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Abstract

This thesis provides an account of Sino-Zambian relations at the local level, through an ethnographic analysis of Chinese language education in Zambia. It argues that Chinese language is a manifestation of the commodification of language (Heller 2010a). Recently, two Chinese schools have opened their doors, and have since then been integrating into the Zambian educational system. Chinese language has been valued as a helpful tool in getting a job on the local and global market, or as a way out of Zambia by receiving a scholarship for a Chinese university. Chinese has become popular through China's linguistic ideology that presents itself to Zambians as a useful economic tool for development. This thesis will show the relation between students' cultural capital and self reflexivity, and Chinese linguistic ideology and imperialism. It describes how students of Chinese language try to catch the moving train towards progress and prosperity that China has to offer.

Key words: Africa; China; Zambia; language education**;** commodification of language; self-reflexivity.

1. Introduction

"yī… yí… yǐ… yì… ": in unison ten students at the Confucius Institute in Lusaka are wrestling with the four tones of standard Chinese (Mandarin), written on the chalkboard and indicated to them by the teacher, Wang. These students are following a course in Chinese language and culture. In Lusaka two major institutes offer Chinese language and culture lessons, namely the Confucius Institute and the Chinese International School. This thesis aims to provide an understanding of learning Chinese language as a socio-economic resource that manifests the commodification of language.

The Chinese International School (CIS) is privately owned by Chinese investors and offers Chinese group lessons and private lessons, both for adults and children. Although it is a private school, the teachers are provided and supported by the Chinese government. The Confucius Institute (CI) is a nonprofit public institute – aligned with the Chinese government - which aims at promoting Chinese language and culture in the world (Hanban Homepage). The CI in Lusaka was opened in July 2010 at the University of Zambia. Since then it has opened new departments at other universities, and has started teaching Chinese to both primary and secondary school students. According to Starr (2009) the philosophy of Confucius is not incorporated in the teaching at the Institute. The name serves only as a brand, since Confucius is globally recognizable and has positive connotations to many (Western) people (Starr 2009). Yet, as Young (2009) argues education is a Confucian preoccupation and Confucius was the most eager advocate of lifelong learning. In my research findings I will demonstrate this underlying importance of the philosophy of Confucius to Chinese education.

Van Pinxteren (2011) regards the CI as the export of a customized ideology to promote China's harmony and goodwill in the world. Van Pinxteren and other critics (Starr 2009, Gil 2009) argue that these Chinese language schools are Beijing's soft power strategy "to win the world's hearts and minds […] as a means of cementing power" (The Chronicle 27.05.2007). Yet, Chinese government officials present a different conception of soft power defining it as a way of establishing friendships, protecting Chinese interest and teaching foreigners the Chinese perspective (Starr 2009). Starr (2009:65) states that it is part of China's message to the world saying: "China has had several bad centuries but is now back as the 'central state'". Accordingly, Young (2009:9) argues that the creation of the Institutes reflects China's ambition to be respected and accepted by the rest of the world.

Recently many authors (see for instance: Alden 2005, Konings 2010, Melber 2007, Taylor 2007) have written on Sino-African relations, most of them focusing on the question of impact on the African continent, as either a positive development or as representing the dawn of a new colonial era and scramble for African natural resources. Most of these accounts are devoted to state level analysis of Sino-African relations. Therefore Esteban (2010) calls for research that provides a deeper understanding of what is actually happening on the local level. In his research in Equatorial Guinea, he examines citizens' assessments of the current Chinese presence in their country, and argues that the perceptions of Africans towards Chinese and China's influence depends on the unique history of each country with China. Countries that have a long history of cooperation with China hold on average, more positive views about the Chinese presence in their country. On the other hand,

Esteban (2010) discusses how this positive image has eroded in the past ten years due to certain developments, such as the increasing growth of Chinese people and the poor labor conditions in Chinese companies. Brautigham (2009) argues that Sino-African relations are often misrepresented. Her book 'The Dragon's Gift' tackles many existing myths about China's presence in Africa. Not only does Brautigham see China's presence as a challenge for the continent, but also as offering new opportunities (Haugen 2010). Learning Chinese can be regarded as such an opportunity.

It should be noted that the Confucius Institutes are not the first format of China's governmental educational support to Africa. From the 1950s to 1989 African students were provided scholarships for Chinese Universities and Chinese teachers were dispatched to Africa to teach diverse courses, including basic Chinese (Nordtveit 2011:101). Yet, Nordtveit (2011:102) argues that this educational support existed in order of serving the socialist ideology in the context of the Cold War. Accordingly, in the 1990s as China started to change, this educational support shifted from an "ideology-based interest in China's language and civilization" (Nordtveit 2011:102) towards an interest for China "parallel to China's economic visibility" (Nordveit 2011:104). One of the results was the Sino-African Inter-governmental Human Resources Development Plan that trained over 10,000 African professionals from various fields within public institutions. Some students I met in the Chinese classes had been enrolled in these training programs and have caught the "Global Mandarin fever" (Gao 2011).

Another ideological instrument that China used during the Cold War is the construction of the Tanzania Zambia railway (TaZara), colloquially also known as the 'Road of Freedom'. This 2000 km long railway connects Zambia to the Indian Ocean and characterizes the ongoing relationship of Zambia with China. Although it is not economically profitable for China, it is still maintained by the Chinese state, because it is too important as a political tool (Brautigham 2012). According to The Lusaka Times (13.12.2011), the TaZara initiated the "long history of friendship between Zambia and China" and has helped the Zambian people to "learn and understand China". Contemporary Sino-Zambian relations are characterized economically by the extraction of copper from mines, agriculture, construction, manufacture and telecommunications (Hairyong & Sautman 2009:4). In addition, the first Chinese financial institution (the Bank of China) in Africa is situated in Lusaka, representing a new stage in the development of Sino-Zambian relations. This means that the Chinese involvement in Zambia is marked by very divergent Chinese actors, from the Chinese State to local Chinese government, and from small independent commerce to large Chinese multinationals. Yet, for the convenience of this thesis I refer to 'Chinese practices' as an overarching denominator.

Despite seemingly flourishing relations, Chinese involvement in Zambia has politically been highly controversial in the past ten years. Michael Sata, the president of Zambia since October 2011, previously incited anti-Chinese sentiments during the electoral campaign in 2006. In the 2011 elections, Sata softened his stance on anti-Chinese sentiments, and only emphasized that the Chinese – like any other investor – had to honor Zambian labor laws. This was a much discussed concern, since Human Rights Watch (2011) published a critical report on the labor abuses in Chinese owned mines, regarding workers' safety, working hours and freedom of association. After having won the elections in 2011, Sata showed a "sudden U-turn over Chinese investment" (The Lusaka Times 15.12.2011), by calling for the strengthening of

Zambia's ties with China, so that Sino-Zambian friendship can flourish and the two countries can remain globally interconnected.

The establishment of the Confucius Institute is supposed to consolidate this connection. Language is not just a way of consolidating relations, it is also seen as the key to globalization. Social relations can only be deepened through verbal communication, and to that effect global linguistic codes are needed. Hence, more people are becoming competent in one or more additional languages and come to master new ways of using language (Block & Cameron 2002:2). Learning a new language has always been an economic asset. However, it is argued that in the New Capitalistic era it has become even more important (Heller 2010a, 2010b, Cameron 2005, Block and Cameron 2002). Tan and Rubdy (2008) and Heller (2010a) argue that languages have now become economic commodities. The commodification of language concerns both people's motivation for learning a new language as well as their choice of language (Block & Cameron 2002:5).

This thesis focuses on Zambians who learn Chinese. I use the notion of the commodification of language as an overarching concept to discuss the students' motivations, and how this can be regarded as their accumulation of linguistic capital and active positioning of the self within the linguistic marketplace (Bourdieu 1991).On the one hand, I view learning Chinese as individual improvement, and on the other as the students' structural location on the linguistic market where languages gain value. Additionally, I explore how Chinese has become a language of interest on the linguistic market and in the imagined worlds of the students. All-in-all, these concepts show how Chinese language is regarded as a commodity that one can 'buy' in order to enhance one's economic position in Zambia and the world.

In the next section I will situate my research within a theoretical framework of existing anthropological concepts. I raise the issue of language learning as linguistic imperialism on the one hand, and linguistic capital on the other. As I will show both concepts are related to the linguistic market and the linguistic ideology that defines this market. In the third section these concepts will be further explored in relation to the ethnographic data I acquired through fieldwork in Zambia. I argue that all these concepts are relevant for my main theoretical angle that argues that Chinese language is a commodity.

2. A conceptual framework of language education

Globalization refers to "the intensification of global interconnectedness, suggesting a world full of movement and mixture, contact and linkages, and persistent cultural interaction and exchange" (Inda and Rosaldo 2008:4). Globalization is argued to be nothing new (Bauman 2000, Giddens 1991, Harvey 2005), but the relationship between time and space has altered, also known as the compression of the world and "the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole" (Robertson 1992:8). This contemporary globalization is also referred to as Late Modernity (Giddens 1991) or Globalized New Economy (Sennet 2005), since it is about the closer integration of national economies and its local and global consequences (Lysandrou 2005). It is argued that this global capitalism has taken a linguistic turn (Poster 2001).

