, multi- — prefixes joined to -lingual (language) to refer to the number of languages spoken in a country or by individuals; mono = one, bi= two and multi = many

Cognates — shared words across languages as a result of their similar ancestral language origin

Comparative linguistics — a field of linguistics which studies the similarities and differences between languages and their possible origins

Consonant clusters — a combination of consonants which are not digraphs or trigraphs (e.g. *nd* (nasal plus a stop) called a nasal cluster)

Consonants — Sounds produced by the narrowing or blocking off and release of the airflow (e.g. p, t, f)

Conversation — A talk or other form of discourse between two or more people in which news or ideas are shared

Conversation Analysis (CA) — a type of discourse analysis which analyses conversations; a useful tool for learning how language learners negotiate communication within social contexts

Corpus language planning — a process of developing a language including the development of an orthography, literature and even vocabulary creation

Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis (CCDA) — a type of discourse analysis used within the classroom context to raise social and political awareness

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) — a type of discourse analysis which focuses on the relationship between power and language

Design features of language — features of human language that make it unique, i.e. differentiates human language from other forms of communication

Dialects — related varieties of the same language. People speaking dialects of the same language have mutual intelligibility, that is, they understand each other

Discourse Analysis — a branch of linguistics at a level higher than a sentence concerned with the study of language in its intra-linguistic context

Divine Source Theory — a belief that language comes from a divine (a God or gods) source

endo-, exo- — prefixes jointed to *glossic* (language) to refer to the adoption of language policies that include either: an inside or native language (*endoglossic*) as an official language; a foreign language (*exoglossic*) as an official language

Ethnicity — refers to the ethnic group/tribe that a person self-identifies with due to a shared culture, norms, values and language

Field — field denotes the subject matter or content being discussed in written and spoken discourse. In other words, field refers to the presentation of ideas as they are represented through the grammar of language (e.g. nouns,

verbs, adjectives, prepositions and other parts of speech) (Schleppegrell, 2004) and how this grammar reflects the participants, processes, circumstances, and connections within language (Humphrey, 2020)

Figurative language — a non-logical language which comprises words used in a new and non-literal sense which departs from the logical usage of language in order to gain special effects

Figure of speech — a literary style or device that involves the use of words to effectively express a given concept

Fluency — the ability to read a text accurately with appropriate speed and intonation

Formalist linguistics — approach to the study of language which focuses on language structures (the form) and not their meanings; often contrasted with functional linguistics below

Functionalist linguistics — linguists who have the view that language is used for performing various social functions (e.g. making requests, orders, apologies, etc.) and that this is more important than focusing on the form, as in formalist linguistics

Genre — how language is organised to express various social purposes in such forms as poetry, essays, stories and so on

Grapheme — a symbol or letter (used in a similar way to the phoneme) that represents a sound in a spoken language

Heteroglossia — refers to the presence of multiple varieties of the same language

Holophrastic stage — when children appear to use just one word to communicate a whole message

Hyperbole — the use of deliberate exaggeration or overstatement for emphasis or to achieve a humorous effect, without any intention to deceive the reader or audience but bring out some sense of humour

Ideational metafunction — a function of language that interprets our material experiences (external world), mental experiences (inner world), and relational experiences (identification and classification of experiences) (Schleppegrell, 2013). In other words, the ideational metafunction refers to what is being talked about.

Ideophones — words and/or phrases that may depict a variety of sensory experiences (i.e. sound, taste, movement, inner feelings) but also have specific marked orthographic features (i.e. reduplicated roots)

Idiom — a figure of speech that means something different froma literal translation of the words would lead one to believe

Interactionist theory — a theory of language acquisition that combines behaviourism and nativism, acknowledging that part of learning language involves imitation and part involves what the child brings to the learning experience

International Phonetic Alphabet — an alphabet created in the 19th century to represent all of the sounds of language

Interpersonal metafunction — an appraisal system from which attitudes are represented according to their polarity (positive, negative, neutral) and force (intensely, softly). Put differently, the interpersonal metafunction refers to the relationships that exist between the speaker and his addressee as well as between the speaker and his own message

Language — a conventional, structured system human use to communicate by sound, written text, or gestures

