

# The Evolution and Sociolinguistic aspects of Kaonde-Ila Language of Mumbwa District of Zambia

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**Abstract:** In this research an attempt has been made at taking a sociolinguistic view of the Kaonde-Ila language of Mumbwa district of Central Province of Zambia. Particular attention was spent on the manner in which the ever-changing circumstances in life put pressure on the Kaonde-Ila language. This pressure is a social demand that emanates from sociolinguistic factors such as language contact and language shift found within and outside the speech community of its speakers. This paper also deals with the historical background of the Kaonde-Ila people. An attempt has been made to differentiate between the various types of the Bantu botatwe languages to which Kaonde-Ila language belongs by tracing the origins of the Kaonde-Ila people and also to give a somewhat accurate definition of the most common words which are usually confused in the analysis of the Bantu botatwe group of languages.

**Keywords:** Kaonde-Ila, Bantu botatwe, language shift, language contact, intermarriages

## I. INTRODUCTION

The dawning of Bantu migration that took place approximately in the 13<sup>th</sup> century has had remarkable effects in the evolution of Zambian languages. This migration of different ethnic groups resulted into ethnic associations and tribal wars in their new localities, and this gave birth to new linguistic characteristics of their languages. Naturally, the birth of new languages meant new identity. It cannot be argued any further that the above given explanation on ethnic migration and association could be some of the ways that led to the association of the Kaonde and the Ila resulting in the birth of a new language called Kaonde-Ila spoken in Mumbwa district particularly in Chief Mumba, Mulendema, Chibuluma, Moono and Kaindu chiefdoms.

According to Binsbergen (1992), the Kaonde people settled in what is known as the North-Western Province of Zambia probably around the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries having migrated from the Luba Empire in what is known as Democratic Republic of Congo today. On the other hand, Mwanabayeke (2013) reports that the Northern Ila, called Bambala originated from Namwala and were part of the main Ila group. "The Kaonde were referred to as Luba in the past and even when they became known as Kaonde their chiefs retained the Luba connections. Chief Mumba for example, now a Kaonde-Ila chief is descended from Luba who with his followers came to Mumbwa from Kaonde country in about 1880. He acquired cattle from the Ila and his followers intermarried with both the Ila and the Kaonde." (Mwanabayeke 2013: 2)

Smith and Dale (1968) point out that the intermarriage and interaction of the Bambala (Northern Ila) and the Kaonde gave birth to intermixture of cultures and new language called Kaonde-Ila. Mwanabayeke (ibid) observed that the proximity of the Bambala and northern location to the Kaonde under chief Mumba suggest that this is the Ila group that easily came into contact with the Kaonde in Mumbwa and through intermingling and intermarriages this could have led to the disintegration of their original ethnic identity and a mushrooming of a new Kaonde-Ila identity. Apart from emanating from language contact between Kaonde and Ila, Kaonde-Ila has also borrowed some vocabulary from predominant and prestigious languages within and around Mumbwa speech community such as Bemba and Nyanja.

Languages of Zambia

*Zambian linguistic landscape*

Zambia has many major local or indigenous languages and dialects, all of them members of the Bantu family, together with English, which is the official language and the major language of business and education. Language issue in Zambia is cardinal for national, political and ethnic identities as well as media of communication and cultural preservation.

It is easy to know or state the number of languages spoken in Zambia if one knows the number of ethnic groups in the country. This is because there is a thin line in differentiating a language and a tribe or an ethnic group in the Zambian context (Kashoki 1978). Today tribal affiliation in Zambia is more important for both cultural identity and political coalition. Kashoki (1978) states that ethnic identification as tribes, with a chief as leader; speaking same language has a long tradition in Zambia and was explicitly manipulated under colonial rule. According to the census of population and housing of 1990 and 2000(CSO 1990:3), the total number of languages spoken in Zambia stands at seventy two. Although the Central Statistical Office (CSO 1990) claims that there are over 72 languages in Zambia, many of these might be better referred to as dialects. Langworthy (1974) points out that some of these languages have a long history within Zambia, while others such as Lozi arose as a result of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century migration. According to Langworthy (1974), all of Zambia's local languages are members of the Bantu family and are closely related to one another. According to Kuka and Mortern (2007), there are seven local languages used in Zambia besides English for official transactions such as broadcasting (both radio and

television), literacy campaigns and dissemination of official information. Each of these seven main languages is the official regional language in the province where it is spoken. Bemba is the regional official language of Northern, Luapula, Copper belt, Central and Muchinga provinces; Nyanja is the regional official language of Eastern and Lusaka provinces, Kaonde, Luvale and Lunda North-western province while Tonga for Southern and Central provinces. Apart from being languages of government transaction, these seven local languages are also used as media of instruction at lower primary school level.

The 2000 census of population and housing (CSO 2000) showed that Zambia's most widely spoken languages are Bemba (spoken by 30.1% of the population as either a first or second language), Nyanja (10.7%), Tonga (10.6%), and Lozi (5.7%). Kashoki (1978), states that there are many more languages besides English and the seven regional official languages that are spoken in Zambia both as first and second languages. However these languages are referred to as minority languages and are only spoken in limited areas and by a smaller number of speakers.

Table 1 Shows language by number of speakers based on 2000 (CSO 2000) census of population.

Language	Use as 1st language	Use as 2 <sup>nd</sup> language	Language	Use as 1 <sup>st</sup> language	Use as 2 <sup>nd</sup> language
Bemba	32.1	34.2	Kaonde	1.9	1.8
Nyanja	11.9	19.5	English	1.7	26.3
Tonga	11.0	4.4	Luvale	1.7	1.8
Lozi	5.7	5.2	Lenje	1.4	1.5
Chewa	4.7	2.3	Lala	1.4	0.5
Nsenga	3.5	1.2	Namwanga	1.3	1.2
Tumbuka	2.5	1.3	Mambwe	1.2	0.9
Lunda	2.2	1.3	Sala	1.1	0.6
Lamba	2.0	1.4	Nkoya	1.0	0.4

The data in table 1 shows that Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga and English are spoken by more than 10 percent of the population either as first language or second language. The table also shows that English, Bemba and Nyanja are spoken by more speakers as second languages than as first languages. This linguistic state of affair is attributed to the fact that these three languages are lingua franca or bridge languages in urban regions and among the elite respectively. According to Simwinga (2006), English, the former colonial language serves as a common language among the educated Zambians and is the most commonly used second language though it is a mother tongue of only 2% of Zambians.

