

Translanguaging as commodified semiotic resource among traders and customers of Soweto market in Lusaka Zambia

By

Katundu Bronah Namatama and Hambaba Jimaima
University of Zambia

Abstract

Motivated by the practical and theoretical need to interrogate the place of urgency, actorhood and convergence of semiotic assemblages and resources in places of trade and business, this paper investigated the use of translanguaging as a commodified semiotic resource among traders and customers at Soweto market in Zambia's Capital City. For in-depth appreciation of the phenomenon, data were obtained by the semi-structured interview, audio recording and general observation within the broader context of qualitative ethnography. A careful analysis of translanguaging practices among traders and customers during a transaction revealed that speakers in a market setting of Lusaka place high premium on stylizing their multiple languages as commodified semiotics, which invariably results in dissolved traditional linguistic boundaries through the use of the extended linguistic repertoire from their language system. Consequently, the speakers combined English lexemes with bound morphemes from their local languages, the standard and non-standard language forms, as well as fragmented pieces of languages as semiotically motivated act. Revealingly, therefore, it is contested that translanguaging, as a commodified semiotic resource, is deployed to engender a clearer conveyance of messages that strive for inclusivity, and multiple deployment of identities as marketization strategy. Of course, one cannot deny the fact that these marketers have the ability to use language in whatever way they feel for meaning making. This entails that, for speakers, the type or form of language to be used in informal contexts does not matter as long as the cause for which the language is being used is met. Which means all bits and pieces of language are treated as meaning making resources in their own right.

Key Words: commodified semiotic resources, translanguaging, stylize, Soweto market, Lusaka, Zambia

1.0 Introduction: Contextualizing the study

In a broader context of translanguaging as occurring in a multilingual and multicultural environment such as a market place, the desire to appreciate its semiotic significance becomes topical and theoretically motivated. Even more telling, is the recognition of urgency, actor hood and convergence of semiotic assemblages and resources in one macro-space. To this end, a study on translanguaging as a commodified semiotic resource among traders and customers at Soweto Market in Lusaka attempts to address the dearth in literature about real life language practices by using a market place as a point of departure from the focus on translanguaging as formal practice in bilingual education. Two interrelated questions motivated this undertaking: namely; how do traders and consumers at Soweto Market stylize their translanguaging practice? Secondly, what motivates the use translanguaging as a commodified semiotic practice in the discourses of traders and customers during a transaction?

The study recognises and strives to go beyond the established productivity of translanguaging in a classroom situation by learning from Pennycook & Otsuji (2015) about the rich translanguaging practices among those in the trade domain in Zambia. Instead of investigating the linguistic aspects of local forms of English or the effect of English on local languages, the goal here is to develop the theorisation on how languages work together in multilingual societies as commodified semiotic resources. The focus was not only on the linguistics of interaction; but also on the city, the surroundings, the artefacts, or those other things that are equally part of the action. For it is recognised that space, actorhood and urgency conspire to produce a highly complex semiotic landscape fertile for translanguaging. Which is why Pennycook & Otsuji (2015) are quick to report that what individuals do with language is always tied to the localities in which language practices occur; however, our words are produced in places that are themselves constructed and interpreted. By this assertion, Pennycook and Otsuji (2015) bring into the spotlight the complex interplay between space and languages on the one hand and demographics and semiotic productivity on the other. For it is not difficult to see that the need for merchandise and

the socio-economic situation undergird the nature of interaction between the traders and consumers. The harsh economic realities force consumers to weigh in on bargaining, thereby producing complex situated translanguaging practices. This is further shaped by the fact that most social actors to these places (Soweto market) do not always share a common linguistic background; their linguistic background is entirely unpredictable owing to the sociolinguistics of globalisation (Blommaert 2010). Yet, traders and customers alike have learned to save the moment by yielding to communicative needs, context and demands of the time.

