

# **A Sociolinguistic Survey of the Nyiha and Nyika Language Communities in Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper presents the findings of a sociolinguistic survey among the Nyiha and Nyika language communities in south-western Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia. The main purpose of the research was to clarify the extent of any dialect differences between the varieties that could impact the ongoing language development process in the Nyiha of Mbozi variety (Tanzania). The research was conducted in August, September and November 2004. The survey identified five different ethnic groups called Nyiha or Nyika in Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi. Research findings suggest that the Nyiha of Malawi/Zambia could possibly use written materials in the Nyiha of Mbozi variety. The Nyika of Malawi and the Nyiha of Sumbawanga (Tanzania) were found to speak varieties different enough to warrant their own language development efforts. The language variety spoken by the Nyika of Rungwe (Tanzania) was found to be not a variety of Nyiha or Nyika at all and was not further investigated.

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# 1 Introduction

Nyiha is a language spoken in south-western Tanzania. There are approximately 246,000 Nyiha speakers living in Mbozi District, Mbeya Region. This is considered the traditional Nyiha speaking area. Nyiha is also spoken in Malawi and Zambia. Tanzanian Nyiha is included in a language development and Bible translation project which includes nine other languages, centred around the town of Mbeya<sup>1</sup>. Several workshops facilitated by SIL have taken place with participation from speakers of Nyiha. Through these workshops it became apparent that the dialect differences in Nyiha might be large enough to influence the writing system and any translation that will take place. Further research was needed to determine the location of the various dialects, the extent of the dialectical differences, and what factors, linguistic and other, may be of importance to the language development process.

Initial research revealed that there might be up to four different language varieties located in three countries that are referred to as "Nyiha", including Central Nyiha, Western Nyika, Southern Nyiha, and Eastern Nyika (see Walsh and Swilla 2001). Therefore an attempt was made to investigate each of these language varieties.

Research on the Nyiha and Nyika<sup>2</sup> language varieties and communities in Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi was carried out in August, September and November 2004.

## 1.1 The organisation of this paper

Section 2 is a presentation of the literature available on the Nyiha and Nyika varieties and their history. Section 3 states the purpose of the research and section 4 is an overview of the tools and methodology used for the conducted research. Section 5 presents the results using these tools. Section 6, finally, summarizes the conclusions of the paper as a whole.

This paper deals with the varieties referred to in Walsh and Swilla (2001), as Central Nyiha, Southern Nyiha, Western Nyika and Eastern Nyika. Section 2, which presents the background information of this paper, follows this classification. From section 5 onwards, however, the varieties are divided slightly differently based on the findings. Here the varieties will be classified in the following way:

- Nyiha of Mbozi (Central Nyiha)
- Nyika of Zambia and Malawi (Southern Nyiha)
- Nyiha of Malawi (Southern Nyiha)
- Nyiha of Sumbawanga (Western Nyika)
- Nyika of Rungwe (Eastern Nyika)

## 1.2 Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank the many people who made the research possible: regional government officials in Mbeya and Rukwa Regions of Tanzania and Northern Province of Zambia as well as local government officials in numerous locations in Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi, church leaders in all the Nyiha and Nyika speaking areas, and the many individuals who spoke with members of the research team. The authors wish to express their appreciation for the

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<sup>1</sup> This language development project includes the following languages: Bena, Bungu, Kinga, Malila, Ndali, Nyakyusa, Nyiha, Safwa, Sangu and Wanji.

<sup>2</sup> The macro-term Nyiha and Nyika throughout this paper refers to all of the investigated Nyiha and Nyika language varieties. The terms are also used to refer to both, the people or their language.

cooperation and assistance provided, without which it would have been impossible to conduct the research.

## **2 Background information**

The previous research on the Nyiha and Nyika varieties is briefly summarized in this section. First, the classification of the Nyiha (or Nyika) language according to various authors is given. Following this is a section dealing with the areas where the Nyiha and Nyika varieties are spoken and the languages that surround them. The next two sections deal with the culture and history of the Nyiha and Nyika communities as well as population figures. This is followed by a section on the varieties of Nyiha and Nyika as presented in the literature.