Although all provinces in Zambia have been allocated one regional official language, North-western province has been allocated three: Kaonde, Lunda and Luvale, this is partly because the three languages are not fairly intelligible. As observed by Mython (1978:209), the selection of the three languages was based on political and linguistic factors. The political factor had to do with the assimilation or integrating Lunda and Luvale speakers who migrated from Angola into Northern Rhodesia. This was done to counter the influence of Angolan broadcasts done in Lunda and Luvale. The linguistic factor was that the speakers of the three languages of North-western province were not able to speak or understand Tonga, the regional official language which was in existence at that time. However, Simwinga (2006) points out that the fact that the same gesture was not extended to speakers of Mambwe and Namwanga in Northern province, Tumbuka in Eastern province and Nkoya in Western province renders support to the position that the decision was based more on political than linguistic factors.

While the seven regional official languages can be acquired both informally in their natural environment and learnt formally at school as second languages, English is generally learnt as a second language at school in a fee paying formal environment. As a result, English is accessible to a limited number of people whose parents are able to pay high school fees as condition for entry and admission to schools.

#### *Threatened Minority Languages of Zambia*

As already stated by Kuka and Mortern (2007) above, Zambia has seven local regional official languages recognized by the government which are used for administrative and commercial transactions. However, each region or province has many minority languages or dialects whose speakers are obliged to speak the regional official languages in order to participate fully in community activities. Kashoki (1998) observes that these speakers of minority languages have been placed in a disadvantageous position as a result of being dominated either numerically or politically (in situations where some policies favor dominant languages in the same region). Simwinga (2006) states that in Zambia there are a number of minority dialects whose speakers are by policy forced to use regional dominant languages for official communication and as media of instruction in schools.

In Southern province and southern parts of Central province, Tonga is the dominant or regional official language used for official communication and as a medium of instruction in schools. According to Kuka and Mortern (2007), about 80% of the people in this region speak Tonga either as first language or as second language. The minority languages spoken in this

region are Toka-Leya, Wee, Ila, Sala, Soli, Goba, Lenje, Kaonde and Shona. Kuka and Mortem (2007) also observe that due to the political and social status Tonga has, most of the speakers of these minority languages use Tonga as their second language. Because of this social status Tonga enjoys, there is a steady decrease in domains in which these minority languages are spoken.

In Eastern province, the linguistic situation is quite interesting. The official regional language, explains that although Tumbuka speakers use Nyanja as their regional official language, there is no mutual intelligibility between Nyanja and Tumbuka. He also points out that Tumbuka is the only language in Eastern province that has resisted the dominance of Nyanja in all domains in Lundazi, where the language is spoken. This vitality of Tumbuka may be attributed among many factors to the rich literary heritage of the language. It is the only language in the province after Nyanja which has bible, hymn books and other literature. Nyanja, has no native or indigenous speakers unlike other official regional languages. Nyanja is a lingua franca (neutral language), which enjoys the status of official regional language spoken by various native speakers in Eastern and Lusaka provinces.

There are a number of minority languages or dialects spoken in different parts of Eastern province. As indicated in table 1, Chewa, Nsenga, Tumbuka, Senga and Chikunda are the dialects spoken in different districts of Eastern province. Simwinga (2006) points out that although these languages are referred to as minority languages; some of them like Tumbuka are used by more speakers than Lunda, Luvale and Kaonde, the official regional languages of Northwestern province, as shown in table 1. The reason why the later languages have become official languages has to do with their relative importance in Northwestern province, where as in the Eastern province, where Tumbuka is spoken, Nyanja is the main language of wider communication and thus has become a regional official language. Simwinga (2006) further

As indicated in table 1 above, 34 percent of Zambia's population speaks Bemba as the second language, meaning that it is the most popular local language in the country. It is the official regional language of the Copperbelt province, Northern Province, Luapula province, Muchinga and Northern parts of Central province. Kuka and Mortem (2007) report that due to its social status, Bemba has had serious impact on minority languages in the regions where it is the official language. Kuka and Mortem (2007) point out that speakers of minority languages in Bemba dominated regions, use Bemba not only for official and other social transactions, but take it as a symbol of identity. The following are the dialects spoken in Bemba dominated areas: Swaka, Lala, Bisa, Aushi, Ngumbo, Bwile, Namwanga, Mambwe and Lungu. Chimuka (1977) observes that most of the languages in Bemba speaking areas have regrettably lost their vitality due to Bemba dominance. Apart from Mambwe and Namwanga, languages which are still used in home domain by its speakers, the rest of the minority

languages in these regions are only spoken by grandparents and parents at home domain level.

Just like other provinces, Western province has also one regional official language and other dialects with varying vitalities. Lozi is the regional official language used in many domains by everyone in Western province. Mython (1978) points out that Western province have a lot of minority languages spoken in small areas of the province. Kuka and Mortem (2007) list Nkoya, Mbunda, Nyengo, Makoma, Kwangwa, and Mbowe as some of the minority languages of Western Province. All these dialects are in some way linked to the predominant language Lozi. Simwinga (2006) however notes that Nkoya which is spoken in Kaoma has no mutual intelligibility with Lozi. He also observed that Nkoya has lost its vitality and is only used in informal domains at family level in Kaoma. The study by Simwinga (2006) reveals that the historical relationship of the dominated and the dominant between Lozi and Nkoya has aided the language policy in relegating the use of Nkoya to the household domain.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### *Social network theory*

One of the theoretical frameworks that is particularly relevant to this study is the Social Network theory. The Social network theory is concerned about how people, organisations or groups interact with others within their environment and how their environment affects individual's language attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, a network is a group of people who know each other in different ways. According to Stoessel (2002) the Social network theory is very significant to Language Maintenance and Language Shift because of its influence on language usage and culture. Stoessel (2002) points out that language use and language attitudes can be affected by changes in individuals' lives and social environment.