Zambia is a multilingual state in the sense that several languages are spoken within its borders, and individuals speak one or more languages in addition to their mother tongue (Simwinda, 2006). In terms of language status and use in Zambia, it can be said that the Zambian languages differ considerably even though in terms of mutual intelligibility there are close. There are seven out of 72 languages considered as regional languages in Zambia and represent languages for wider communication in the provinces they have been promulgated for use and these include; Nyanja, Bemba, Lozi, Lunda, Kaonde, Luvale and Tonga. Nyanja is mainly spoken in the Capital City with traces of it in most spaces of Zambia, competing for visibility with Bemba even though many regional languages are highly represented in most provinces (Jimaima 2016; Jimaima & Banda, 2019). The seven languages are used alongside with English in a number of contexts, in limited public affairs, and are employed in selected government intercourse for the purposes of education and the dissemination of official information in the designated regions of the country (Banda & Jimaima 2015; Banda & Mwanza xxxx). This aspect makes Zambians to have more than one language in their linguistic repertoire and can choose from the diffused semiotic lexicon, for both communication and ethnic linguistic identities.

2.0 Problematizing Translanguaging

The history of translanguaging is deeply rooted in the field of bilingual education. The ideology behind translanguaging emerged from the evolution of multilingual teaching practices, particularly

the practices promoted by teaching English to speakers of Welsh in Wales, UK. It aimed at advancing the quality of English language instruction (Lewis et al. 2011). There is consensus that the term translinguaging was first coined by the Welsh educationist Cen Williams (1994). He referred to a pedagogical practice where an instruction in English would be given by the teacher to the pupils and a response would be given in Welsh (Lewis et al. 2011). This practice was seen to help maximise both learners' and teachers' linguistic resources in the process of problem solving and knowledge construction. From then on, translinguaging has proven to be an effective pedagogical practice in a variety of education contexts as it seen to empower both the learner and the teacher to transform the power relations and focuses on the teaching and learning to meaning making (Garcia 2009; Creese & Blackledge 2015).

Translinguaging, though recently coined in the 21st century, it has captured a number of scholars' attention and imagination who hitherto proposed a variety of terms to describe translinguaging, for example, situational and metaphorical switching, code mixing, code switching, code meshing and style shifting (Garcia 2009; Creese & Blackledge 2015; Baker 2001; Kanana 2004). In terms of its applicability, translinguaging has been applied to pedagogy, multimodal communication, linguistic landscape, visual arts, everyday social interaction, musicology, and transgender discourse (Banda and Jimaima 2015; Pennycook and Otsuji 2015; Jimaima 2016; Mambwe 2014; Wakumelo 2010). In addition, the present study adds new knowledge to the understanding of translinguaging as a performative act which is actively practiced as people interact in a market place. If one oriented towards the traditional view, the languages that are used in market transactions have specific functions and advantages in those economic transactions. Thanks to translinguaging, the traders and customers explore and exploit all their linguistic resources available to them to ensure communication is done effectively and efficiently. As will be demonstrated in this paper, the translinguaging practice creates a conducive environment in the unfolding of a business transaction till the trader's and buyer's intended goals are achieved.

In exploiting its potentiality and productivity, the work by Reid and Otheguy (2015) becomes important here. For them, translanguaging is the deployment of speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named languages. Reid and Otheguy's (2015) perspective on translanguaging brings into the spotlight the semiotic affordance of translanguaging as it permits the dissolution of traditional linguistic boundaries and calls into question the artificiality of political assignment of languages to specific domains. This is why Strauss (2016), Garcia and Wei (2014) view translanguaging to be not merely a shift or shuttling between two languages; they refer to the speaker's construction and use of original and complex inter-related discursive practices that cannot be easily assigned to one or another traditional definition of a language. Rather, focus is on what makes up the speaker's language repertoire. Arising from the aforesaid, one quickly sees the place of urgency and actorhood as occasioned by translanguaging. No doubt, in the eyes of Strauss (2016), Garcia and Wei (2014), translanguaging affords the speaker linguistic latitude for forging complex inter-related discursive practices, which defy the normative and canonical linguistic codes and boundaries.

Arguably, and in line with Garcia's (2009) and Canagarajah's (2012) view of translanguaging as a communicative practices associated with social actors moving across languages during interaction for negotiating meaning, translanguaging ceases to be a mere practice; rather it takes on an important discursive role as a commodified semiotic resource that engenders communicative practices. For these communicative practices involve the deployment of semiotic resources across modalities, including language and textual, artefacts as well as gestures; facial expressions and other ways of using the body (Banda & Jimaima 2015; Pennycook & Otsuji 2015; Banda & Jimaima 2017; Jimaima & Banda 2019a; Jimaima & Banda 2019b; Wakumelo 2010).