Due to time-space compression, there are "new conditions for the production of language practices and forms and new challenges to current ways of thinking about language" (Heller 2010b:349). Due to the increase in interaction and exchange, more people must communicate across cultural, social and linguistic barriers. Moreover, because of new, faster forms of mediation, a wider repertoire of communication forms and languages is necessary. Most contemporary occupations involve new technologies, compared to hundred of years ago when communication was considered as a distraction from the physical work (Boutet in Heller 2010b:350, Tapscott 1996). In the following conceptual framework I discuss the different aspects of language in Late Modernity, and how language is related to the economy, resulting in language education and the commodification of language.

Linguistic imperialism

Some theorists argue that globalization equals cultural imperialism, where the centre dominates the periphery (Barber 1995, Hannerz 2005, Schiller 1976). Linguistic imperialism, an aspect of cultural imperialism, refers to the asymmetrical introduction to a norm and example for the periphery to follow, and thus the transfer of a dominant language to peripheral people (Phillipson 1992:65; Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 2010). An active promotion of language aims to strengthen the market forces and the culture associated with it (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 2010:83). English is currently seen as an imperial language, serving "the interests of the corporate world and of the governments it influences" (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 2010:82). English offers access to social mobility and economic development, while other (mainly indigenous) languages are regarded as hampering this access (Pennycook 1994, Phillipson 1992, Wee 2003).

Yet, Campbell (2008) and Jacques (2012) argue that China is now becoming the dominating center and is providing the world with the Chinese cultural imagination that acts as a challenge to US global hegemony. Chinese soft power and the spread of the Chinese language serve to illustrate this dominance (Van Pinxteren 2011). Seemingly, China is following the same route as the US in becoming the hegemon, by establishing power relations with periphery countries, leading to such prophecies as "A Chinese global empire may be on the way" (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson 2010:83). Others, however, argue that there will be more segmentation in different world languages (Block 2010:301) or that English will remain the world's lingua Franca (Ammon 2010:102, De Swaan 2010).

Colonial linguistics

English is perceived as having become the dominant global language, due to the US' neo-imperialist policies and the expansion of the British Empire through colonization, which went hand in hand with the introduction of the English language through the colonial administration and the Christian missionaries (Ammon 2010, Bisong 1995, Errington 2001, Mufwene 2010). As in the case of Zambia, English was not just imposed on the colonial subjects, but was often demanded by young Zambians, because it would offer them access to the state and the colonizer's world (Kuster 1994, Mgadla 1996).

As well as introducing English, colonialism has led to the formation of separate and discrete languages. The idea that a language is different from another and is owned by a certain group of people is according to Pennycook (2010:602) "a very strange ideology […] arisen at a particular cultural and historical moment". Colonizers contributed to and were the instigators of linguistic differences, and the accompanying traditional cultures and identities (Bhatt 2010, Errington 2001). In Zambia the British were very effective in the formation of tribal identities and linguistic variation, which resulted in the contemporary claim that Zambia owns seventy languages. To unite all these linguistic groups, the postcolonial government rendered English as the official language (Whitehead 1988, Williams 1995). English was not just useful for the project of nation-building, but was also attractive as it was the language of 'progress', that as a Lingua Franca related Zambia to the world (Chrystal 1997).

Heller (2010a) questions whether this relation to the old empire is a new form of empire or the old empire in new clothes, where the "neoneo-colonial project" is creating new subjectivities (Heller 2010a:106). Although there is no old imperialist relation between China and Zambia, it can be questioned whether China is using the colonial and neo-colonial infrastructure that connected Zambia to the world economy, and if these Neoneo-colonial subjectivities of the US and Britain are now becoming China's subjectivities. For that reason it is interesting to regard Zambia's linguistic history, and to draw parallels between Chinese language education and how English has become hegemonic. While English has enabled the circulation between Britain and the British periphery (Errington 2001), it can be questioned whether Chinese language is establishing a similar relation between Zambia and China.

Language ideology and the linguistic market

In the previous paragraph it is argued that the ideology of discrete languages is situated in colonialism (Pennycook 2010). Language ideologies are "the values, practices and belief associated with language use by speakers, and the discourse that constructs values and beliefs at state, institutional, national and global levels" (Blackledge 2005:32). These discourses can be "explicit and implicit, visible and invisible, official and unofficial, long-term and ephemeral, contested and uncontested, negotiable and non-negotiable" (Blackledge 2005:44), and are constituted through ideological discourse in the context of media, politics, the economy and education (Blackledge 2005:33). Linguistic ideologies promote the production and reproduction of discrete languages, making some languages of greater moral, aesthetic, intellectual, and economic worth than others (Bourdieu 1977, Blackledge 2005, Errington 2001).

Both dominant and dominated groups consciously and unconsciously accept this greater value of the dominant language (Blackledge 2005:34). Besides, this 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu 1991) or 'sociolinguistic hierarchy' (Errington 2001) appears to

be natural, while the dominant language provides better access to "symbolic resources" and is thus more legitimate (Blackledge 2005:39). The fact that English has remained the official language of Zambia, because it connects Zambia to the world economy, assumes that English is more worth than any other local language. Chinese also presents itself as a language of higher value in respect to for instance local languages, as will be further explained in the ethnographic section of this thesis.

Language ideology is closely related to the linguistic market (Bourdieu 1977), which is theorized as the "political economy of language constellations'" (King 2007:328), or the market where languages and communication forms are valued (Bourdieu 1991). Generally, language learning occurs upward, because people learn a language that is highly valued (De Swaan 2010:57). Thus, a successful linguistic ideology promotes learning a highly valued language. The value of a language is determined by its power to provide access to wider markets, and results into financial advancement of different sorts (Coupland 2010:15). There is an exchange between the linguistic marketplace and the material market, which means the translation of linguistic variation into economic value. Acquisition of a certain language is an economic activity (Bourdieu 1977, 1991, Irvine 1989), and just like in the economic market there are "monopolies and power relations" on the linguistic market (Blackledge 2005:32).

The English linguistic ideology is not just visible by the installation of English as the official language creating a unified linguistic market in Zambia. In past decades English has also been the language that produced and reproduced the relationship of Zambia to the world (economy) (Serpell 1993). In the era of 'development' English was seen as an empowering language, key in 'human development', which helped the underdeveloped reach a civilized, human rights worthy stage (Tikly 2004).

Linguistic capital and self reflexivity

Bourdieu's (1977) notion of the linguistic marketplace is connected to his idea of linguistic capital as an aspect of cultural capital. Cultural capital offers a model for seeing language learning as a form of agency instead of the cultural imperialism presented by Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (2010). Cherrington (2004) argues that the notion of Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (2010) downplays agency, and makes individuals the dupes of linguistic imperialism and linguistic ideology. Linguistic imperialism, Morrisson and Lui (2003:273) argue, can be useful in explaining the language situation in colonial times, but it offers an inadequate account of the role of a certain language in the contemporary world.

In contrast, linguistic capital highlights the agency individuals have in improving their communication skills (Morrisson and Lui 2003). In regards to language education, the notion of linguistic capital assumes that some students have a certain cultural background (habitus) and dispositions (assets, motivation, support, ability) that make them engage in language acquisition. Thus, language education increases their status and provides them with chances on the labor market and thus in life at both the local and global scale (Morrisson and Lui 2003:274). Thus, the accumulation of linguistic capital, through for instance learning Chinese, converts into economic capital: "the individuals concerned opt for the neo-imperial language because they perceive that this linguistic capital will serve their personal interest best" (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 2010:82).

Although it seems that linguistic capital is the total opposite of linguistic imperialism, it is not. Morrisson and Lui (2003:274) argue that linguistic imperialism

embraces linguistic capital and that "linguistic capital owes some of its origins and contemporary power to linguistic imperialism". Linguistic capital, thus, stands for the relationship between individual improvement and the structural location of these individuals in the global and local market economy (Morrisson and Lui 2003:285). For Giddens (1991, 2000) and Beck (2000), globalization increases people's opportunities. An aspect of Late Modernity is the "reflexive project of the Self", which occurs "in the context of multiple choices as filtered through abstract systems" (Giddens 1991:5). Today, individuals must negotiate between lifestyle choices shaped in the dialectical interaction of the local and the global. These available lifestyles which one can choose from are presented in the social imagination of life today (Appadurai 1996:53). Thus agency in the new global order is bounded to the collective imagination of people as the "staging ground for action" (Appadurai 1996:7). Students in Chinese language can imagine the global order and articulate a life path by learning Chinese, which helps them advance in life.

Bauman (2005:27) understands this individual improvement as a result of time-space compression, by which "[a] steady, durable and continuous, logically coherent and tightly structured working career is […] no longer a widely available option". Media especially plays a substantial role in the "interpenetration of self-development and social systems [i.e. global systems]" (Giddens 1991:5). Media presents all the possible lives to choose from, and some images penetrate more successfully than others (Appadurai 1996:53). In addition, media contributes to the "semiotic diacritics of great power" and the knowledge and relations people have if the metropolitan world (Appadurai 1996:53). Moreover, discourse can embody globalization, because it provides people with information and understanding of its process (Fairclough 2006:22). Thus, studying Chinese language can be regarded as such a choice in lifestyle and self improvement, influenced by a dialectical interaction between the global discourse on China's increasing role in the world and the rise of Chinese investors and immigrants in Zambia.