Language acquisition — the process of how children become speakers of the language of the community or family in which they are born

Language learning — the formal or explicit teaching of language to a child or adult

Linguistic competence — the knowledge of grammatical rules possessed by a speaker of a language which are used to construct sentences

Linguistic evidence — evidence of the origins of language that comes from considering similarities in language structures across languages (typology) and comparative linguistics

Linguistic performance — the use of linguistic rules (grammar) in generating sentences in actual communication

Linguistics — the scientific study of language

Literacy — the ability to read and write

Metalanguage — metalanguage refers to any language or symbolic system used to discuss, describe, or analyse another language. This is different from object language, which is the language being discussed by metalanguage

Metaphor — a figure of speech containing an implied comparison

Mode — mode refers to the channel of communication, such as monologic/dialogic or spoken/written, including visual contact.

Monogenesis — the position that language has one (mono) origin (genesis)

Morpheme — the smallest unit of meaning in a word

Morphology — the study of the internal structures of words

Mutual intelligibility — able to understand each other. A characteristic of dialects that while different are so similar that people can understand each other

Nativist theory — a language acquisition theory suggesting that children are born already programmed to acquire languages

Nonlinguistic evidence — evidence on the origin of language not based on linguistics such as myths, religion, anthropology, archaeology, etc.

Official language(s) — a language prescribed by law to be used as the language of government administration, education and so on (e.g. English in Zambia)

Opaque orthograph — orthographies where the correspondences between letters and sounds are inconsistent (e.g. English)

Orthography — the spelling system of a language or a set of rules that are followed in writing words in a language

Personification — a figure of speech in which inanimate objects, animals or abstract ideas are endowed with human form, character, or sensibilities

Phoneme — the smallest unit of sound that signals a difference in meaning in a word

Phonetics — the study of speech sounds

Phonological awareness — an awareness of the fact that words are composed of individual sounds (phonemes) that can be manipulated in various ways

Phonology — the study of how sounds pattern together in language to encode meaning

Polygenesis — the view that language has many (poly) origins (genesis)

Polyglot — a Greek word (*poly* = many, *glot* = tongue/language) which refers to a person who has command of many languages

Pragmatics — a branch of linguistics concerned with how context shapes how we use and interpret language

Prosodic properties — properties of intonation, stress, and length

Psycholinguistics — a branch of linguistics concerned with the study of the relationship between the mind and language

Reduplication — a process by which whole words or stems are repeated or written twice

Register — register refers to how a language user varies his or her speech according to local or situational aspects such as where the language is being used, for what purposes, how it's organised or presented, and whether there is interaction between a speaker and an audience

Semantics — the study of meaning in language

Simile — a figure of speech that compares two different things in an interesting way using the words *like* or *as*

Sociolinguistics — a branch of linguistics which studies all aspects of the relationship between language and society

Status language planning — a process for determining which languages or dialects should be officially used in different social domains

Syllable — a unit of pronunciation usually larger than a sound but smaller than a word (Crystal, 2008:467). It can consist of a single vowel or a combination of a vowel and one or two consonants. Open syllables end with vowels (e.g. *ba*) while closed syllables with consonants (e.g. *cat*).

Syntax — the study of sentence structure; how words combine to form words, phrases, clauses, and sentences

Systemic functional grammar — this is a type of grammar concerned with the social and pragmatic functions of language, relating these to both formal syntactic properties and prosodic properties.

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) — a theory of language centred around the notion of language function. SFL places the function of language as central in terms of what language does and how it does it

Telegraphic speech — in this phase, children start stringing together two or more words but omit some such as function words like articles or inflections in Bantu languages

Tenor — tenor refers to the participants in a particular discourse, how they relate to each other and their purposes in discourse

Textual metafunction — the textual metafunction is that part of the meaning potential which makes a text into a text and involves phenomena such as thematic structure, information structure, and coherence

Transparent orthographies — orthographies where there is a clear correspondence between letters and sounds in a language (e.g. Zambian languages orthographies)

Unaspirated sounds — the release of a stop without an audible puff of air (e.g. [p])

Vowels — sounds produced without interruption in the vocal tract, principally the mouth (e.g. a, e, i, o, u)

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