Here, one observes the circularity of semiotic resources across the linguistic landscapes for marketization strategy. As it has been argued in the conclusion of this paper, the rollover of semiotic resources during interaction in the multilingual context heightens

the communicative vigilance and the meaning making capabilities; but also broadens the market base due to the incentivised inclusivity. In fact, commenting on minor languages, particularly in commercial spaces, Jaworski (2015: 232) reports that “in recent decades, commodification of language as a marker of authenticity, heritage and localization of mass produced, standardized products has created an opportunity for ‘small’, minority languages and language varieties to gain symbolic and economic value, visibility, and vitality.” No wonder Blommaert (2012) holds the view that:

We must see languages, and certainly English, as mobile objects, no longer tied to an ‘organic’ speech community residing in a particular space, but moving around such places and communities in intensive ways, on the rhythm of globalizing flows of commodities, people, messages and meanings. (Blommaert 2012: 2).

In a well thought-out title, “*Selling the city: Language, Ethnicity and Commodified Space*”, Leeman and Modan (2010: 182) remind us that “a landscape is not a container that holds objects like a picnic basket filled with lunch items...rather, [landscapes are] a topographies that shape and are shaped by the items with which they are collected.” And this is true for market places, which are shaped by conflating human urgency, diffused semiotic repertoires and mobile spaces.

In the past, studies on multilingual practices have adopted the speech accommodation theory (SAT) Giles (1979) and conversational analysis (CA) to uncover how social actors translanguange. In particular, SAT has been used to provide an explanation on why speakers accommodate their interlocutors during a face to face interaction; on the other hand, CA has been referenced to describe the orderliness, structure and sequential patterns of interaction in casual conversations. Seen from this end, proponents of SAT argue that SAT predicts and explains the dynamics of speech adjustments that individuals usually make to create, maintain and decrease the social distances in interaction and also the changes that are enacted for reasons that go beyond the more exchange of referential information and emotions. Thus, SAT helps to explain why individual speakers

use the speech strategies, and also explores the different ways in which communicators accommodate their motivations for doing so and the consequences arising from these adjustments (Coupland, Giles & Henwood, 1988, Giles & Wadleigh 2008). One sees nothing theoretically intriguing with SAT. Similarly, CA which is believed to consist of the basic structures that explain the occurrences of the patterns of interaction between speakers fails to explain the complex nature of translanguaging. This is predicated on the fact that CA assumes to determine participants' methods of turn taking, constructing sequences of utterances across turns, identifying and repairing problems, and employ gaze and movement; it further assumes to have the capacity to describe basic units out of which turns are fashioned, and the components describe how participants organise their interaction by distributing turns to speakers who coincide with sequence organisation which focuses on how actions are ordered in conversation (Mambwe 2014).

The assumption framed in SAT and CA renders the complex interchange occurring in a multilingual setting overly artificial and superfluous. To imagine that individuals consciously take turns during highly charged commodified semiotic interchange is rather too simplistic and unnatural. It is contested here that the assumed orderliness and predictable speech patterns orient towards streamlined and pre-ordained setting. However, as will become apparent here below with regards to trading places such as Soweto market, “[r]ather than working with homogeneity, stability and boundedness as the starting assumptions, mobility, mixing, political dynamics and historical embedding are now central concerns in the study of languages, language groups and communication” (Blommaert and Rampton 2011: 3). No wonder the study takes the view that traders at Seweto market do not use languages as bounded systems; rather, traders only tap into linguistic repertoires available to both themselves and customers during the ‘unfolding of discourses’ (Auer and Wei, 2007; Wei 2011; Mambwe 2014; Jimaima 2016; Banda, Jimaima & Mokwena 2018).

In what follows, the paper describes the methodology which undergirded the study.

3.0 Methodology

Undergirded by ‘walking narrative methodology’ (cf. Stroud and Jegels 2014), this study couched within the broader qualitative ethnographic research. Notably, ethnographic research has always been about ‘walking’ – enmeshing oneself in the life-world of the people of whom the research is about. Precisely, to collect data that fed into the possible projection of how translanguaging is employed and unravel the styles and patterns in its practice, the semi-structured interviews, audio recording and observation were used. A total sample of 100 persons (70 traders and 30 customers) of varying gender and age was selected for the study. In addition, 580 conversations among speakers of Soweto market were observed of which 380 were purely of a translanguaging practice. The data for the study were drawn from one of the busiest markets in Lusaka, Soweto Market, where Nyanja, Bemba and English, or blends of these languages are commonly used for trading by the speakers.