### **2.1 Language classification**

According to the Ethnologue (Gordon 2005), Nyiha is a language classified as Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, Central, M, Nyika-Safwa (M.20). Guthrie (1970:14) classifies Nyiha (Nyika) as M.23. The other M.20 languages as listed by Guthrie include Wanda, Mwanga, Malila, Safwa, Iwa, and Tambo. Nurse (1988:20-23, 59) classifies some of his Corridor Languages<sup>3</sup> into a superordinate “Mwika-Nyika” grouping. His “Nyika” subgroup consists of Nyiha, Malila, Safwa, Lambya and Tambo. The members of the “Mwika” subgroup are Pimbwe, Rungwa, Fipa, Rungu, Mambwe, Wanda, Iwa and Namwanga. The above classifications deal only with the Central Nyiha language variety.

### **2.2 Language areas and surrounding languages**

#### ***Central Nyiha***

The Central Nyiha (also known as Mbozi Nyiha) are situated within Mbozi District of Mbeya Region in Tanzania with “Mbozi town” at the centre. To the north of them lies Lake Rukwa, whilst in the south they extend towards the Zambian border (Walsh and Swilla 2001:285).

The Central Nyiha of Mbozi District are surrounded by several ethnic groups, including the Nyamwanga to the west, Wanda to the northwest, Bungu in the northeast, Safwa to the east, Malila in the southeast and Lambya in the south (Walsh and Swilla 2001:285, quoting Wilson 1958:map, Willis 1966:map).

#### ***Southern Nyiha***

The Southern Nyiha, according to the literature, are located in northern Zambia, mainly in Isoka and Chama Districts of Northern Province. Walsh and Swilla (2001:286) report that there may also be speakers in the far northwest of Malawi.

The southern Nyiha in Zambia and Malawi are bordered by the Nyamwanga to the north and west, and the Lambya to the south and east (Walsh and Swilla 2001:286).

#### ***Western Nyika***

Walsh and Swilla (2001:285), quoting Willis (1966:68), say that the Western Nyika are located in the Ufipa Plateau and in the Rukwa Valley below. They report that the 1957 Tanganyika census counted 26,379 Nyika living in this area.

There is a lack of published data concerning the Western Nyika. However, according to Walsh and Swilla (2001:285), they border the Fipa to the west. They may extend towards the Mambwe and the Nyamwanga in the south, and the Wanda to the southeast.

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<sup>3</sup> The term “Corridor Languages” is used to describe the languages in an area roughly between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Nyasa. The languages included in this term vary slightly by author.

### **Eastern Nyika**

There is some uncertainty in the existing literature as to whether the Eastern Nyika still exist as a distinct ethnolinguistic group. However, Walsh and Swilla (2001:286) suggest that if they still survive, they most probably occupy a small area in Rungwe District on the western side of Kiwira River, to the southwest of Tukuyu town.

According to Walsh and Swilla (2001:286-287), the Eastern Nyika are probably only a few thousand people situated on the western fringe of an area dominated by Nyakyusa speakers. It seems that they were once a distinct ethnolinguistic group probably originating from the central Nyiha, but they have likely been partially or completely assimilated into the Nyakyusa. Their neighbours include the Lambya and the Nyakyusa of Masoko to the south, and the Penja and Nyakyusa-speaking Kukwe to the north. To the west are the Ndali (Walsh and Swilla 2001:286-287).

## **2.3 Population**

According to the *Ethnologue* (Gordon 2005), there were 306,000 Nyiha speakers in Tanzania in 1987. This figure is questionable, however, as it is a projected estimate, using the national growth rate and the figures from the 1957 census. Nyiha is also spoken in Zambia. The *Ethnologue* estimates a total of 626,000 Nyiha speakers in both countries. However, Walsh and Swilla (2001:285f) consider these figures too high.