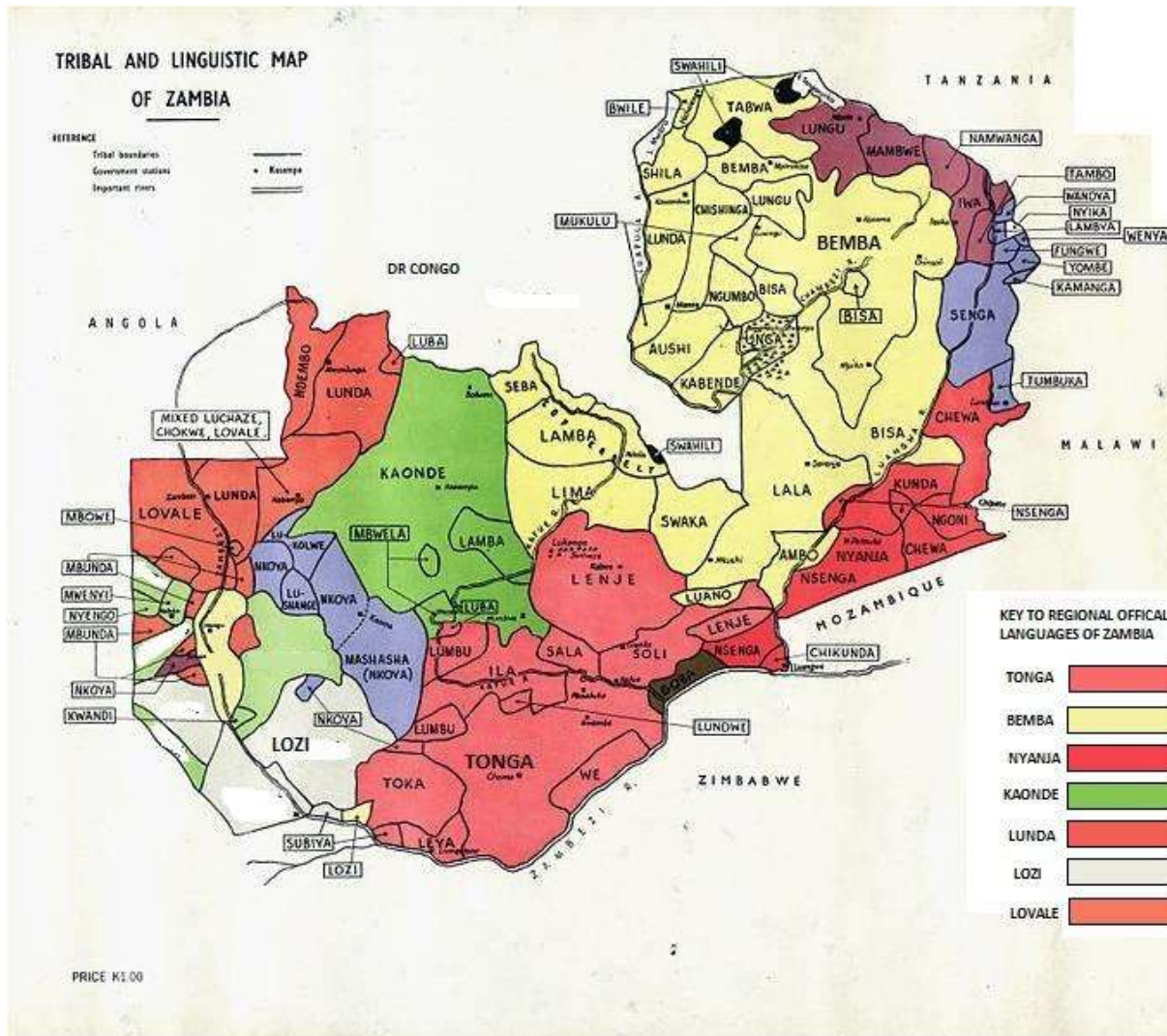
The central assumption of this theory is that language is the main medium of interaction by individuals within their social and cultural environment; hence language serves as a means of socialisation. Therefore individuals are able to depict their social roles such as gender, religious, professional and institutional roles through language and in turn receive feedback from other members with similar traits of socio-cultural knowledge and values. In this way, an individual becomes part of the social group to which he or she will show loyalty. (Stoessel 2002:96).

According to Stoessel (2002) various factors influence the individual when it comes to language use and choice. For instance, belonging to a particular social network can be marked by language (the choice of words, dialects, or accent). In this regard, individuals can indicate specific needs and desires such as the desire to be part of a particular class of people or desire to exit from a previous social network by choosing a particular dialect or variety or accent. In other words, the choice to belong to a certain social class or desire to distance oneself from a particular group can be determined by the individual's choice and use of language.

Since this theory looks at social class or social group as a major factor that affect language use and choice, it is then clear that Social network theory is linked to Language Shift and Language Maintenance because language preference has a bearing on the vitality of preferred and unpopular languages. This theory is relevant to this study because of the various social groups and classes found in the speech communities under investigation. The people of Mumbwa belong to different networks that influence language use and choice. For example, there are social clubs for women and youths which are associated with their own language varieties.

### III. METHODOLOGY

Linguistic map of Zambia showing regional and minority languages of Zambia. Kuka and Mortern (2007)



#### Historical Background of the Kaonde-Ila

For us to adequately understand the Kaonde-Ila people as well as the sociolinguistic aspects surrounding their language, we need to have the prior historical background of the speakers

themselves. Some sociolinguistic features found in the Kaonde-Ila language today are direct results of historical background of its speakers.

The Kaonde-Ila people found in Mumbwa today originated mainly from two tribes, namely the Kaonde from North-western Zambia and the Ila from Namwala, Southern Zambia. Smith and Dale (1962) record that the Kaonde people were led into the present Zambia at different times by their two leaders, Kaindu and Mumba.

According to Mwanabayeke (2013), a group of Kaonde speakers under the leadership of Chonaminungo, migrated from Kola or Luba kingdom to the south in Kasempa around 1870. Since these people were hunters, they later crossed the Kafue River in pursuit of elephants until they found themselves in the present day Mumbwa. In 1890, the British colonial office was set in Mumbwa and appointed Chonaminungo as gazetted Chief of the Kaonde people of Mumbwa. Chonaminungo died and was buried at Mumbwa caves. He was succeeded by his nephew Mumba from which the name Mumbwa is derived. When Mumba died he was succeeded by his nephew Kabozhanchili who shifted the palace from Mumbwa caves to Kalilwe hot springs on the Chibila stream. The colonial office decided to maintain the name Mumba as the royal name for all upcoming chiefs.