Soweto market is the biggest of the Zambian markets. The market is located along Los Angeles road on the western part of Lusaka City behind the City market. The market is an urban market comprising of a number of shops, stalls and business stands where traders display their different types of merchandise. Lusaka being the capital city of Zambia, it is a get way to most parts of the country. Hence the population of the market is a mixture of people of different ethnic affiliation from all parts of the country. They converge and interact not only in terms of business, but also linguistically. Therefore, the influx of traders and customers in the market has contributed to major linguistic diversity, as well as broadening of the communicative repertoire from which speakers draw commodified semiotic resources in their daily interactions during transactions.

5.0 Results

In this section of the paper, the results of the study are discussed. The discussion orients primarily towards understanding how traders and customers at Soweto Market stylize their translanguaging practices

and subsequently account for the emerging translanguaging patterns. Generally, the observable language practices within the market enclaves are seen as commodified semiotic resources amenable to engender inclusivity and marketization.

5.1 Stylization in translanguaging practices in Soweto market

As a notable feature of commodified semiotic resources, it was observed that in their translanguaging styles when engaged in discourses, speakers combined English lexemes with bound morphemes from their local languages. At this point, the findings of this study help dismiss the perception that in contexts of language mixing, speakers would draw on actual lexemes or words from one language and combine them with similar forms from another language for meaning making. However, that view is not always the case as speakers may also use fragmented bits and pieces of language as bound morphemes from other languages to combine with lexemes from not so similar languages in meaning making when conversing (cf. Blommaert 2010; Jimaima 2016). As the data show, the social actors practiced translanguaging by combining bound morphemes from Nyanja, Bemba and other local languages, which are Bantu languages, with lexemes from the English language in the plural and honorific morpheme formation. The plural formation in the discourses of the traders and customers was a major point where the combination of bound morphemes from the local languages and English lexemes was deployed. And this weighs in on the argument that during translanguaging speakers create complex structures that defy established artificial boundaries. Consider the data below.

In the following discourses, the plural markers are underlined; words in English are in bold, Nyanja are in italics, Bemba are in bold italics.

Exchange 1

Turn

- 1: C: *Mulina mavegetables afresh?* (Do you have fresh vegetables?)
- 2: T: *Bwelani bacustomer tilinayo mavegetables kwati macarrots, macucumbers, green beans, na mafruits yonse.* (Come my customer we have vegetables like carrots, cucumbers, green beans and all types of fruits).

In the conversational exchange above, it is noted that speakers were using plural forms from Zambian languages while maintaining the English plural form, thus resulting in some kind of double deployment or echo plural *ma-* -s. The plural morphemes *ma-* is drawn from the local languages that use it as a plural marker and attached to the English lexemes apples, vegetables, carrots, cucumbers and fruits with the English plural marker maintained.

Consequently, the study revealed that the speakers combined the honorific prefix form from Bemba, Nyanja or any Zambian local language with a lexeme from English language to stylize their language use. This form of stylization raises the outcome semiotic material to commodified semiotic resources whose appeal is never local/or speaker-specific.

Exchange 2

Turn

- 1: T: *Basister iseni mupepi.* (My sister come closer)
- 2: C: *Nisakila majuzi alipo pano?* (I am looking for jerseys, do you have any?)
- 3: T: *Alipo bacustomer mufuna yanu?* (Yes we have my customer, is it for you?)

In the example above, the prefix ‘*ba-*’ in ‘*basister*’ and ‘*bacustomer*’ is a morpheme used for plural marking and as an honorific prefix in most Zambian languages. It is normally attached to nouns associated with animate to denote the social relationship and functions as a face

serving strategy towards one's interlocutor. For example, '*basister*' has two different linguistic features drawn from two languages; '*ba-*' drawn from Bemba or any local language which uses '*ba*' for honorific effect while '*sister*', '*customer*', are drawn from English.