The commodification of language

The "socio-linguistic engagement with the markets" is nothing new in the history of mankind (Coupland 2010:16). People have always learned new languages for economic gain. What is remarkable about today's linguistic market is the scale and its evolving speed (Mufwene 2010:31). Semiotic production – less people are now concerned with making material objects and more people work with signs and symbols – is one of the effects of scale increase and speed acceleration, which has resulted in a new attitude towards language (Cameron 2005:9). Hence, learning a new language to gain a better position on the local and the global job market can be regarded as the two characteristics of globalization: what happens locally and what happens globally. Moreover, time-space compression can only occur through communication, thus for global relationships more people need to be competent in one or more languages (Block & Cameron 2002:2). Language, thus, is central to the contemporary economy, both as a process and as a product of work. We are witnessing therefore, the emergence of language industries: "those types of work is which language is either the product or an important dimension of it" (Heller 2010b:352). Language teaching is such a type of work.

Irvine (1989) provides an interesting account of the relation between language and economy. She not only argues that language education is a clear and direct example of the exchange of linguistic objects for assets; she also views verbal skills as economic

resources, forming the socioeconomic system. These verbal skills however are not equally distributed, and therefore language is economically relevant. Accordingly, "second-code acquisition is surrounded by economic activity because of the perceived value, and distributional scarcity, of the linguistic variety to be acquired" (Irvine 1989:255).

Capitalism in Marx' (2004) sense is the genuine commodity system. Capitalism stretches and deepens commodity relations. Therefore things and social relations, that formerly were untainted from the market, are brought into the capital market system, and valued – by subjects - as a commodity in relations to other commodities (Appadurai 1986, Lysandrou 2005, Simmel 2005, Turner 2008). Heller (2010a, 2010b) argues that language has now turned from a social practice into a commodity. She approaches language as a resource in the globalized new economy (2010b) and as a commodity in the new service economy (2010a). The globalized new economy "places language in a particularly salient role, both as process and as product of work. As a result, language may also become a particularly salient site of contestation of high modern regimes of regulation, as is perhaps evidenced in movements for subverting state control of communicative technologies" (Heller 2010b:361). Hence, states within the new global economy establish linguistic norms through (language) schools, which are the producers of cultural products.

The commodification of language concerns both people's motivation for learning a new language (linguistic capital) as their choice of language (linguistic market) (Block & Cameron 2002:5). This is part of the general commodification of knowledge and semiosis (Fairclough 2006). Hence, languages have become more important. Heller (2010a:103) offers four reasons: first, "the flow of resources over extended spatial relations and compressed space-time relations" has to be managed. Second, symbolic added value has to be provided to industrially produced resources. Third, the construction of and access to niche markets have to be facilitated. Finally, linguistically mediated knowledge and service industries have developed. In short: one needs to be literate in late modern times.

The commodification of language holds strong ties to colonization and the global discourse on development. Indigenous people in the colonies were created into modern subjects. Especially schooling contributed to the creation of colonial subjects and world governmentality (Carnoy 1974, Foucault 1977). After independence, education and the teaching of world languages continued to be viewed as a liberating, civilizing force, which was the "necessary prerequisite for nations to participate with the developed countries in the world project of material advancement" (Carnoy 1974:1). Colonization changed into neo-imperialism, which then became the main force in promoting certain languages as more valuable than others. Neo-imperialism was the outcome of the power relation established during colonization, which was not regarded as a hierarchical relation, servicing the imperial center, but a collaborative relation aiming at economic development. Nevertheless, these old colonial centers have remained the regulators of the linguistic market (Heller 2010a; 2010b), which explains the current use of English as the official language in Zambia.

Methodology

This research took place from August to December 2011. I drew mainly on the method of participant observation and enrolled in the beginner's classes at both the Institute and the School. This has given me understanding of who the students are; what their motivations are for studying Chinese; what they think about the Chinese

position in Zambia and the world; how they interact with the teacher; how they learn Chinese; and what their family and friends think of their ambitions. In addition I have conducted interviews with the students, visited their homes and talked with their relatives and friends. It has to be taken into consideration that I conducted my fieldwork in English, since I did not speak Chinese. Therefore, I was limited in understanding most of the Chinese teachers, and mainly focused on the students.

3. Chinese language as commodity and socio-economic resource: an ethnography

"Welcome to Zambia" said the sign above the airport entrance. Stepping off the airplane, however, this was not the first thing that I saw. The small welcome sign was dwarfed by a much larger billboard that showed Chinese people on the phone and had Chinese characters covering it. Not knowing what it said, I asked myself whether the sign is aiming at the many Chinese passengers on the airplane setting foot in Zambia, or if the Chinese language has become a desirable language in Zambia. Once in the taxi, driving out of the airport parking, another billboard caught my eye. This one promoted learning Chinese at the Confucius Institute in Lusaka.

In this ethnography, I explore Chinese education in Lusaka and how it balances between the local and the global: between cultural capital and self improvement on the one hand and the linguistic market and language ideology on the other. Taking Morrisson and Lui's (2003) stance, learning a new language is about the advancement of the individual in relation to one's structural location within the global and local market economy. Therefore I examine the students' motivations for studying Chinese, how this can be understood as the manifestation of cultural and linguistic capital, and how this is related to China's soft power and linguistic ideology. This section explores the various implications of both sides, deploying the commodificiation of language as the overarching concept.

1. The Chinese language schools of Lusaka: Chinese International School (CIS) and Confucius Institute (CI)

There are two Chinese language schools in Lusaka offering Mandarin language courses, namely the private Chinese International School (CIS), that is owned by six different Chinese investors and run by a Chinese director, and the Confucius Institute (CI), supported by the Chinese government. Only one of the investors showed his face, and only every now and again, by lunging into the classroom and interrupting the teacher's program. One time he held a half an hour speech, expressing his concerns for the Zambian students' future, promoting learning Chinese and conducting the HSK (standard Chinese proficiency test). He also proclaimed his intensions for the school and told us that he started the school for his own son and the increasing amount of Chinese children alike, who since their birth have been living in Zambia and who are in need of Mandarin tutoring. Yet, at the time I was following Chinese, there were no Chinese students in the first and second level classes. They were mainly populated by Zambians, except for a French girl and an Indian and Sri Lankan man.

CIS offers Chinese group lessons and private lessons for adults, group lessons for high school students, group lessons for primary school students, and a kindergarten where both Zambian and Chinese toddlers learn English as well as Chinese. The school was inaugurated in October 2009. Today there are about eight to fifteen students in a class on average. The beginner's class I enrolled in had about eight students who attended class on a regular basis. Both men and women sign up for classes. In my view it was rather a coincidence that there were more men enrolled than women. The school is located nearby the main Great East road in Lusaka. It has two classrooms, a small conference room, several kindergarten rooms, a small playground and a martial arts practice square. In addition, there are rooms for the

teachers, a communal kitchen and offices. The teachers are all recently graduated language students (Chinese as a foreign language) from China, and come to Zambia as volunteers. Their expenses are paid by the Chinese government, which I will return to later in this ethnography.

The Confucius Institute is a worldwide organization established by the Chinese government as a non-profit public institution, aiming to promote Chinese language and culture in foreign countries. It is inspired by Western language institutes such as Alliance Française and the Goethe Institute. The CI is organized by Hanban (The Office of Chinese Language Council International, the Confucius Headquarters) which is a non-profit organization related to the Chinese Ministry of Education. The first CI department in Zambia was opened in July 2010 on the University of Zambia (UNZA) campus in Lusaka. At the moment the CI offers several beginners and second level classes in the afternoons and evenings, to a group of ten to fifteen students. The Institute is located below the main library and consists of two small classrooms and two offices. Because the Institute is located in the same outdated building as the university library, the water seeps through the ceiling in the rainy season, which make the teachers spend the first five minutes of each lesson mopping the floor. One enters the Institute through one of the classrooms where the students are welcomed in Chinese characters painted on a big sign hung on the wall. Further inside, the classroom is furbished by a white board and a large map of China. The other classroom is the computer room, with eight relatively new computers. The two other rooms are used for office and storage. Next to the Institute's location beneath the central library, one can witness the integration of the CI at UNZA in the library, where a corner is reserved especially for CI students. Yet, I never saw or heard the CI students using the space for Chinese purposes, and generally it was used by regular UNZA students, who had no idea about its purpose.

At the CIS, the students pay one million kwacha (about two hundred US dollars) for a three month course. Most students pay this amount divided into monthly installments. The funds are raised by students themselves, by their parents or by their employers. At the institute fees depend on whether students are affiliated with UNZA. University students pay the equivalent of thirty dollars for a three month course, employees fifty dollars and non-affiliates one hundred dollars. As I will show later in this ethnography, the issue of fees is rather ambiguous, as it is not always clear whether students actually pay it or not. Nevertheless, students from both schools consider the tuition fees as fair or even relatively cheap. This was reflected once, when after Chinese class I was accompanying Jonathan and Francis outside and came across some of their friends, who asked us what we were doing. We told them we just had Chinese class, a comment to which they showed much interest. They enquired where we were enrolled and the price for a course. When Francis explained the cost were only thirty dollars, the friends were surprised and showed enthusiasm to also enroll, and from then on they were present in class. This anecdote demonstrates how the low tuition fee can encourage people to increase their linguistic capital, and accordingly shows the most direct involvement of language in the economy, since linguistic objects and performances are exchanged for cash (Irvine 1989:249). But, as Irvine (1989) argues, this represents only one of many types of relation between language and economy, as will be elaborated throughout this ethnography.