## **2.4 History, culture and scriptures**

The term Nyika (Nyixa, Nyiha) derives from Eastern Bantu \*-(y)ika (class 9/10). It seems likely that it originally described savannah woodland or bushland, although it today denotes grasslands or plains in some of the Corridor languages (Walsh and Swilla 2001:284).

Nurse (1988:66ff) constructed a Proto-Cultural-Vocabulary for the Corridor languages. He found that words related to iron-working, tools/implements, food types and processing, spiritual matters/medicine, fishing and hunting mainly are of Bantu origin. However, the words used for fauna, especially words related to cattle, seem to be influenced by Southern Cushitic languages, suggesting that Southern Cushitic communities at some point in time were in contact with the Bantu communities of the Corridor.

Oral traditions in the Corridor claim that the Nyiha chiefs share a common origin with the chiefs of Umalila, Uguruka and Usangu. The first chief is said to have originated from "Somaliland". Before he settled in Unyiha, he also stayed in Ugogo and Uwanji for some time. These traditions seem to reflect the importance of the trade with the East African coast (Walsh 1998:5-9).

The 19<sup>th</sup> century involved great changes and hardship for the Nyiha people. The Ngoni raids in the area are said to have begun in the 1840s. At the same time, the Bungu and the Bembe also raided the area, sometimes in cooperation with the slave traders from the coast. In 1877 the Hehe exiled the Sangu from their homeland. This caused the Sangu to resettle in Unyiha and Usafwa where they became the dominant power during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, until the German administration restored them to their original homeland (Walsh 1998:9f). The various events during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which resulted in multiple displacements of the ethnic groups involved in this report, partly explains the complex language situation of today.

The Nyiha New Testament was published in 1965 by the British and Foreign Bible Society. According to the *Ethnologue* (Gordon 2005), the earliest portions of the Nyiha Bible were published in 1913.

## 2.5 Language varieties

Walsh and Swilla (2001:275f) divide the languages in the Tanganyika-Nyasa Corridor into West Corridor (Mwika), Central Corridor (Nyika), East Corridor (Nyakyusa-Ndali) and Wungu. In this section, the previous literature on the varieties of speech within the Nyasa-Tanganyika Corridor is discussed with emphasis on the Central Corridor languages.

The internal classification of the Central Corridor languages and dialects is particularly complex. The main problem is the lack of reliable data. Research is also made more difficult by the lack of consensus as regards language names as well as the fact that several of these languages are spoken across the borders to Malawi and Zambia (Walsh and Swilla 2001:275f).

Wilson (1958), quoted in Walsh and Swilla (2001: 277, 283), conducted research in the Corridor in the 1950s. One of the major groups of people she studied was the “Nyiha”, which she divided, partly based on language, into the following groups:

- a) The Nyiha of the Mbozi District
- b) The Lambya of the Rungwe District
- c) The Lambya of Nyasaland
- d) The Wandya (not the same as the Wanda) adjoining the Lambya
- e) The Lambya of Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia)
- f) The Nyiha of Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia)
- g) The people of the Malila Plateau adjoining the Lambya of Rungwe District
- h) Scattered ethnic groups on the Fipa Plateau
- i) The Nyiha of the Rungwe District

Wilson (1977), quoted in Walsh and Swilla (2001:284), later added to this grouping and suggested that the Safwa, Nyiha and Lambya spoke dialects of the same language.

Research by the anthropologist Mariam Slater (1976), quoted in Walsh and Swilla (2001:284), stated that Malila, Lambya and Nyika were mutually intelligible.