Furthermore, the combination of a diminutive form, and the plural marker with the English lexeme was equally noted in the speeches of the social actors. These two morphemes (diminutive form and plural marker) from the local languages are attached as prefixes to the English lexeme, making it to possess two bound morphemes, one marking for size and the other for plurality. Consider the following example:

Exchange 3

Turn

1. C: *Nifuna tumashirts na tumashorts twa bana.* (I want small shirts and shorts for children)
2. T: *Twa bamayears angati?* (For which ages?)
3. C: 5 to 10
4. T: *Bwelani tuliko* (Come we have)

In the example above, two bound morphemes have been combined with English lexemes. Diminutive '*tu-*' plus a plural marker '*ma-*' from the local languages are combined to '*shirts*' and '*shorts*' of the English lexemes. In essence, this is not just a case of bound morphemes but the use of diminutive prefixes '*tu-*' and plural markers '*ma-*' with the words '*shirt*' and '*short*' and English plural form '*-s*' to form '*tu/ma/shirt/s*'. It is argued here that only bound morphemes from local languages seem to be attached to English lexemes, than bound morphemes from English being attached to lexemes in local languages (Mambwe 2014).

Pennycook (2009), as Jimaima and Simugala (2019) put it, reveals that meaning does not reside in the text but is always in the context or in the relationship among pre-textual, contextual, sub-textual and post textual meanings. Thus, to understand the meanings arising from the semiotic assemblages (Jimaima and Banda 2019), the overall context of the utterance ought to be examined.

This means understanding the noun class system of the Bantu languages in order to appreciate the semiotic aggregates afforded by diminutive prefixes. Arguably, to appreciate the meaning potential of an utterance expressing translanguaging practices requires that one examines not only the language and semiotic material used, but also the social effect of meaning production. Therefore, for linguistics and communication studies, translanguaging particularly in a market setting has revolutionized communication in the modern era to levels never experienced before. The data reveal the conflation of multiple semiotic resources of standard and non-standard bits and pieces of languages drawn from local languages and English language. Consider the following;

Exchange 3

Turn

1. T: **Yes boss** *mulibwa?* *Bwelani muoneko maslimfit shirts.*
(Yes boss how are you? Come and have a look at the slimfit shirts)
2. C: *Sinimavala maslimfits, this potbelly would not allow that.*
(I do not put on slim-fits this potbelly would not allow that).
3. T: **I see, but manormal size** *aliko.* (I see, but the normal sizes are there.)

In the exchange above, speakers draw on the bits and pieces of standard and non-standard language forms from Nyanja and English. In T1, the trader uses non-standard bits and pieces of English and Nyanja ‘**yes boss** *mulibwa*’. ‘**Yes boss**’ is a non-standard form of greeting that expresses some form of respect and attempts to honorify the addressee. Noticeably, for the traders, the use of ‘**yes mummy**’, ‘**yes daddy**’, ‘**yes basister**’, ‘**yes babrother**’ has become normative, hence a norm. The speaker uses the word ‘**yes**’ to mean ‘**hello**’, which expresses the standard form of a greeting in English language. On the other hand, ‘**boss**’ is a noun that refers to a superior person who has authority over the other in a working place. However, in this context, the word ‘**boss**’ functions as an adjective as it referred to customers who seemed to be of a higher class than

the trader. In addition, *mulibwa* is a Nyanja non-standard form of greeting that means (how are you). The standard form of *mulibwa* is *mulibwanji* (how are you).

In his response, the customer associates the design of a shirt ‘**slim-fit**’ to the stature or body size of those who buy such a design. In the expression, ‘**this potbelly would not allow**’, the customer referred to his body size that he could not fit in the slim designed shirts. Here, he described himself with the word ‘**potbelly**’, which is a non-standard way of describing self. The words, ‘**this**’, ‘**would not allow**’ all are Standard English words which have been combined with the non-standard forms. At this point it can be said that speakers in the trade domain stylize their language use by combining standard and non-standard forms from either the same language or from two different languages. The combination could either be in a single stretch of discourse or multiple strings.