Due to the smaller tuition fees, location and timing of classes, the Confucius Institute attracted more UNZA students (in the age of nineteen to twenty-eight), recently graduated high school students (seventeen to nineteen years) and UNZA

employees (thirty to fifty year). UNZA students had different disciplinary backgrounds, such as Biology, Mining and Geology and Language Studies. Also a fair amount of Development Studies students attended Chinese classes. Students had different local ethnic backgrounds and nationalities of countries bordering Zambia. Comparatively, the CIS attracted more business employees from banks, insurance companies, and construction companies as well as entrepreneurs. The multinational demographics of the classes both at the CIS and the CI demonstrate that Chinese policy is not only directed towards Zambians, which is also illustrated by the CI's promotion of Chinese at the American International primary school and Baobab College, where mainly expatriate children are enrolled.

Many of the students attending the CI classes are interested in the possibilities of a scholarship at a Chinese University, an opportunity that the CI organizes together with the Chinese embassy. In order to apply for a scholarship, each student needs to pass what is known as the "HSK test" or the Standard Chinese Proficiency Test, which is organized twice a year. The HSK demonstrates how Mandarin is promoted as the standard Chinese language to an international public. Standard Chinese designates Mandarin, which in Chinese is known as Zhongwen, Puntongua or Hanyu. The standardization of Chinese was one of the priorities for the Communist government in 1949. Putongua became the denominator of the standard Chinese language within China, abstaining from Hanyu (the language of the Han), and which has remained the official language in China (Starr 2009). However, the language that was taught in the classes at both schools was called Hanyu, the Chinese textbook used at the School is called Hanyu Jiaocheng (meaning Chinese textbook, course, study). In English it was referred to as Chinese language, only on occasion did I hear it defined as Mandarin. Therefore throughout this thesis I use 'Chinese language' to refer to the standard language taught in class. Under this denominator I do not make a distinction between written or spoken Chinese, and I also include Pinyin (the world's standard for phonetically transcribing Chinese characters in Latin letters) within this category (Starr 2009).

2. Expansion, differentiation and standardization of Chinese language in Zambia

"You can see the Chinese teachers everywhere, and you also can see the booming scene of Chinese spread everywhere" (Hanban 2011). This expression is taken from an article on Hanban's website, elaborating on the integration of the CI at the University of Zambia. In this section, I demonstrate how this integration is further consummated at the university and in other educational terrains within Zambia. A significant factor is the Institute's exploration of new locations and formats for Chinese teaching throughout Zambia. Initially, the CI opened classes at numerous locations: the Copperbelt University and Mulungushi University, eight Confucius Classrooms (for primary and secondary schools) in and around Lusaka, and a basic Chinese course at Livingstone Institute of Business and Engineering Studies in Livingstone. Furthermore, they have started teaching a "Tourism in Chinese" course, as a result of the increased number of Chinese tourists that require Chinese-speaking safari guides and hotel personnel in Zambia. This "edutourism" – language learning activities for the tourism industry – has been scrutinized by Yarymowich (2005). Yet, in my research I only focus on adult beginners and intermediate classes, not on these other courses.

Beginner and intermediate classes are given from one to two o'clock, during the lunchtime break at the university. This enables many students to take the classes in-between their normal university schedule. However, most students clearly did not find it ideal, because most arrived late and had to leave early to attend their required classes. During the exam period, I often found myself as the sole attendant of Chinese class. For these reasons, the Institute is aiming to have Chinese language integrated into a regular university major offered at the Faculty of Humanities. The CI principal told me:

> I think it is better to make it into selected courses or degree courses. The students will pay more attention, they will come. You see now that when something happens, they do not come, it is not serious, it is just extra.

Offering Chinese as a 'degree course' would enable UNZA students to study Chinese on a fulltime basis. The principal elaborated on more goals for the future:

> [We want] to have the locals become Chinese teacher [because] we are here just as foreigners, we do not have long to live here. So, later we want local people to teach Chinese […], just like … I have been to the French Alliance and I saw that some teachers are not French, there are always Zambians teaching French.

These statements exemplify the CI's desire for insertion of Chinese language at the University of Zambia and the incorporation of Chinese language in the Zambian education system. This can also be recognized by the provision of a radio program at UNZA radio station. Twice a week a teacher or a student of the Institute presents a topic in fifteen minutes. The topics include Chinese culture (food, marriage, and festivals), basic Chinese conversations (greeting, at the market, colors) and interviews with students of Chinese. The radio program aims to introduce UNZA students to the rich Chinese language and culture, remove misunderstandings about Chinese culture and promotes Chinese language courses at the Institute.

The expansion of Chinese is also visible in the provision of courses other than the Chinese language. Both the School and the Institute offer martial arts courses (Kung Fu and Tai Chi), and the School is also planning to offer cooking and calligraphy courses in the future. The CI is currently restricted by space, postponing further exploration of courses exclusively dedicated to Chinese culture. Yet, when the CI of Zambia proves to be successful, the Chinese government might support it further by offering a new building on the university campus. This will not only reduce time spent on mopping the floor in the rainy season, a new building could also host more students and the possibility to offer courses such as Chinese literature and calligraphy.

The type of expansion illustrated above resembles the theory of product differentiation which can be traced back to economics. Products become differentiated when they are distinguished from other products and other competitors of the same target market, in order to make the product more appealing (Hunt 2011). By expanding the supply, both the School and the Institute make the core product (language) more interesting. At the School, some students started with a language course and then became interested in the martial arts practice that the School offered. Raymond, a second level student who was also enrolled in Kung Fu class, was also happy to hear that the school was considering Chinese cooking lessons. He told me: "Those guys really know how to cook. I love their food, and using chop sticks is much more hygienic than using the hands as we are used to in Zambia". Chinese language lessons have made Raymond enthusiastic about other aspects of Chinese culture.

At the Institute, it worked the other way around for some students. Prince and Patrick, UNZA students enrolled in first level Chinese, for instance saw an advertisement of martial arts training at the CI. Always having admired popular Kung Fu movies, both guys signed up for the course and even performed during the first annual celebration of the Institute. Patrick told me: "I really enjoyed the Kung Fu and Tai Chi lessons. After this [the Kung Fu performance] I wanted to learn more about the Chinese and became interested in learning the language". From Patrick, Matthew and Raymond one can observe how the supply of different cultural courses has made the core business stronger. The core business can be regarded as the standard language and culture courses I attended, or can be observed as the oblique product of integration in Zambian society. In addition, product differentiation takes place in regards to other products. Hence, Chinese language is differentiated from other languages offered at UNZA or by private institutes. By becoming a standard language (offered in the UNZA curriculum) it is on a par with other languages offered by the university.

Next to product differentiation, there is another lesson which can be drawn from economics, 'supply creates demand'. Students like Matthew and Patrick, but also Jonathan, Francis (introduced earlier) and others, did not consider commencing a Chinese course before it was promoted and offered by the Confucius Institute. Because of active campaigning at the University and stressing the importance for Zambians to learn Chinese, many students became aware of the Chinese language courses the CI offers. Emmanuel, an UNZA student enrolled in the first level course, told me:

> I want to do a scholarship outside Zambia. I was thinking about enrolling in the Russian program or to try to go to Europe. But then I saw the advertisement of the Chinese school and thought that was better.

Through the previous described developments and economic insights it becomes clear how Chinese language is increasingly becoming a commodity (Heller 2010a, 2010b). Yet, it is not only becoming commodified in the educational setting. The Taylorist production processes, in Heller's (2010b:350) view, have led to the shift of standardized sets of languages in the working space. Most companies favor one set of linguistic practices, which now have to function across linguistic and cultural differences which the market encompasses. Zambians with Chinese linguistic skills are preferable for Chinese companies both in China and Zambia, and for Zambian companies dealing with Chinese businesses. Since they speak the standard language of the company and can thus become linguistic and cultural translators for the Zambian market. Thus, also in the sphere of the working place, the supply has created demand. Now Chinese companies prefer or can even demand Chinese competent people above people without Chinese language skills, simply because they are available.

Thus, through the expansion of Chinese schools, the differentiation of courses and the standardization of Chinese education, Chinese language and culture are inserted into the Zambian education system. And not only that. These developments can also be extended to a global level, and this global level is further represented in Zambia by the promotion of Chinese at the American International primary school and the Baobab College. Chinese is not just inserted into the Zambian education system, but also into the educational infrastructure of expatriates. In addition, these developments have created a market for the Chinese language. Chinese schools compete with one

another and Chinese language courses compete with other language schools. Chinese language schools therefore are sites of the production of Chinese and the reproduction of Zambia's educational infrastructure. Besides, persons with Chinese competence are challenging one another for a job within Chinese companies or scholarships in China. Yet, people do not just compete with one another. Together they can also create a niche market by clustering together and setting up businesses that engage with Chinese companies (De Swaan 2010). Moreover, if Chinese would become a global lingua franca, it offers a communication form to overcome cultural differences.

3. The value of Chinese language and the Zambian linguistic market

Through the insertion of Chinese into the Zambian educational system, it has become an important language on the Zambian linguistic market. Yet, Chinese is an addition to this market and has not replaced English, nor any local lingua Franca. I do not want to suggest that Chinese is valued higher than other languages. English remains the official language in which children and students are taught in Zambia, and Bemba remains the language most widely spoken (Spitulnik 2000).