When studying the languages of south-western Tanzania, Nurse (1988:20-23, 59) found a grouping consisting of Nyiha, Malila, Safwa, Lambya and Tambo. This grouping was given the name “Nyika”. Nurse also confirmed Wilson’s intuition that Safwa was the “least compatible member” of the grouping. Furthermore, Nurse suggested that there might be a higher level “Mwika-Nyika” grouping. The members of the “Mwika” group according to Nurse are Pimbwe, Rungwa, Fipa, Rungu, Mambwe, Wanda, Iwa and Namwanga. The Mwika and Nyika subgroups appear to share more in common phonologically than lexically. This would support a genetic affiliation as a lexical similarity often reveals a more recent contact with other languages (Nurse 1988:68, 80). Nurse’s findings were based on lexicostatistics, existing studies of the languages and the opinions of native speakers.

Labroussi (1998, 1999), quoted in Walsh and Swilla (2001:278), also recognizes a “super ordinate Nyika-Mwika grouping”.

Walsh and Swilla (2001:284) conclude that at present we do not have enough evidence to determine relationships between the different varieties of Nyika. The Central Nyiha group, sometimes called the “Nyiha of Mbozi” (Guthrie’s M23), is the largest of the Nyika groups and their language is the one that has been most studied.

In the following, a review of the existing literature on the four subgroups of “Nyika” according to Walsh and Swilla, namely, Central Nyiha, Southern Nyiha, Western Nyika and Eastern Nyika, is presented. Finally, the relationship between the Nyiha and Nyika varieties and the neighbouring Malila, Lambya and Safwa is briefly discussed.

### **Central Nyiha**

The Nyiha language variety of Mbozi is, in some of the literature, referred to as Central Nyiha due to its centrality in relation to the other variants. The Central Nyiha speakers' area extends from south of Lake Rukwa to the Zambian border (Walsh and Swilla 2001:285).

According to Walsh and Swilla (2001:285), most of the research on the Central Nyiha variant was done by non-linguists, many of whom were German missionaries in the early and mid-1900s. Some folktales were published at that time. A monograph on the language was published by Busse in 1960. The Nyiha New Testament was published in 1965 by the British and Foreign Bible Society. According to the *Ethnologue* (Gordon 2005), the earliest portions of the Nyiha Bible were published in 1913.

### **Southern Nyiha**

According to the literature, the Southern Nyiha are found mainly in Northern Zambia. They were, however, not listed in the 1969 census of Zambia. There are also some Southern Nyiha speakers in the north-western corner of Malawi (Walsh and Swilla 2001:286).

It has been suggested (see Brock (1963) quoted in Walsh and Swilla 2001:286) that the Southern Nyiha broke away from the Central Nyiha due to the Ngoni raids in the mid-19th century. There might therefore be a close linguistic relationship between the two varieties. Southern Nyiha data was collected by Kashoki and Mann 1978 (quoted in Walsh and Swilla 2001:286). Their data suggest that Southern Nyiha is lexically closest to Zambian Lambya (70%) and Tambo (69%). However, they did not compare Southern Nyiha with related languages in neighbouring countries.

In addition, it has been suggested that Southern Nyiha is dialectally related to Wandya (Kashoki and Mann 1978 quoted in Walsh and Swilla 2001:286; see also Gordon 2005). However, there is very little data available on Wandya. According to Walsh and Swilla (2001:286) the only published data is a wordlist in Johnston (1922).

### **Western Nyika**

The Western Nyika group inhabits the Ufipa Plateau as well as the Rukwa Valley. The 1957 census gives the figure of 26,379 for the Western Nyika. Although they claim Nyiha origin, it has been reported that they find the Central Nyiha variant hard to follow. In addition, it was noted that the Western Nyika variant was not easily comprehensible to native Fipa-speakers (Willis (1966), quoted in Walsh and Swilla (2001:285)).

Fourshey (quoted in Walsh and Swilla 2001:285) collected lexical data on Western Nyika. She found that Western Nyika had a slightly higher proportion of cognates with Nyiha (62%) than with Fipa (59%). According to Walsh and Swilla (2001:285) these findings support the hypothesis that Western Nyika and Central Nyiha share a common origin. The similarity with Fipa, on the contrary, would be due to lexical borrowing.