Additionally, in some instances, a combination of only standard bits and pieces of different languages in a single utterance was observed. The motivation then lies in creatively blending the words from the local languages and English language to privilege meaning making. For example;

Exchange 4

Turn

1. T: Hello my brother! *Bwelani mugule nsapato zokosa*, these shoes are very nice and strong. (Hello my brother come and buy the strong shoes)
2. C: *Tumoneni kaReebok ako, mpeni* right side (Let me see that Reebok one, give me the right side)

From exchange 4, features from three languages are employed by the trader and customer in their transaction. Bemba, Nyanja and English which are used in the transaction have particular linguistic features that are available and drawn from the speakers’ linguistic repertoire in order for meaning making in their conversation. These linguistic features are all needed to convey information in this particular speech interaction. This follows Reid and Otheguy (2015)

who suggest that translanguaging is the deployment of speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named languages. Whereas *'Hello my brother, these shoes are very nice and strong'* and *'right side'* are standard pieces from English language, *bwelani mugule nsapato zokosa, Tumoneni, ako, mpeni* are standard pieces from the local languages, being Nyanja and Bemba respectively. In fact, what is brought to life on Zambian markets is that the combination of linguistic features from the speakers' repertoires as they are deployed in the constructions of meaningful and complete discourses entails that, for speakers, the type or form of language to be used in informal contexts does not matter as all bits and pieces of language are treated as meaning making resources in their own right (Blommaert 2010; Mambwe 2014). Here the study revealed that each language is used to convey a different informational message, but it is the bilingualism of the text that the full message is conveyed (Creese and Blackledge, 2010).

4.2 Motivation behind Translanguaging

In addressing the motivation behind translanguaging, consider the data presented here below. The data show that speakers in the trade domain use translanguaging strategy as a scaffold to help their interlocutors to cultivate their ability to using all of their languages as a resource for trading purposes. The motivation then lies in the ability to creatively blend different linguistic features from multiple languages in order to privilege meaning making. In the quest to achieve their intended goals, the actors deploy the speech convergence, speech divergence and the speech maintenance strategies in their transactional discourse. The deployment of these speech strategies is influenced by a number of factors which include the need to; communicate effectively, persuade or convince one's interlocutor, explain or describe a product or process. In analyzing the motivation behind translanguaging, we look at the example below involving an interaction between a lady of about 45 years old, buying a Chitenge (African material wrapper) from a male trader.

Exchange 5

Turn

1. C: *Ichi Chitenge ni chakuti?* (Where is this African material wrapper from?)
2. T: *Bwelani mummy, ivi, vichoka kuZaire vija kuNigeria* (Come mummy, these are from Zaire those are from Nigeria)
3. C: *Nizingati chaku Nigeria?* (How much is the Nigerian one?)
4. T: *Ni K150 6 metres, K100 4 metres na K50 2 metres* (it's K150 for the 6metres, K100 for the 4metres and K50 for the 2 metres)
5. C: *Ha! nafidula* (they are expensive)
6. T: *BaMummy bandi, umutengo ulifye bwino elo nimaoriginals tafifeda nokufeda, moneni mukati, tapali difference nakunse* (My mother, the price is fine, these are originals which do not fade, just check there is no difference between the inside and outside part).
7. C: *Mpene discount, ndefwaya 6 metres muli iyi type* (give me discount, I want 6mts in this type)
8. T: *Ok, letani K145* (Ok bring K145)
9. C: *Mmm! K5 discount? Nilichabe naK130* (Mmm! K5 discount? I only have a K130)
10. T: *Nivokosa maningi vitenje ivi elo vichokela kutali, ok, ni fakileni poni K10 ni bweze chabe yoodela.* (these chitenge material are very strong and they are from a far place, just add a K10 so that I return the amount for the orders)

In the transaction above the customer in **T1** opens up the conversation in Nyanja by asking from which country the chitenge material was ordered. In response in **T2**, the trader maintains Nyanja in his explanation in order to accommodate the customer by using the language she uses. The trader applies the convergence strategy by using the language the hearer knows. He calls the customer 'mummy' so as to show solidarity and to make her feel welcome and to connote sisterhood/brotherhood or ethnicity. The trader's convergence to English in **T2**, tells the customer that 'I appreciate you' as a sister or mummy, hence further reduces the apparent social