It was during the second Mumba, that the genesis of Kaonde-Ila language is marked. When the Bambala people of Chief Moono were attacked by the Lenjes, of Chitanda, the Kaonde of Mumba sent warriors to go and reinforce the Moono military strength which resulted in the retreat of the Lenjes from Chitanda. In appreciation, Chief Moono gave out cattle and women to the Kaonde of Mumba. This intermarriage gave birth to a new language called Kaonde-Ila with a blend of two ethnic traditions and cultures. According to Headman Chilimboyi of Mumba Chiefdom, the time when the Kaonde arrived in Mumbwa area led by Chonaminungo, the first Mumba, they were just a small group until about the 1880s when large numbers of Kaonde people migrated from the Kaonde land to Mumbwa. By that time, there was a great deal of social interaction between the Kaonde and the Ila and the first Mumba had acquired cattle from the Ila and his people had intermarried with them. This intertribal interaction culminated into the foundation and evolution of the Kaonde-Ila in the area

According to oral narratives, the Kaonde-Ila of Kaindu just like that of Mumba are Kaonde by origin. Although there are no written records, oral narratives from Kaindu chiefdom state that the Kaondes of Chief Kaindu originated from Mwata Yamvo kingdom in Congo. Manchishi and Musona (1990) report that the Soli together with the Kaonde and Lala came from Kola under Mwata Yamvo. Mwanabayeke (ibid) reveals that Chief Mwata Yamvo had a dispute with his sister Nonyi whom he chased together with her four sons, Kapijimpanga, Mushima, Nyoka and Kamutombangombe. This small group of Kaonde settled in Solwezi and later dispersed. Kamutombangombe crossed the Kafue River and met Mumba in Mumbwa who gave him land in the north to settle.

On the southern part of Mumbwa lives a second group of Kaonde-Ila speakers with a different ethnic background. Unlike

Mumba and Kaindu Kaonde-Ilas, people of Chief Chibuluma are originally Bambala, an Ila northern group. The Chibuluma chieftaincy belonged to Benempongo (the goat clan). The first leader of the Chibuluma dynasty was Mwanza, a Mbala who was succeeded by his brother Mayaba. Mayaba was succeeded by Namweenda, and then came Chinenga. Chinenga was succeeded by Chilele who was succeeded by Shakupelenga. It is during the reign of Shakupelenga when the Kaonde-Ila language was born in Chibuluma chiefdom.

Shakupelenga bought a slave from Chief Kaindu of the Kaonde by the name of Nsumbula. Nsumbula became so trusted by the royal family that he was given the Chief's daughter to marry. When Shakupelenga died, Nsumbula was appointed Chief of the Bambala people. Nsumbula could not believe himself, and imagined how a slave could end up being a chief. In praising himself he exclaimed, "*Ndime Chibuluma! Ndabuluma mubwami bwabeni!*" Meaning I am roaring in other people's chieftaincy. The British colonial office as usual decreed that all chiefs should be called by one name throughout; hence the name Chibuluma which stated as a nickname became the royal name to date. This ascendancy of a Kaonde to Ila royalty, no doubt facilitated the fast growing Kaonde-Ila evolution.

Unlike the four Kaonde-Ila Chiefs whose roots are traced either in Kaonde or Bambala roots, Mulendema chiefdom was founded by the pure and original Ilas from Namwala, *Baila baku Maala*. These Ilas were led into Nalusanga area by Munyama. Munyama had his fifth son who was nicknamed Mulendema because of his tremendous skill of beating drums. When Munyama died his son Mulendema succeeded him and the colonial office in Mumbwa approved the name Mulendema as the royal name.

Now how did the Kaonde intrusion reach an all Ila dynasty and community? When Mulendema's son Kabambankuku succeeded his father, he married a Kaonde wife from Kaindu. As per tradition, this Kaonde wife brought a brother by the name of Lukutaika so that he could stay with her at the royal palace. Chief Mulendema later employed Lukutaika as a royal messenger. Lukutaika won the admiration of the Colonial office in Mumbwa which transferred him to the Boma.

When Mulendema died, he was supposed to be succeeded by one of his two sons Matabula and Chivwema. Unfortunately Matabula died in a very mysterious circumstance which made Chivwema run away abandoning the palace out of fear and went to settle in Shibuyunji.

The District Commissioner in Mumbwa gave the council of elders three months to find a successor to Chief Mulendema. When the District Commissioner realised the three months ultimatum had elapsed without finding a successor, he handpicked Lukutaika a Kaonde to succeed Mulendema as chief. This action angered the Ila who rioted but the colonial office sent messengers who went to Mulendema and whipped the rioters. On the other hand, this action pleased the Kaondes of Kaindu who migrated to Mulendema in numbers to settle

since their own son was in power. This is how the Ila lineage lost power to Kaondes.

This intermingling of Kaondes and Ilas created what is known in Sociolinguistics as Language transformational shift which resulted in a new language Kaonde- Ila language. The creation of Kaonde-Ila is a phenomenon that is very unique, it was a process born out of free interaction and mutual harmony rather than invasion. There was no language shift where the dominant language took advantage of the weaker one, instead a new language evolved and new tribe born

#### IV. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Holmes (1992) explains that one of the most important issues in the study of Language Shift is the powerless minority group which attempts to maintain its mother tongue when communicating with the majority group whose language is dominant. If the majority group, whose language is dominant, is economically and politically superior in all sectors, the consequence is that the minority language will experience a shift to the majority language or eventually disappear. In his study, Holmes (1992) outlines some social factors that may trigger Language Shift. These factors are attitude, economic factor, political factor, intermarriage and migration. This literature review revealed that Tsunoda (2005), Ngidi (2007), Chishiba (2001), Magirosa (2014) and Mautsane (2010) discuss Language Shift triggered by attitude of speakers of minority language. These studies have also revealed that Migration, historical and cultural factors coupled with intermarriages are factors that have contributed to Language Shift in the speech communities investigated. The rest of the researchers who carried out studies on the topic of Language Shift have been extensively discussed below.