### **Eastern Nyika**

The variant of Nyika spoken in the Rungwe District of Tanzania is called, in Walsh and Swilla (2001:287), Eastern Nyika. The Rungwe District is dominated by Nyakyusa speakers. According to these authors, the Eastern Nyika do not appear as a separate ethnic group in any of the census reports and their population today might be only a few thousand people. There is not much written on this variant, and its affiliation with the other Nyika groups remains uncertain due to lack of linguistic data.

However, Wilson (1951), quoted in Walsh and Swilla (2001:287), mentioned the Nyika of this area as one of "a number of small groups with old languages of their own which, though related to that of Nyakyusa and Ngonde, are more or less unintelligible to them". At the time of Wilson's study, they were already being reported as being assimilated to the Nyakyusa and Ngonde in speech.

According to Walsh and Swilla (2001:287), the information given by contemporary native speakers suggests that this variant still exists. The authors also present two hypotheses with regard to the affiliation of the Eastern Nyika. First, they suggest that although Eastern Nyika might originally have been a dialect of the Nyika cluster, it has now undergone language shift and become a dialect of Nyakyusa. Secondly, they argue, based on oral traditions that Eastern Nyika might have originated as a splinter group of Central Nyiha.

### ***Malila, Lambya and Safwa***

As noted above, there is a close relationship between Nyiha, Malila, Lambya and Safwa. Some authors have even claimed they are dialects of the same language. A sociolinguistic survey was conducted in the Malila language community by SIL in August 2003. The preliminary lexical comparison presented in SIL's report showed Malila to have a high lexical similarity with Nyiha<sup>4</sup> (81%), Lambya<sup>5</sup> (80%) and Safwa<sup>6</sup> (78%). In the study, Malila groups and village leaders were asked to give their perceptions of how similar the Malila language is to the neighbouring languages. They all agreed that both Nyiha and Safwa are similar to Malila, but that children would not be able to understand these languages without first learning them. Although according to the lexical comparison, Lambya seems to be as close to Malila as Nyiha and Safwa, the perception among the Malila themselves is that Lambya is not similar to Malila. This is possibly due to the geographical distance and lack of contact between the two groups (Anderson 2004).

## **3 Purpose**

The purpose of this survey was to determine what language varieties are included in the broader term "Nyiha" and then to obtain relevant information about these varieties and their communities, to inform the Nyiha Bible Translation Team and SIL on how to proceed with the language project. In addition, any language varieties which were included in the term "Nyiha" and which were not likely to be served by the Nyiha language project were to be identified.

## **4 Methodology**

The following methods were used to gather information in order to answer the research questions:<sup>7</sup>

- Wordlists
- Phraselists
- Interviews<sup>8</sup>
- Government officials
- Church leaders
- School officials
- Group
- Informal
- Observation

The procedures are dealt with in more depth in this section, starting with an explanation of the selection of research locations in the three countries visited.

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<sup>4</sup> Compared with the Nyiha CBOLD wordlist (Nurse and Philippson (1975)).

<sup>5</sup> Compared with the Lambya CBOLD wordlist (Nurse and Philippson (1975)).

<sup>6</sup> Compared with the Safwa SIL wordlist (Turner et al 1998).

<sup>7</sup> For a list of all the research questions see Appendix A.

<sup>8</sup> Interview schedules can be obtained upon request from the UTB Language Assessment Department: [survey\\_utb@sil.org](mailto:survey_utb@sil.org).

#### **4.1 Research locations**

In each location, the survey teams first visited government offices in order to interview officials about the language situation in the areas, specifically, to find out the location of any Nyiha or Nyika speaking peoples in the area. Once these peoples were located, the team chose research locations within the Nyiha or Nyika speaking areas.