distance and linguistic difference between them. In this way, the trader asserts his approval. In **T4** the trader uses English when he gives the prices according to metres. In **T5**, the customer used Bemba in order to be dissimilar to the trader and create a social distance between them *ha! nafidula*. However, in his explanation, the trader translanguaged between Nyanja and Bemba in **T6** to bridge the linguistic gap created by the customer by becoming similar and be perceived more favorably. He notes that he needs to sell and make profit. Here the similarity- attraction theory and social exchange tenets of SAT are at play. The data revealed that the use of Bemba language by the trader is to reduce the difference between him and the customer, to communicate effectively and encourage the interaction to continue in order to maximize profit. The similarity-attraction theory proposes that the more similar our attitudes and beliefs are to others the more likely it is we will be attracted to them. In the same view, Pennycook (2015) observes that spoken language fulfills two basic aims; to communicate information about the speaker and to establish social relationships with other people. In **T7**, the customer maintains her linguistic style by continuing with Bemba. The trader in **T8** uses Nyanja as he wants to maintain the discount he has given to the customer. In **T9**, the customer translanguages to Nyanja, this time to converge with her interlocutor as she needs the price to be reduced further. In **T10**, the trader employs Nyanja so as to persuade and mediate information with an effort to make a sale. He weighed the potential costs and rewards thereby choosing the alternative that maximizes the positive outcome. The trader uses translanguaging in order to describe, convince and explain to his interlocutor on the quality of the chitenge material and the fact that the chitenges were from a far distant place. The customer is so firm on what she wants to spend and the trader gives in. Here, we conclude that translanguaging practices among the traders and customers in the market are aimed at maximizing profit as it gives them a high bargaining power that in turn concludes a price that is fair between them.

5.0 Conclusion

Place of translanguaging as a commodified semiotic resource has been made apparent in this study as translanguaging gives the traders a higher bargaining power in terms of language use because they are not limited to only one feature of a language that they may not be very competent in. Therefore, something of interest here is that speakers in the trade domain in their quest to complete a transaction apply a number of translanguaging patterns or styles. These patterns of language used in the communication practices of Lusaka speakers, is highly unpredictable in terms of structural composition of the utterances and the positional occurrence of various bits and pieces of language available to speakers. In addition, as noted in the extracts and examples that have been highlighted above, one stretch of discourse might have a combination of more different bits and pieces of language yet another discourse might have few or use one standard form exclusively. These translanguaging practices are all meaningful to speakers in different contexts in which they occur. Here, one style serves a different purpose from the other and all the languages that are used in the transactions have specific functions. This follows Wakumelo (2010) who points out that social groups within multilingual Zambia, creatively uses their linguistic resources to communicate and to provide them with an identity.

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that speakers practiced double deployment of commodified semiotic apparatus in their linguistic performances by rejecting the view that their own internal linguistic perspective was limited to having one bounded language repertoire, but rather one language system with language features that interact to propel their linguistic and cognitive performances that are alive to the needs of the immediate communicative and business context. Further still, like Mambwe (2014), the study showed how speakers in an urban market setting of Lusaka stylize their multiple identities by comfortably dissolving the traditional linguistic boundaries through the use of the extended linguistic repertoires available to them in order to achieve their intended goals. In this regard, the study has presented the styles and patterns which speakers employ in their language use by combining

bound morphemes from local languages with a lexeme from English language to form a double pluralisation and indicate honorific marker in an attempt to transcend the limiting scope of boundedness. Furthermore, the study has shown that the linguistic borders assumed to exist between languages are permeable as speakers may choose to use linguistic resources which are closer to the standard in an informal setting. They would choose to combine both sets of languages, that is, standard and non-standard in a stretch of speech in varying and unpredictable patterns. This entail contributions to recent arguments on language that view it not as an autonomous system but rather as embedded in people's social interactions. The study has also demonstrated that languages have no clear-cut borders and that language is an important tool and symbol in the haggling, which accompanies economic transaction (Mambwe, 2014; Garcia & Wei, 2014; Blommaert, 2010).

Thus, translanguaging as a commodified semiotic resource shifts the locus of language practice from the traditional view to language as a social practice in which languages do not work in isolation; rather, languages are seen as semiotic aggregates in circulation amenable for uptake in the unfolding of discourse. The events described in this paper about urgency and actorhood in a marketplace in multilingual context entail a special re-examination of the role of translanguaging in communication. This is even truer considering that marketers did not only translanguaging for mutuality; rather, they did translanguaging for a more economic reason, a strategy that explains why they are in the marketplace. Seeing translanguaging from that perspective forces to us label the notion as a commodified semiotic resource deployed for enhanced business outcome and sustainable clientele satisfaction.

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