What can be argued is the greater potential and future opportunities that Chinese language students see in China as compared to Western countries. Scholarships to China are easier to obtain, and the increase of jobs in Chinese companies and development agencies in Zambia create these future possibilities. Mwenya, an UNZA student in Public Administration and enrolled in a second level course at CI, told me that she would prefer to go to China rather than any Western country: "Life is hard in Western countries. Most people who go there with good education end up with minimal jobs, as cleaners or something". Therefore she would like to go to China for her master's degree, and afterwards return to Zambia to start an interior design bureau. She perceives Chinese language education as a step towards being granted a scholarship, and later to broaden her market with Chinese clientele once her business is established. Also in a conversation between Chitalu (a recently graduated twenty three year old) and Mary (a high school student of seventeen), both studying at the CIS, the relevance of Chinese language for local job opportunities becomes clear:

> Mary: I want to study in China.
> Chitalu: You should do that. I wish I had done that. Now I only speak English [she went to Manchester for her bachelor studies] and Bemba. I wish I would have gone to China, then I would have been fluent in Chinese and had not so much troubles finding a job in Zambia.

Chinese does not serve as a substitute to English (or Bemba), but in Chitalu's perception, she would have had a better chance of getting a job in Zambia with Chinese skills in addition to her already existing proficiency in language. Chinese is thus valued in an economic way, because it provides access to other markets, and gives financial advancement (Coupland 2010).

Chinese language is perceived as an asset of economic value by Chinese language students. This judgment is based on several developments and discourses about China in Zambia and in the world. First, the number of Chinese people coming to Zambia has increased greatly in the past ten years. Exact figures are absent, but the IRIN (2006) estimates about eighty thousand Chinese residents in Zambia. However, according to the Centre for Chinese Studies at South Africa's Stellenbosch University, these demographic figures are exaggerated. They estimate the number of Chinese at four to six thousand, and argue that eighty thousand Chinese residents form a "phantom population" created by the political party the Patriotic Front in order to

mobilize voters (Hairyong and Sautman 2009). It should be noted that the Chinese presence in Zambia consists of very diverse actors and groups. There are private entrepreneurs for instance in farming and retail, large commercial enterprises such as ZTE Corporation, non governmental organizations, such as the Confucius Institute, and diverse Chinese state affairs, such as mining. It was clear to the students they were not a homogenous group. Yet, I refer to 'Chinese practices' for the ease of this thesis to refer to all kinds of Chinese involvement in Zambia.

Other circulating rumors over Chinese activities in Zambia influence Chinese language students. There was much public debate in the news about Chinese convicts working in the Copperbelt mines and several sexual assaults by Chinese managers on Zambian under aged girls. Almost everyday during my fieldwork, something was written or said in the media about China and the Chinese in Zambia. People would also discuss their concerns among each other, which has created an awareness of the Chinese presence in Zambia, that is reinforced by Western media presenting the Chinese presence in Africa as a new wave of colonial occupation of the continent. Yet, Sautman and Hairyong (2009) argue that African views about Chinese are not nearly as negative as Western media represents it. They are divergent and complex (Sautman and Hairyong 2009), and, as I will show in this ethnography, inspire people to start a study in Chinese language.

This source of inspiration was often strongly connected to global narratives about China becoming a world economical power. Jonathan, for example, told me that he signed up for Chinese classes because he took notice of the news that China had become the world's second economy and thought that it was now "wise to invest in Chinese language for the future". Language ideology is inherent in these narratives, which is the "set of beliefs about the structure of language and/or the functional uses to which language is put which are shared by the members of a community" (Watts 1999:68). Valuing Chinese language is mainly about the functional use and what one can achieve by learning it. The narratives about China's growing prominence in the world has made the language seem superior. If Zambians believe that Chinese is a superior language, by learning Chinese they hope to achieve something in life, they can jump aboard the moving train towards progress and prosperity.

Second, next to the narratives and the encounters, products from China ("Made-in-China") also contribute to the students' imagination on China. Mary wants to go to China to study engineering, because every time she has something great in her hands – like laptops, mobile phone, flash disk etc - the label says "Made-in-China". Wang Xiaohui, deputy editor-in-chief of the China News Service compares the "Made-in-China" logo to Japanese Sashimi and US full-length films (2005). These cultural products were successfully distributed throughout the world, thus spreading the soft power of these countries. The "Made-in-China" logo can be regarded as a successful cultural product. In 2009, the logo has even been the subject of a broad international television campaign countering perceptions about the poor quality of Chinese products. It promoted how the world's factory has developed into a high-technology industry, symbolizing China's recent economic development, modernization and the becoming of a world player (Wang 2005, Wang 2011). Although I do not know what the outreach was of this campaign in Zambia, the "Made-in-China" logo in accordance with narratives about China's influence in the world and in Zambia resulted in increasing the value of Chinese as a useful language that could benefit one's future.

Third, the Chinese activities in Zambia expose people to the Chinese language. Not only are Chinese characters found on billboards at the airport, but also all throughout Lusaka on advertisements, construction sites, and products. People are generally aware that the Chinese language consists of characters and many could even identify these characters. They also have an idea how Chinese sounds. When I told people that I was studying Chinese, they would often make phonetical sounds of their interpretation of Chinese. This illustrates that people are more familiar with Chinese language, resulting in its status as a common language, compared to other languages of which people do not have an idea of how it looks and sounds.

Fourth, many students are experiencing more encounters with Chinese people. Through the media, students were exposed to an increased amount of narratives and at the same time they encountered more Chinese people in their daily lives. These encounters took place at the market or in little shops, for some it was on a more regular basis through their jobs. That there is an increased presence of Chinese people in the entire world was very plausible to students, since they had experienced increased encounters with Chinese in Zambia and also had heard more stories – through other people and media – about the Chinese presence in Africa and elsewhere in the world.

Finally, I want to note here that a few students caught the "Mandarin fever" (Gao 2011), because they already had been to China in the context of the bilateral development programs that trained Africans working in public institutions. Kenneth (at that time working for the ministry of agriculture) went in 2006 for the first time to China to do a course in hybrid rice technology. After that he enrolled in four other training programs and decided to enroll in a Chinese language and culture course at Heibei University. I met Kenneth both at the Institute and the School, while he was spending his vacation in Zambia and he wanted to keep his Chinese up-to-date. When I asked him what his purpose was of this complete life change, he told me: "I want to live in China, I like it so much!".

These developments I have described represent a change in the political-economic situation, and a strategy to gain control over linguistic resources (Bourdieu 1977). Studying Chinese is a way to maintain or improve one's position in life with respect to the (newly emerging) market (Heller 2010b). More social actors are involved in "globalized forms of exchange" (Heller 2010b:349) due to these developments, and Chinese language students anticipate this transformation. They are aware that these globalized exchanges are influenced extensively by China, both in their country and the rest of the world. To be able to speak the language offers the possibility to interact with these global exchanges. Thus, Chinese language is valued for its access to global and local markets (Coupland 2010).

Yet, it is not just Chinese that is used as a strategy to gain control over linguistic resources. The students also considered studying other languages. Mwaona, a student at UNZA, told me that he considered studying Chinese, but decided against it because he perceived it as too difficult. Now he is considering Portuguese, because of his perception of Angola as becoming a newly prosperous country. These students appear to be very sensitive to discourses on booming economies and articulate a life path from these discourses so they can take advantage of this economic boom.

4. "Visualizing dreams of going outside"

Linguistic capital provides a counterpart to linguistic imperialism, it allows agency and focuses on the positive aspects of ideology (Morrisson and Lui 2003). In the

previous section, I have explained that four developments have resulted in the growing popularity of Chinese language in Zambia. It seems that China is successfully propagating a political message of becoming a world player, and by supplying courses in Chinese the demand is instigated. Yet, Chinese language is not only fueled by its supply, but also by the cultural capital of students.

Cultural capital is convertible into economic capital. Bourdieu (2008) [1986] argues that education is often the basis for this conversion, while educational qualifications are a way of showing one's specific competence to an employer and can be exchanged for "lucrative employment" (Williams 2010:85). Linguistic capital is a part of cultural capital and can be defined as:

> …fluency in, and comfort with, a high-status, world-wide language which is used by groups who possess economic, social, cultural and political power and status in local and global society. The linguistic capital thesis, then, states that students who possess, have access to, or develop linguistic capital, thereby have access to better life chances (Morrisson and Lui 2003:274).

In relation to other languages on the linguistic market and as argued above, Chinese is regarded as a helpful tool in acquiring a job on the local and global market or as a way out of Zambia by receiving a scholarship for a Chinese university. Like the study of Morrisson and Lui (2003) on Hong Kong youngsters who study English as a passport to study at an international university, students of Chinese language also seek economic advantage and a way out. Mary illustrates as follows:

> …I re-developed the interest [for Chinese language]; I started visualizing my dreams of going outside Zambia. I was thinking about the Chinese, and they are spreading over the world. I thought let me be one of the first who speaks their language, let me be the first to join them and develop a relationship with them, before everyone else does.