Bradley (2001) notes that the issue of *language attitude* plays a vital role in language shift in any given linguistic environment because attitudes have a significant influence on patterns of language learning and language use and help explain certain aspects of Language Shift as a sociolinguistic change. Bradley (2001) further explains that language attitudes are caused by people's position in society, their status and prestige. He further observes that certain positions and social class demands that people use certain languages according to the social class of speakers and social context. This is what Ngidi (2007) observes when he defines *language attitude* as strong positive or negative emotions experienced by people when they are faced with a choice between languages in a variety of situations or are learning a language. In his study on the attitudes of parents, educators and learners on the use of English as medium of instruction in Mthunzini circuit, Ngidi (2007) reports that most parents and learners would want to learn in English while educators support the teaching of learners in their mother tongues. The study revealed that parents felt that if children are taught in English right from the start, they would have better chances of getting good jobs. Parents felt that isiZulu should be kept in children's lives but English is more important for employment. The study by Ngidi (2007) shows that people

always want to identify themselves with a language that would either give them social status in society or a language that would provide social integration and incentives.

Tsunoda, (2005) notes that as people aspire to learn a language spoken by the majority in the region, they become bilinguals and they eventually begin to lose their ability to use their mother tongue. He investigates the *language attitude* of speakers of minority languages towards the officially recognised regional dominant language (Tsunoda 2005). The study revealed that the prestige attached to majority languages has negatively affected the vitality of minority languages as speakers of minority languages begin to shun their mother tongues. Tsunoda (2005) further mentions that people's desire to integrate into a community whose language of communication is more prestigious, is responsible for stimulating positive *language attitudes*. Due to the fact that young people want to be identified with majority languages, they will strive hard to learn a language that would integrate them into the majority linguistic group. This positive attitude towards majority languages plays a pivotal role in facilitating Language Shift (Tsunoda 2005).

Chishiba (2013) in his book about the genesis and challenges of French teaching in Zambia, points out that school administration and curriculum can cause *negative attitudes* towards languages that are not media of instruction in schools. He further states that exclusive use of English in the school bounds and the discouragement of the use of native Zambian languages has seriously facilitated negative *language attitudes* among learners in schools. In his study on factors contributing to the decline in the teaching of French in Zambian public schools, Machinyise (2009) reveals that most school managers do not support the teaching of French in secondary schools but they rather encourage learners to take up subjects such as Literature and Religious education. This lack of support and motivation of Zambian languages and French has contributed to the reduction in the number of pupils learning French and Zambian languages in Zambian public schools. The study has also revealed that this negative attitude towards Zambian languages and French has negatively affected learners' communicative competence in Zambian languages and French. Similarly, Gurrey (1960) also reports that there is still a good number of schools where the mother tongue of learners is held in low esteem and is not even allowed to be used in the school boundaries. Investigating the impact of mother tongue medium of instruction on class performance of lower primary learners in Ethiopia, Gurrey (1960) further reveals that the use of mother tongue in school boundaries is a punishable offence. This restriction of language use in schools has the potential of creating negative *language attitudes* in children.

Negative historical background attached to a language can bring about negative attitude towards the language and can cause a steady reduction in the number of its speakers (Magirosa 2014). In his study on the factors that contributed to the death of Chilapalapa language, Magirosa (2014) revealed that in many African countries, languages of former colonial

masters are usually associated with brutality and oppression, hence their unpopularity and resentment. Magirosa (2014) remarks that Chilalalapa, the language of Southern Rhodesia, (now Zimbabwe), was a language used by white employers (Boers) to demean and brutalise Africans. Chilalalapa as a pidgin language of Southern Africa was heavily influenced by Southern African native languages such as Ndebele, Shona, Nyanja, English and Afrikaans. About 60 percent of Chilalalapa vocabulary comes from Ndebele, 20 percent from English, 10 percent from Shona, 5 percent from Nyanja and another 5 percent from Afrikaans. Chilalalapa was widely used in towns, mines and on white owned farms by Africans and white employers.

This *negative language attitude* towards Chilalalapa is also echoed by Machinyise (2018) who reports that Chilalalapa, a lingua-franca, which was used by Boers (or Afrikaners) on blacks in the farms and industries during the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, became obsolete when the three countries (now Zambia, Malawi, and Zimbabwe) became independent. Investigating the influence of Chilalalapa vocabulary on Zambian languages, Machinyise (2018) reports that Chilalalapa language was viewed by Africans as a language of Boer brutality and oppression. The findings revealed that although Chilalalapa language left a lot of words in most Zambian languages, many Zambians have a negative attitude towards Chilalalapa as it reminds them of Boer brutality and exploitation. Therefore, after independence, these Southern African countries adopted English as their official language. These Southern Africa independent states preferred English to Chilalalapa because English though a language of the coloniser was never used to demean Africans as Africans in the colonial era were not allowed to use English with Whites as doing so was seen as placing an African on equal standing with a Whiteman.

In line with the issue of negative language background, Mautsane (2010:27) explains the causes of language shift from Afrikaans to English in Western Cape.

English has taken different social roles throughout South Africa's turbulent history and presented many faces as a language of oppression, a language of opportunity, a language of separation or exclusivity and also a language of unification. From any chosen theoretical perspective, the presence of English has always been a point of contention in South Africa, a combination of both threat and promise. Afrikaans and the Afrikaner policy of Apartheid and the Afrikaner controlled state had become locked in a tight and suffocating embrace. Afrikaans had become a language of the oppressor- the medium used when white policemen arrested black pass offenders or when white civil servants ordered black or coloured people out of their houses in racially mixed slum areas.

Concerning the status and place of Afrikaans in South Africa, Dyers (2008) carried out a survey aimed at establishing factors determining the use of Afrikaans among township youth in

South Africa. His findings bring to the fore the fact that the linguistic landscape of South Africa was engineered and influenced by the more than 40 years (1948-1994) of apartheid regime whereby there was a separate development for all races. This scenario has had a *negative historical* impact on language choice. Dyers (2008:51) observed:

As a language, Afrikaans has suffered historically because of its association with the forty odd years of Apartheid. It was a language of the rulers of this period, the Afrikaners, and this language became known during the years of struggle against this system as the language of the oppressor.

As reported by Magirosa (2014), Mautsane (2010) and Dyers (2008), *negative attitude* towards a language can have a negative impact on the vitality of neglected languages. The reviewed literature show that when speakers neglect a language due to their negative attitude towards the language, that language may gradually die and its speakers shift to a language with positive impression

Nawaz (2012) carried out an analysis of Language Shift among the Punjab minority language of India where the young generation has abandoned Punjabi their native language. Nawaz (2012) identified *cultural factor* as the cause of this shift. He points out that colonisation of India by Britain left frolicsome notion of inferiority complex where native Punjab speakers have adopted Western culture to the detriment of their culture. Nawaz (2012) explains that the genesis of colonial socio-political and educational set up has had a negative impact on Punjabi culture and language as language cannot be separated from culture.