This quote demonstrates the relation between the global, structural transformation and China's growing power on the one hand, and the positioning of the self within that structure on the other hand. Mary's motivation of "going outside" Zambia translated into learning Chinese, her reason for that is that "the Chinese are spreading over the world". In the imagination of the Zambian students, Chinese language and culture are spreading rapidly worldwide, which becomes apparent by the increased interactions and discourses about China and Chinese people. This has influenced students' view on how to improve their selves and the discourse on China as the new global hegemon is for them a staging ground for action (Appadurai 1996, Giddens 1991). Learning Chinese is an outcome of the negotiations between different lifestyle choices, shaped in the complex interaction between local and the global. Student Dylan – an economist working for an international Bank – expresses this very well:

> China is becoming a big economy and I think by 2016 it will be the biggest economy of the world. […] So the best thing to do for someone is to position themselves in what we're going to see in the near future, […] my main motivation was that the Chinese are becoming the biggest in the global economy and to be able to understand issues better and to secure my future…

Dylan and Mary have knowledge about present discourses on China's economic position in the world. Therefore they position themselves within this development by learning Chinese and improving their linguistic skills. Global discourses transcend into local developments, which offer opportunities and influence actions. Dylan's and Mary's self-reflexivity is connected to discourses about the global and local situation

regarding China's position. Mary's idea to "be the first who develops a relationship with them" confirms her desire to secure her future. Her cultural capital contributes to her own position in the socially imagined global order. Dylan has imagined the future of the global order and articulated a life path within this imagination. Within the project of the reflexive self the students also reflect on their linguistic action as an asset. This is also known as epilinguistics (Culioli 1968, Williams 2010:155). Students approach both Chinese and other languages as assets. Conceptualizing language as an asset corresponds to seeing language as a commodity. Both concepts perceive language as something one can acquire and possess.

Dylan and Mary see Chinese as an asset that helps them advance in the global market economy. However, other students learn Chinese to exploit the local linguistic market. They see a niche in the Zambian labor market, and noticed the growth of Chinese companies in Zambia or the increase of Chinese related issues within their current job. These students had experienced difficulties in communicating with Chinese in their execution of work. One example is Raymond. In his work as a policeman he noticed that Chinese people in Zambia were increasingly coming into contact with law enforcement: "Often when they come to the office they cannot defend themselves because they do not speak English, but they have the right to hear what they have done wrong in a language they understand". When he proposed to learn Chinese, his boss agreed and told him he could do a course in Chinese language during office hours.

Linguistic capital is not simply convertible into economic capital; also economic capital is needed for the inversion to cultural capital: one needs economic capital to be able to pay for the classes. However, the classes at the Institute were assumed to be 'free'. Besides, one also needs cultural capital to start a course in Chinese language, which are certain dispositions that can range from economic assets, support from family and friends to the ability to learn (Morrisson and Lui 2003:274). Several dispositions together formulate students' incentives for studying Chinese. Mary for instance was not just personally motivated, but also supported by her family: "Dad said I have to learn Chinese. [...] I already learned French in primary school. Dad said why don't you start Chinese and look for a school to go to?" This illustrates the role the family can play to encourage students to start a Chinese language course. Mary's father was the main motivator and always made the effort to drive her to and from class, although she could just as easily have gone by bus. Her parents' encouragement for the Chinese language school was mirrored in the other schooling Mary undertook. Hence, she was also enrolled for the 'Cambridge exam', where she was taught in diverse subjects corresponding to a British degree. Also her mother, who according to Mary is "not very educated", was convinced into supporting her daughter's cultural capital. Most of the family's budget was invested into education for Mary and her two younger siblings. Thus, Mary has the required economic and cultural capital to be eligible for a Chinese course.

In addition, Mary also had the linguistic capital that makes her learn languages easily, having previously learnt French. Because her sister was not "very linguistic" and more interested in local languages, Mary instead was pushed to start Chinese. Thus, linguistic capital is also about the capacity and the flexibility to adapt oneself and learn new language to match a particular market (Williams 2010:85). One needs linguistic capital to accumulate more linguistic capital. For the accumulation of Chinese, one needs English competence, because the classes are provided in English. Because of her linguistic competence her father pushed her to learn Chinese. Chinese

was the best option for Mary, according to her father, because "it is becoming very important in the economy of Zambia and the world and therefore it would be a great addition to her [Mary] other education".

Students also promote Chinese among their friends and relatives. Francis and Jonathan promoted Chinese because it was cheap in the first place. Florence, a second level UNZA student at the CI, actively promoted Chinese among her relatives and enthused two cousins. Her cousin Jeff – a recent Accountancy graduate - started Chinese after Florence had told him that being able to speak some Chinese would help him find a job, since there are many Chinese investors in Zambia.

It is not just the linguistic and cultural capital that is enhanced by learning Chinese. Also the social capital of the students is broadened. Social capital refers "to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu 2008:286). The students broaden their social capital by the engagement with the teachers. Mainly the teachers of the Institute were very useful people to have in one's network, while they actively promoted students among their network of Chinese companies. Emmanuel, introduced in section two, had a few conversations with Chinese employers, and was offered the possibility to work for one in his school holidays. Although Emmanuel's level of Chinese was minimal and his actual linguistic capital had not improved, he still gained economic capital from the Chinese course. Promoting the Chinese language students among their network of Chinese companies also appears to be the active endorsement of the value of Chinese language on the linguistic market. Not just would Emmanuel stand for the successful conversion of linguistic capital to economic capital among the other students, also these Chinese companies learn to value Chinese competency in Zambian employees.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the quantity and quality of the actual Chinese the students learn is negligible. Students in fact learn two languages. First, Pinyin and how to speak and pronounce the standard Chinese correctly, including the four tones. And second, the standard Chinese characters that are of an entirely different order than the Latin letters the students are familiar to. Because of the great diversity of spoken dialects within China and the standardized written language, being able to read and write characters offers much more advantages then speaking, especially when one wants to work for a Chinese company that uses characters in their official documents. Nevertheless, most students put effort in Pinyin and work on their ability to speak. Raymond, introduced in section two, is an exception. He repeats all the characters he had previously learned, and tried to learn a new character everyday. One reason for his exception could be that he was in level two, and now more convinced of the importance of the Chinese language. It could also be because Raymond had been to China to do a computer course in the context of the previous described bilateral development program.

In the level one course at both the School and the Institute, the students were much more engaged with Pinyin. Although the importance of the characters was often emphasized by the teacher. Teacher Tan often stressed that some Pinyin words could mean different things, one striking example was the word 'ma', which could both be mother and horse. Yet, the students cared more for learning Pinyin and the ability to vocally communicate with Chinese. Mwape, a first level students of the School working for as an account manager for an insurance company, was not interested in learning characters, but wanted to be able to talk to Chinese clientele. When discussing the importance of the Characters, Mwape disputed the teacher and said:

> We have a problem communicating with you guys [Chinese people], you do not speak English. That is why I want to speak it [Chinese]. That is my objective. I do not want to know the characters. I just want to be able to greet those Chinese when they come in my office.

Yet, also the quality of Pinyin vocabulary the students acquired was not sufficient for thorough communication. There were only a few students putting significant effort in learning Pinyin. At both the School and the Institute students told me they wanted to put more effort in Chinese, but had too much workload from their jobs and studies. Despite that, the students remained motivated and told me they were planning to put more effort in learning Chinese in the future. Consequently, it can be said that it is not about the actual Chinese competence students accumulate, but learning Chinese language is mainly a way of acknowledging the importance of Chinese language on the global and local linguistic market.

In sum, students of Chinese already have certain cultural and linguistic capital and by learning Chinese they accumulate more. Also they gain more social capital through the addition of the Chinese teachers in their network. All students hope to gain social mobility by learning Chinese, and some of them actually increase their status. However, as Williams (2010:85) argues this is not a "conscious calculation, but a tacit anticipation on an understanding of the acceptability and assumed value of the linguistic capital on the market".

5. Students' access to Chinese language

In the above section I have argued that the students of Chinese language already had a certain amount of linguistic, cultural and economic capital that assisted their ability to study Chinese. As argued by Bourdieu (1991) cultural and linguistic capital is unequally distributed, and thus not all Zambians are able to start a Chinese course. First of all, not everyone has the economic capital that is needed to pay of the courses. The fees at both schools are rather high and this can only attract those who can afford it. Since the average income of Zambians is estimated at US $1.08 a day (Worldbank 2010), this is a quite small group. The Chinese International School is even more selective than the Institute, because the fees are much higher than at the Institute. Besides, CI teachers are not very concerned about collecting the money from their students; most students had not paid their fee. For Jessy, an orphan who recently graduated from high school, this was a reason to start Chinese:

> My friend told me about the institute, she said she did not pay anything, only for the HSK [Chinese proficiency] test. I always had an interest in learning other languages and cultures. Chinese was much cheaper than other courses.

Because she lived in the neighborhood right next to the UNZA campus, she could easily walk to class and did not have transport costs.

This leads to my second argument, that is the unequal distribution of cultural capital. Zambia is listed in 164th place on the Human Development index (UNDP 2011), indicating a very low level of human development. Access to education is one factor taken into account, so Zambia's position reflects the low access Zambian youth have to primary, secondary and tertiary education. The students who enrolled in Chinese courses at both the Institute and the School were almost all educated in primary, secondary and tertiary education, which means that they were accustomed to the format of education, had the intellectual capability and the English competence

required for the Chinese class. Based on students' clothing and lifestyles it was apparent that many of them had middle and upper class backgrounds, or were lucky and had the social capital that gave them the opportunity to go to school. Namzy, a twenty year old communication student, told me:

> At UNZA, students get fifty, seventy-five or hundred percent paid by the government to study. I get seventy-five percent, the rest my parents pay to fill up. It depends whether you know the right people of what you get. When you know the right one, you get more.