Language is an integral part of culture, so we cannot separate a language from its culture and vice-versa. The British knew this fact very well so they intentionally portrayed Punjabi culture as uncivilised, crude and inferior. This systematic and organised portrayal of Punjabi culture as inferior left a permanent impact on our collective unconscious and we started to unrelate ourselves with our culture including language (Nawaz 2012: 20)

Prochazka (2017) in her study of language and *social identity*, explains that language plays a vital role in people's identity in an increasingly mobile or urban society compared with a largely rural society. She points out that when language forms a greater part of one's identity, there might be greater tendency to learn and preserve it. Prochazka (2017) reports that in order to preserve the language that gives them *social identity*, speakers tend to create language clubs and associations that promote their languages. Bradley (2001) also observes that since speakers' *social identity* is sometimes determined by their linguistic affiliation, there is no doubt that positive or negative attitude towards language triggers language choice and use.

Schmidt (2008) in his study of language loss and ethnic identity, points out that language is a crucial element of *ethnic identity*. The study further reveals that one's national identity

in Europe is determined by the language one speaks. Schmidt (2008) explains that in European tradition, language has become a major marker of belonging to a particular ethnic or national group. He further points out that it is extremely difficult in Europe to classify and recognize a group whose language has died:

Many states are still reluctant to recognize the minority groups whose languages have gone into extinction. Therefore, legal definitions need to account for the fact that many ethnic minorities have lost their languages and thus need protection on the basis of other identity markers. This issue brief wants to take this discussion a step further by asking what should be the status of a minority group once its language is lost and thus, should the group still be eligible for special minority rights protection (Schmidt 2008:65)

Baker (2008) explains that the child's first language is critical to his or her *social identity*. He further stresses that maintaining the child's language helps the child value his or her culture and sacred heritage from their ancestors, which contributes to a positive self-concept. In fact it is the language that makes human beings distinction from animals and among themselves (Baker, 2008).

From the literature above (Bradley 2001, Schmidt 2008 and Prochazka 2017), it is clear that language is a crucial element of group identity and if a language does not give a *social identity* to the group, that language is at risk of dying out.

According to Bayer (2005) observes that *political factor* has a serious impact on the status of languages in multilingual societies. He explains that a rapid language shift occurs when people develop an anxiety to be integrated into a society where the knowledge of the second language is a prerequisite for success. Bayer (2005) carried a study aimed at investigating factors contributing to Language Shift among the Sindhi Hindus. The study reveals that the Sindhi native speakers have shifted to Hindi a second language which is a local official medium of communication and instruction in schools.

In multilingual countries such as Zambia, government authorities usually choose one language as a lingua franca in order to unify various ethnic groups (Kashoki 1999). According to Kashoki (1999), the selection of few indigenous languages as official languages has led to speakers of minority languages shifting to dominant languages as speakers of non-officially recognised languages are compelled by *policy* to use the few official languages in official domains. Investigating the impact of regional official languages on the vitality of minority languages in Zambia, Kashoki (1999:60) observes that, "the designation and actual employment of one of the native language as an official language has an effect of turning it into a language of prestige causing speakers of nonofficial languages or minority languages to acquire and use it as a second or even as first language and as a result, becoming a dominant language." The study by Kashoki (1999:60) revealed

that minority languages have become endangered as the number of their speakers has begun to decline.

Simwinda (2006) investigated the impact of *language policy* on the use of minority languages in Zambia with special reference to Tumbuka and Nkoya languages which have struggled to compete with the two regional official languages Lozi and Nyanja respectively. According to the findings by Simwinda (2006)'s study, the selection of Lozi as a regional official language has negatively affected the vitality and popularity of Nkoya the local language. According to Simwinda (2006), Tumbuka has maintained its vitality as a district language of communication in Lundazi, while Nkoya language has lost its vitality and is only used in informal domains at family levels in Kaoma district.

In her study on the patterns of language use in Malawi, Kayambazinthu (1994) reports that although the Government's main objective of adopting one of the local languages as national language is to enhance unity and national identity, the result is detrimental to the minority languages. Kayambazinthu (1994) remarks that the *policy* which recognises Chichewa as a national language has rendered other languages obsolete as speakers of these languages are obliged to use Chichewa in all the official domains. Her study reveals that the other minority languages have been confined only to home domain and only spoken by the grand-parent and parent generations. Kayambazinthu (1994:48) points out, "Although speakers of minority languages enjoy using Chichewa as a national language, their non-officially supported languages have lost popularity as they are no longer spoken in many social domains"

According to Nsibambi (2011) one of the negative effect of adopting one local language as a national language among many is ethnic rivalry and decline in the popularity of non official languages. In his analysis of the *language policy* in Uganda, Nsibambi (2011) reports that the issue of officially and non-officially recognised languages is a source of ethnic confrontation which has led to the endangerment of other languages in Uganda. He further states that this ethnic confrontation in most cases leads to tribal violence, which instils fear among minority language speakers who may gradually shun their mother tongues for fear of being brutalised by speakers of rival languages. The study further reveals that the non-officially recognised languages are slowly losing popularity as their native speakers see no incentive in speaking non official languages. According to Nsibambi (2011), the cultural and political rivalry among the ethnic groups in Uganda has played a significant part in relegating non official languages to home domain which is facilitating their endangerment. . Nsibambi (2011) observes that the choice of Lugbara as official language of the media among the Kakwa community is the source of Kakwa-Lugbara rivalry. According to Nsibambi (2011:64) "When the Kakwa were requesting that their language should be used on radio Uganda, one of their major submissions was that they felt discriminated against whenever they had to listen to programmes in Lugbara as their



children no longer speak their mother but Lugbara a second language” This study by Nsibambi (2011) clearly demonstrates that the selection of a national language with an ethnic affiliation cannot promote national unity but promotes language dominion.