This example shows how social capital can be converted into cultural capital. William provides another example. For most of his life, William and his siblings grew up on a Chinese operated farm. The Chinese farmer invested in the children and paid their tuition. The farmer also sent William to the Confucius Institute to learn Chinese. The Chinese employer can be seen as the family's patron, which improved the cultural capital of the children. The Chinese employer also advised William to work at a Chinese restaurant to improve his Chinese. William's social capital translated into cultural capital, by living with the Chinese farmer.

Jessy and William also demonstrate how by learning Chinese their social mobility increased. Yet, considering Dylan, an economist working for a bank, and also others who had good jobs and high social positions; it can better be observed as ensuring one's position and reproducing social inequality. Another example is Mwape, who I introduced in the former section. He studies Chinese to greet in Chinese, so can attract Chinese clientele and is able to do businesses with them.

Mwape creates and tries to enter a niche market by having a familiarity with Chinese, an ability which allows him to ensure his own position within the company. His boss perceives Mwape's value in attracting Chinese clients, so not only does Mwape guarantees his own survival in the company, but also the survival of the company itself. Students like Mwape and Dylan and also most other students, come from middle and upper classes, which can be observed through their clothing and living standards. Through learning Chinese they enhance their cultural and linguistic capital which reproduces their social positions in society. Thus, these students have the possibility to look upon their future and reflect about their positions, and have the opportunity to act accordingly. However, people with less social, cultural, linguistic and economic capital cannot even consider this action. Hence, these students have the capacity to manipulate the market and are able to exploit the Chinese presence in their country (Bourdieu 1991:71), especially compared to those people working in the contentious copper and coal mines of Zambia.

Although the Confucius Institute seems to offer access to anyone who can take up Chinese, only a small amount of people "possess the linguistic (or its related economic, social and cultural) capital to be able to take advantage of it" (Morrison and Lui 2003: 274). It can be observed that the Confucius Institute has considered this unequal access and therefore is now cooperating with SOS Child Villages, an international NGO that stimulates education among disadvantaged children to reach the children's full potential. Teaching Chinese to these children is considered to be a way of accomplishing SOS' goals by improving children's social mobility.

Yet, the question rises what the purpose is of learning Chinese to these children. From all previous examples it appears that Chinese companies prefer Chinese skilled employees. One function of education is to produce a "labor force that could operate within the confines of the state's economy" (Williams 2010:25). These confines can be of interest of the imperial or colonial power (Williams 2010:25). By educating

Zambian children and youngsters in Chinese, it seems that China is creating a labor force for its own market and establishing a power relation between Zambia and China. This process can be identified as 'symbolic dominance' (Bourdieu 1991) which refers to: "the ability of certain social groups to maintain control over others by establishing their view of reality and their cultural practices as the most valued and, perhaps more importantly, as the norm" (Heller 1995:373). Knowledge of Chinese language is promoted as a future norm in the local and global market. It might even already be the norm, through the representation of a global network of Confucius Institutes and stressing the importance for Zambians to learn Chinese for continuing cooperation and friendship between the two countries. The Chinese ambassador of Zambia, during the first year celebration of the Confucius Institute in Zambia, even underscored this by saying: "few Zambians can effectively understand and review the Chinese texts of the several dozen documents signed between the Chinese and Zambian governments every year" (Yuxiao 2011).

Parallels can be drawn to the hegemony of English during the colonial era. At that time official documents were in English. Therefore at a certain moment colonial subjects began to demand the teaching in English so they were provided access to the imperial state and the world of the colonizer. Teaching Chinese underlines Bourdieu's (1977) conception on the linguistic strategies of individuals, which at the cost of being dominated, take the chance of profiting from the possibility of the economic distribution of a certain language. Chinese language thus is a socio-economic resource, because it enhances one's economic capital and increases the linguistic (including social and cultural) capital of students. Chinese language does not contain worth, but the "boom of China" considers those people with Chinese competence worthy.

6. "Most people would like to know how our Chinese colleagues came to develop to this stage"

This title refers to something Development studies student and UNZA employee Kimote told me. In full he said:

> Zambia is part of the global economy, and it is China that connects Zambia to the world and has the ready cash. […] Initially most of the countries that were colonized by Europeans, have a certain biasedness towards these other countries which are non-English speaking countries. And most of the African countries, especially those colonized by the British, did not want to learn another language. […] Now [because of] the coming of the Chinese as the second developed country after America, most people would like to know how our colleagues came to develop to this stage**.**

He also told me that Zambia should open up to China, because Zambia is now too much subject to Western discourses about China and the bad influences China has on the African continent. Besides, he and many other students told me that there is much to learn from China, because China has developed economically in such a short period of time. This goes against the Western media that represents China as Africa's new colonizer. Kimote and many other students were not sensible to these discourses, and defended the Chinese practices in Zambia. Patrick told me: "Chinese investments are not a problem, we welcome it. But let them adhere to the labor laws, for instance the issue of safety in the mines". The issue of labor laws was one of Sata's main

criticisms on the Chinese investors, which was also pointed to any other foreign investor. Mary told me when I asked how she was doing:

> I am fine, especially now my uncle has won the elections. That is dad's uncle, he will do great thing and will help the suffering people in Zambia. [With her head pointing in the direction of the Chinese teacher] he's going to be stricter with them. They have to adapt to Zambian laws.

These above quotes show the complexity of Chinese engagement with Zambia, and how the students counter the views of the Western media by deploying Sata's narrative on the Chinese investments in Zambia. In addition, these quotes exemplify how learning Chinese is a legitimate way of contributing to Zambia's development. This can be further elaborated by Mary's example who is inspired by the "Made-in-China" label, and wants to learn China's technology so that in the end she can create a "Made-in-Zambia" label: "One day I will create something which has a Made-in-Zambia label. Then I can be proud of my country and put Zambia on the map". Thus, the students' stories on China's growth show how some images and narratives penetrate more successfully than others. The most successful narratives teach the point that China could help Zambia's development.

The view that language is central to development is reflected in the Chinese ambassador's speech during the first annual Confucius Institute Celebration. He emphasized that English education has contributed to the immense "social progress and economic development" of China and "that is why China has chosen education as one of the priority areas to increase its assistance to and enhance cooperation with Zambia" (Yuxiao 2011). Hence, the Chinese government is not only promoting Chinese language across the world, it also promotes English within China to enhance people's possibilities to work in foreign enterprises (Bianco et al. 2009). This indicates that the Chinese government is regulating language and managing the new communication oriented forms of production, in China and the world (Heller 2010b:353). Chinese language is used for the purpose of political, economic and cultural governance of Zambia (Tollefson 2002). This governance, however, uses an existing educational infrastructure, founded under the British colonial administration, by cooperating with local schools and universities. In Zambia, they collaborate with the University of Zambia (UNZA), other universities and primary and secondary schools.

Besides, they also make use of the world's infrastructure between the 'developed' and 'underdeveloped' world. It seems that the Chinese government has adopted the Worldbank discourse of development through education, which helps Zambia participate with the developed countries "in the world project of material advancement" (Carnoy 1974:1). Human capital, a term originating from economics, is central in this development discourse. Education enhances human capital, which is "the embodiment of skills and experience" (Thorsby 1999:3). Human capital pertains to the individual (Williams 2010:64). The more human capital people possess, the more a country can claim to be developed.

The concept of human capital is very close to cultural capital. Cultural capital, as previously argued, is regarded as one's cultural acquisitions. It is not about the individual skills, but more about the relation of these skills to others in society. Hence, Chinese education in Zambia is presented as improving the human capital of Zambians to improve Zambia's development project. Although the Chinese promote human capital, it is actually about creating a basis for society, where people with Chinese language skills are considered of higher worth than those without. Hence, as

scrutinized in the third section of this ethnography, it is about cultural capital, because being able to speak Chinese is not about intrinsic worth, but about the market and the "control over the instruments of reproduction and competence" (Bourdieu 1977:651). Learning Chinese is rather about dealing with social and cultural transformation than about one's actual productivity.

This control over the instruments of reproduction and competence is to a greater extent occupied by the Confucius Institute, and less by the Chinese International School. The latter is privately owned, and therefore much more dependent on tuition fees. The Institute on the other hand is much less dependent. As I have already stated, not all students at CI actually pay the tuition fees. They did not know they had to, and were never asked to pay anyway. One time in class the teacher did make a cynical comment, and told us that he could not provide copies of the teaching material because the students had not paid their fees. Yet, the students did not really respond, and they remained thinking the classes were free, or expected the teacher to directly ask for it. The CI principal told me she does encourage the students to pay, but mainly to raise their motivation.

Considering the previous, and also the standardization and expansion described in the second section, it seems that the CI (and also the Chinese government, the cooperating companies and UNZA) is very concerned about Zambians learning Chinese, and are willing to pay the costs. Some authors (Ding 2008, Wang 2011, Van Pinxteren 2011,) consider this as a clear example of China's soft power. Soft power can be defined as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments" (Nye 2004:x). Cultural political values and foreign policies are key within soft power and all three can only exist through language (Nye 2004). China has shown great ambitions with their intensive global language campaign, which mirrors the Chinese embrace of soft power (Van Pinxteren 2011). Yet, soft power is not just imposed on people. The students show how they all actively anticipate these policies for personal improvement.

It appears that this embrace of development through education has been copied from the Western human capital theory. Sending young volunteers over the world to teach Chinese appears to be deducted from the United States' Peace Corps volunteers that since the 1960s have been promoting English all over the world as a tool for development and enhancing one's human capital. Heller (2010a) argues that the theory on human capital and development symbolizes a reframed imperialist relationship between the old colonies and their former colonial centers. The markets that were set up in the imperial centuries are still operating, however instead of representing a hierarchical relation, they are now framed as collaboration aiming at mutual profit (Heller 2010a). English until today has remained the official language that connects Zambia to the old empire, and has remained key to the development of Zambia. Chinese is now incorporated into this reframed imperialist relation and also promotes language as advancing the individual's human capital, and the development of the country. However, it is not just indirect transposition. First, because the equal opportunities for rich and poor through education are embedded in Confucius' thoughts (Starr 2009:69).

Second, Chinese is neither a substitute for English, nor does it aims to become one. English has helped China develop, and inspired Chinese formulated that Chinese could help Zambia develop. The comparison of the Institute with Alliance Française and the Goethe Instute demonstrates that China is just trying to gain acknowledgement for the Chinese language, and an equal position to other languages

is in the world (Kasuya 2001). That is why English is used as the medium for teaching Chinese in the classes and why many teachers were studying English in Zambia. They thought the better English they spoke, the better they were able to teach the students Chinese. Similar to the study by Morrisson and Lui (2003) on Hong Kong, the importance of Chinese linguistic capital is redefined, without undermining the global significance of English. Thus, China is not competing on a linguistic level, but they are competing in global development. China has copied the development story, but has a different approach to it. When we celebrated the birthday of Confucius, the Institute provided a class about Confucius. They presented the core values of teachings of Confucius:

> "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do that to others". This is a famous saying of Confucius. This can hold for individuals, but also for countries. The Chinese government does this too, also when we go to different countries, we will not do what we would not do to ourselves. In China we want to keep things natural, how they are. We do not want to change cultures, when we go to other countries. Like with your new [Patriotic Front] government, we would not say what he can and cannot do. That is the difference with Western culture; they will say 'we tell you how to do that. Do what we think is right. Help people in our way. That is good'. But as Chinese we want to keep things natural.

This development story was also reflected in the students' dialogue. Francis told me that he does not like Western development aid, because they ask Zambians to accept homosexuality – in opposition to the Chinese. Kimote's argument in the beginning of this section expresses this as well by saying that there is much to learn from China's development story. Next to development is also 'friendship' which is closely embedded in China's international policy.

As can be seen from the previous quote, it is emphasized that China comes with good intentions. The teachers regard themselves as ambassadors, spreading and teaching Chinese language and culture around the world and establishing friendship between different countries, cultures and people. Teacher Tan told me: "I love my country and its culture. I want to teach this to other people in the world. I want them to get to know China and all the great things of it". She and other teachers signed up for becoming volunteers to make friends abroad. Hence, friendship was emphasized in the relation to the locals and the students, and characterizes the Chinese ideology that boosts China's image in the world. For that reason, it was probably not a coincidence that we learned the song 'Peng You' ('Friend') in class.

Chinese language teaching is a powerful medium for ideology, which teaches the world about China's great culture and language, its development story and the acknowledgement of China as a growing world player. Earlier I have discussed language ideology in relation to valuing languages on the linguistic market. The language ideology among the students was that the Chinese language connects Zambians to the development and prosperity that China offers.

This ideology encompasses the notion that it can easily be learned. Many students told me that Chinese was not a difficult language to learn, and that you only needed to go to the classes and put interest in it. Chinese was regarded as a competence that could easily be added to the rest of one's skills. As argued before, it is regarded as an asset. It is an asset that is fixed and non negotiable, like a commodity, that can be exchanged in the market economy. The Chinese language taught in the Chinese schools in Zambia is presented as a homogenous asset that can improve the students' human capital. Yet, Chinese language is not an embodied skill as presented in the

human capital theory, it is not about the actual proficiency. It is linguistic capital that translates into cultural capital, which is part of the linguistic ideology of the Chinese state that regards Hanyu as the standard language of China, and which is working towards the top of the hierarchy of world languages. Chinese language schools such as those in Zambia are the sites of the production and reproduction of this ideology of the authentic Chinese language and culture. Therefore can Chinese language, that is taught in the classes at both the School and the Institute, be seen as commodities that are “Made-in-China”.

4. Conclusion

At the outset of this thesis I questioned how Chinese language education in Zambia is a manifestation of the commodification of language. Tan and Rubdy (2008), and later further explored by Heller (2010a), introduced the theory on the commodification of language, arguing that languages in the globalized new economy increasingly become commodities. The narratives of the Zambian students I came to know during my fieldwork demonstrate that Chinese language is a commodity that can be acquired to advance their position on the local and global market. I have shown how this global and local market is related to the linguistic market and the value of Chinese on this market, as conceptualized by Bourdieu (1977). Through several developments in Zambia regarding Chinese presence, students are exposed to the increasing importance of Chinese language, and as argued by Giddens (1991, 2000) and Beck (2000) these students are not just the dupes, but active agents that anticipate these developments. Students connect the global discourse on the rise of China to their own lives. By studying Chinese they formulate a life path which increases their social mobility within and outside Zambia.

I also explored how Chinese has become a desirable language and highly ranked on the linguistic market. For this, I used the notion of linguistic ideology as a tool (Blackledge 2005, Bourdieu 1977, Watts 1999). The discourse of learning Chinese language to enhance one's human capital, leading to national development, is the main attraction for students of Chinese language. Yet, Chinese language competence is not an embodied skill as presented in the human capital theory, but rather cultural capital, using Bourdieu (1977) notion of different forms of exchangeable capital. Learning Chinese language is the accumulation of linguistic capital, with which students hope to gain access to jobs with a Chinese company or to attract Chinese business within their own company. Outside Zambia, Chinese competence offers to help them attain scholarships or jobs in China. They are competing with other Chinese skilled Zambians and nationalities, which has made the language marketable. Therefore, learning Chinese becomes a socio-economic resource, that enhances the students' linguistic capital and the corresponding economic, social and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1977, 2008).

In addition, other conditions can be regarded as showing the manifestation of Chinese as a commodity, such as the expansion, differentiation and standardization of Chinese language, which can be interpreted as spreading capital that enables the production of Chinese. Because of the expansion to other institutions, the Chinese language is integrating into the Zambian education system. Besides, it has become marketable and been brought into the capital market system as a commodity in relation to other linguistic commodities (other languages). Next to offering a standard Chinese language course, the schools have been exploring classes in other Chinese cultural aspects, thus making the central 'product' (that is teaching Standard Chinese language) more attractive. In addition, I demonstrate that the students regard Chinese language as an asset that can be added to other competences and education experiences. It costs time, money and effort, but once attained, becomes exchangeable for economic capital. The students do not always enhance their linguistic capital, because the quality and quantity of actual acquired Chinese is negligible. Yet, by showing they possess Chinese competence, they acknowledge the linguistic status of Chinese.

Thus, learning Chinese is like acquiring a commodity: a 'thing' that is valued and exchanged (Appadurai 1986, Simmel 2004). The language taught in the Chinese classes that I have researched was Hanyu, which in 1949 was appointed as the Chinese standard language and which is now part of China's linguistic ideology that promotes Chinese to the world. Therefore it can be seen as a "Made-in-China" commodity, which contributes to China's transforming status into a country of international importance.

Further research could focus on this recognition aspect. An interesting angle would be on other formats of Chinese education. For instance the bilateral. programs offered to African civil servants, or the Chinese education for children, also offered by the Confucius Institute. It would be interesting to see how the CI sets foot in primary and secondary schools, and what the motivations for the children's teachers and parents are to have their children learn Chinese. In this thesis I assume that the students' cultural capital increases by learning Chinese, because the students themselves think so. It would be interesting to further research whether this is the actual case, and whether these students have a better position on the local and global job market. Do their actual chances on a job improve? And how do students integrate in Chinese companies?

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Summary

This thesis explores Chinese language learning in Lusaka, Zambia's capital. Two schools are scrutinized in this research, and I link my findings in relation with several concepts from the discipline of anthropology. Learning languages can have economic implications. I argue that Chinese language can be seen as a product or a commodity. A number of developments have led to this commodification. First, one can distinguish expansion of Chinese language for instance by setting up courses on different educational institutions. Second, standardization sets Chinese language deeper in the Zambian educational system. Third, differentiation occurs where not only the base product is offered (that is the standard language course), but also other cultural lessons have become promoted in both the Chinese schools. In this way Chinese language is integrated on the Zambian linguistic market and valued on the basis of its use.

This use is formulated through a number of developments that have taken place in Zambia and the world. Within Zambia one can observe Chinese presence through the increased number of Chinese people and Chinese businesses. This exposes people to the Chinese language more often. One example is the billboards promoting Chinese products in Chinese. Stories of China's growing prominence in the world contribute to the increasing value of Chinese skills in Zambia. Ultimately, these developments result in Chinese language being seen as a valuable commodity.

In addition, I show how these stories are presented to the students of Chinese language. They imagine the role that China can play in Zambia's development, especially in terms of education.. China's development history inspires students to learn Chinese. They believe that learning Chinese will benefit their country, and at an individual level will situates and secure their own position within both the local and global job market. However, learning Chinese reproduces societal hierarchies, because students need certain language skills in order to accumulate other language skills. People who do not speak English cannot enroll in a course in Chinese. Additionally, people also need a certain level of education, the support of their family, and sometimes money to be able to enroll in a Chinese course. Finally, they require intellect to study Chinese, and also motivation to initially have the idea to improve themselves through languages.