The policy of selecting one of the languages as *medium of instruction* in public schools has raised some concern among interest groups in Zambia. Nkosha (1999) points out that learners whose mother tongue is not a classroom language, are compelled to learn and master another language which is a medium of instruction at school. Besides, the use of non-official languages is prohibited in most Zambian schools as doing so is viewed as being detrimental to academic progression. Nkosha (1999) carried out a study on parents’ attitude towards the use of a dominant Zambian language in each region as the medium of instruction from grade one to the fourth grade. The study targeted parents in low and high-density residential areas of Kasama, Livingstone, and Lusaka representing peri-urban and urban areas of Zambia. Nkosha’s (1999) study was prompted by the decision by the government to reintroduce the use of some of the local languages as media of instruction in lower primary schools. Nkosha (1999) revealed that most of the respondents preferred their children to be taught in English. According to Nkosha (1999), most parents from the minority ethnic groups preferred English as a medium of instruction due to the negative attitudes towards their indigenous languages used as media of instruction. The study by Nkosha (1999) reveals that the use of official languages as media of instruction at the expense of local languages has a negative bearing on the vitality of other local languages. Although proficiency in the medium of instruction is regarded by Africans as a sign of cognitive advancement, it has created partial Language Shift in most local speech communities.

Kamwangamalu (2003) carried out a study on the impact of South African language *policy* on mother tongue of young learners in the post-apartheid era. According to Kamwangamalu (2003), English has become the preferred nationwide medium of communication in South Africa due to its use as the *medium of instruction* in schools. Kamwangamalu (2003) points out that English is popularly becoming the medium of communication in the communities of South Africa. Kamwangamalu (2003) further says that it is clearly noticeable that most South Africans, whose mother tongue is not English, are increasingly moving away from their mother tongues, consequently, more South Africans becoming more and more English speaking people. Similarly, Fortuin (2009) reports that in schools, South African learners are being educated in the medium that is not their mother tongue. Fortuin (2009) points out that English has become the preferred *medium of instruction* in South Africa. This scenario clearly shows that *medium of instruction* also plays a pivotal role in facilitating Language Shift among learners. Vivian and Bosch (1995) state in their study on Language Shift from Afrikaans to English, that the child’s language of schooling plays an important role in the child’s language preferences. They further report that the

language shift that is occurring in South Africa can be seen as a shift to English from other languages and that there has not been any language shift away from English to any other language that has yet been documented in the South African context. This is because English is the major *medium of instruction* in most South African schools. (Vivian and Bosch, 1995)

Kuncha and Bathula (2004) discuss factors that triggered Language Shift among the second born Telugu immigrants in New Zealand. The findings of study reveal that the Telugu immigrants had to learn English for them to integrate into an English speaking country. In their conclusion, Kuncha and Bathula (2004) state that among the factors such as economic, cultural and intermarriage, *migration* is the most influential factor that can facilitate Language Shift and Language Death. Kuncha and Bathula (2004) further remark that when a community of speakers moves to a region or a country where the language spoken is different from theirs, there is a tendency to shift to a new language. This, however, can happen the other way round where speakers of the host language can shift to the language of newcomers or settlers as reported by Machinyise (2018). In his paper, Machinyise (2018) investigated factors contributing to Language Shift among the speakers of minority languages around mine towns of Zambia. The study revealed that speakers of minority languages, Swaka and Lamba, have shifted to Bemba, the language brought by mine workers because Bemba was declared the regional official language and medium of instruction in Swakaland and Lambaland. Machinyise (2018) reports that the interaction in the mines and in the markets has led to Swaka and Lamba speakers learn Bemba for easy integration in city communities and easy interaction in the markets. On the other hand, the process of migration can cause multilingualism. Shridah (1996) notes that as people move from one country to another, there is contact with various speech communities in a natural setting, which brings about multilingualism. Shridah (1996) in her study on language choice in a multilingual community, states that multilingualism is an indicator or a sign that minority languages are under threat by dominant language because of Language Contact. The work of Chondoka (2007) shows that *migration* has the potential to give birth to new languages and send others to extinction as tribal groupings migrate from one region to another. In his study of the history of the Senga and the Tumbuka people, Chondoka (2007) records that the Bisa who were speaking Bemba migrated to the east and settled among the Tumbuka in 1780 and established the Chimanyavyose chiefdom. Through Language Contact with the Tumbuka, the Bisa lost their Bemba language and started speaking a language similar to Tumbuka which was later named Senga by the Tumbuka. However, Mwanabayeke (2013) explains that the host language can be assimilated by the language of immigrants by losing its phonological and lexical characteristics to the new language. In his study of the genesis of the Kaonde-Ila language of Mumbwa, Mwanabayeke (2013) records that the Luyi speakers of Western province of Zambia lost their Siluyana language to Silozi of the Kololo, a Sesotho dialect from South

Africa through Language Contact. According to Mwanabayeke (2013), although the Luyi finally conquered the Kololo (Sotho), they adopted the language of the conquered. This is because of the strong culture and social networks of the Kololo. Another case of Language Shift caused by *migration* occurred in the densely populated community of Slovenia. Milnar (1996) carried out a study aimed at establishing Sloven speakers' attitudes towards English language. The study revealed that the younger Sloven generation was the first to embrace English, the language of immigrants. Milnar (1996) observed that English language proficiency of adult Sloven-speaking people is poor. These Sloven adult speakers find it difficult to follow and understand English programmes on radio, while the youths feel that English is no longer a foreign language and is as simple as their mother tongue. As noted by Milnar (1996), when the number of immigrants grows in a community, local languages are affected negatively. This happens when the languages of immigrants are linked to some ethnic cultural traditions that attract speakers of local languages such as music and social networks within the speech community.

According to Mwanabayeke (2013) *intermarriage* is one of the major factors that can lead to Language Shift in many speech communities. In his study on the genesis of Kaonde-Ila language of Mumbwa, Mwanabayeke states that inter-ethnic marriages are the primary cause of Language Shift in multilingual communities. Mwanabayeke (2013)'s study reveals that Kaonde-Ila language was born out of the intermarriage between the Kaonde speakers from Kasempa and Ila speakers of north of Namwala. According to the *Shakumbila Chieftdom Development Strategic Plan* (2014), the factor of *inter-tribal* marriages is associated with migration. This document states that because of rampant inter-tribal marriages between the Tonga and Sala speakers in Mumbwa, the influence of Tonga language is prominent in almost all domains of language use among the Sala speakers. This document reports that the intermarriage between the Tonga and the Sala speakers has influenced the lexical and phonological characteristics of Sala language. Hantobolo (1991) provides a similar explanation when he discusses how the Ngoni (Nguni dialect) ethnic group lost their Nguni language when they migrated into Zambia in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. IsiZulu one of the Nguni languages for almost a century had been a language for men while mothers and children spoke Nsenga and Tumbuka at home. With the passage of time isiZulu went into extinction when the Ngoni warriors continued marrying Nsenga and Tumbuka women. Hantobolo (1991) explains that children born from Ngoni and Nsenga mothers adopted Nsenga the language of their mothers since Ngoni warriors left their women behind in KwaZulu.

Bayer (2005) carried out a study investigating factors contributing to Language Shift among the native Sindhi in India and the findings show that the *economic* factor is one of the causes of Language Shift. Bayer (2005) records that job seekers, especially in the remote areas of Sindhi, are motivated to learn international official languages or majority languages

by the desire to use these languages as tools for getting good jobs. Bayer (2005:98) remarks, "Besides, the demand from industries for employees who are fluent in either French or English has successfully encouraged job seekers to equip themselves with English or French." The findings by Bayer are in fact in agreement with Homes (1991) who observed that the knowledge of major international languages is a vital vehicle for well-paying jobs. Based on the above findings, it can be clearly stated that these prestigious international languages have confined local languages to informal domains as these local languages are not attached to any economic value.

On the other hand, Mwape (2002) point out that *economic factor* is not only limited to employment but also to commerce and other informal business transactions. A language that is used for commercial business has the potential of becoming prestigious and acquiring a status of lingua franca. Such languages will in the long run affect negatively the vitality of indigenous languages spoken in that business region. Mwape (2002) investigated the use of Namwanga, Kiswahili, English and other languages in different domains in Nakonde border town among Zambians and Tanzanians. The study reveals that although Bemba and Kiswahili are the two main languages used in Nakonde border town, not many people adopt them as first languages. Rather they are learned mainly as second or additional languages. In other words, Bemba and Kiswahili have remained languages for *commerce and business* while Namwanga, the local language has been confined to home domain and remained strong at family and ethnic group level. Mwape (2002)'s study, however, reveals that Namwanga has remained strong at ethnic levels because of the speakers' strong traditions and cultural heritage. Despite the Language maintenance initiative by Namwanga speakers, this language has failed to attract speakers of other languages. This is because Namwanga is not a language of commerce and business like Bemba and Kiswahili.

#### *How Ila and Kaonde languages contributed to the formation of Kaonde-Ila language*

It is easy to know or state the number of languages spoken in Zambia if one knows the number of ethnic groups in the country. For one to compare linguistic features of given languages, one should understand the historical background of speakers of those languages. This is because there is a thin line in differentiating a language and a tribe or an ethnic group in the Zambian context (Kashoki 1978). It is an undeniable fact that, Kaonde-Ila being a member of the Bantu Botatwe languages, naturally shares many linguistic characteristics with the other Bantu botatwe languages such as Ila, Tonga, Sala, Soli and Lenje. From the historical background of Kaonde-Ila speakers, it can be confidently stated that Kaonde-Ila is no doubt the youngest language among the Bantu Botatwe group of languages.

As discussed above, Kaonde-Ila language was born as a result of the intermarriage between the Ila and the Kaonde people. However, analysing the structure of Kaonde-Ila, one would

notice that Ila language contributed about 80 per cent of the vocabulary and phonological characteristics to Kaonde-Ila. In reality Kaonde-Ila is actually Ila with a lot of Kaonde morphological and phonological interference and contamination. In most situations, one would notice that in a sentence of ten words, eight words are Ila while two are Kaonde, or in some instances some Ila words are affected by Kaonde pronunciation. That is the reason why it is extremely difficult for a non Bantu botatwe speaker to differentiate Kaonde-Ila from Ila or Sala. Additionally, there is also about two per cent lexical contribution from Bemba and Nyanja the national lingua franca used countrywide.

The reason why Ila is predominant over Kaonde is that in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century more Ila women got married to Kaonde men than the other way round. Consequently, children who were born out of these marriages adopted the language of their mothers. That is the reason why Kaonde-Ila is closer to Ila than to Kaonde. There are however significant differences found between these two versions of Bantu botatwe languages.

*Linguistic analysis of features of Kaonde-Ila in relation to Kaonde and Ila languages*

Ila	Kaonde	Kaonde-Ila	English
Mukuku	Malwa	Bwalwa	Beer
Iilwe	Majila	Malila	Funeral
Achisha	Bamwisho	Baisha	Uncle
Chikuwa	Kizungu	Chizungu	English
Basazhima	Bakwetu	Bakwesu	My kinsmen
Batamwany ike	Batamwan iche	Batamwanike	Uncle

Apart from new words that were born from Kaonde and Ila to create Kaonde-Ila, there has been a lot of borrowed words from other prestigious lingua franca such as Bemba, Nyanja and Tonga to form Kaonde- Ila language.

It cannot be gainsaid the fact that Kaonde-Ila, a product of Ila and Kaonde has also affected the original source languages through language contact. For example the Kaonde spoken in Mumbwa and southern parts of Kasempa has some different lexical features from the Kaonde spoken in Solwezi and Mufumbwe. Mumbwa Kaonde has some Ila influences in vocabulary and pronunciation. For example in Solwezi, to say ‘I don’t drink beer,’ they say, ‘Ke ntoma malwa ne.’ But Mumbwa they say: ‘Shintoma malwa ne.’ The Mumbwa version is influenced by the Kaonde-Ila version, ‘Shinwi bwalwa.’

The Kaonde-Ila of Mumbwa use the phrase ‘yaya’ in most of their conversation. It is simply an expression of humility and respect. For instance: ‘Twabuka yaya,’ Twalumba yaya.’ This word is derived from Kaonde which means my sister. The meaning of this word was distorted in the late 1800 when Kaonde women were married to Ila men. That time Kaonde women who were married to Ila men went with their siblings (young brothers and sisters) to leave with in Chief Chibuluma, Mulendema and Moono. So these Kaonde children would address their sisters as ‘bayaya’ consequently all the children

born in these Ila chiefdoms would generalise the word yaya in whatever they said, ‘twalumba yaya’ twashika yaya’ ‘nkutuli yaya.’ Through language contact and cultural assimilation, the Sala of Shakumbila, especially western and northern parts, is partially influenced by Kaonde-ila.

As started above, Kaonde-Ila, unlike other languages that were formed through language shift, was born and evolved through cultural interaction and intermarriages. Although Kaonde-Ila native speakers speak this new language, they still maintain cultural traits of Kaonde and Ila depending on the chiefdom one comes from.

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