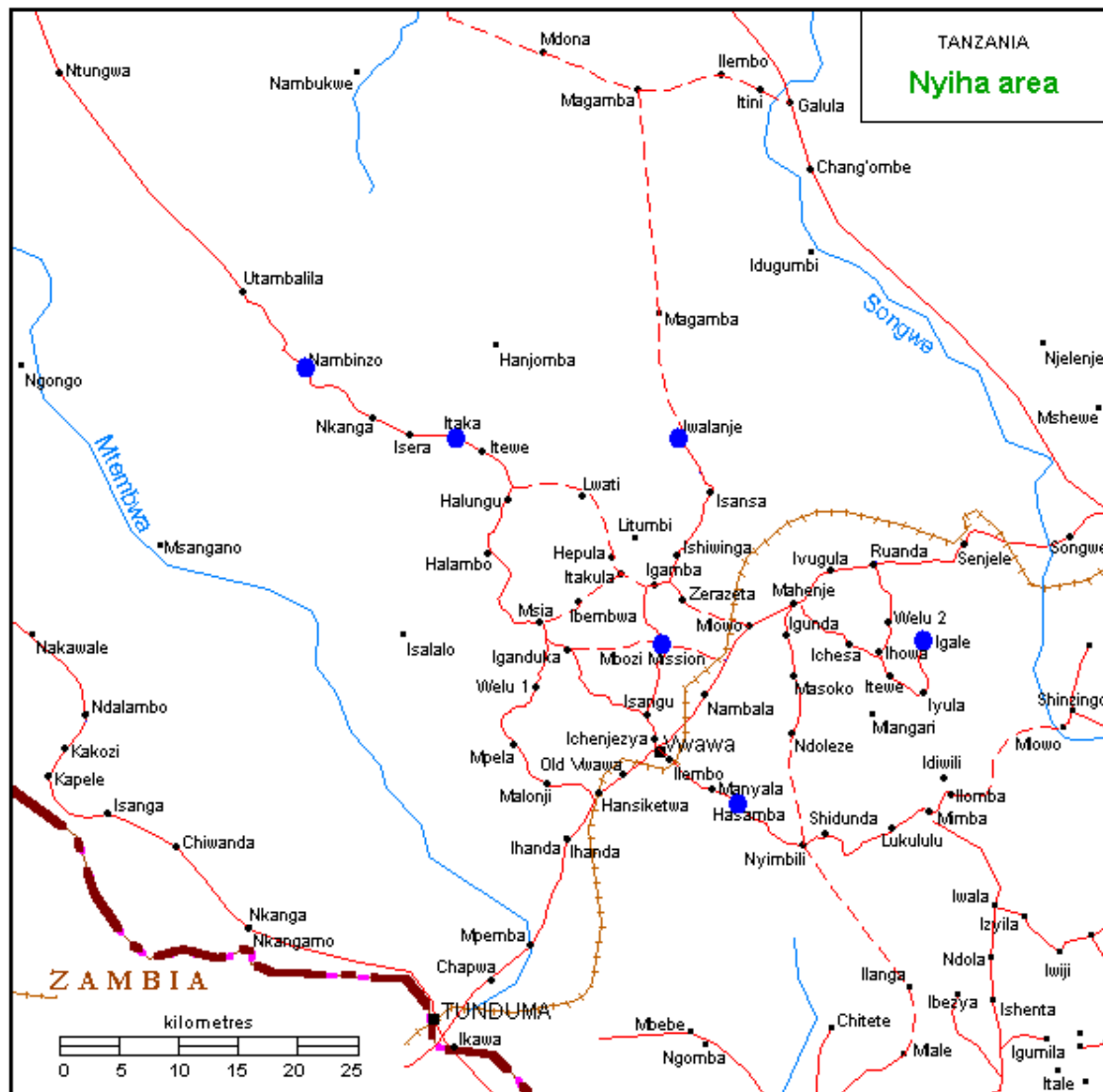
In an effort to ensure that the research locations were representative of the whole area where the investigated variety of Nyiha and Nyika was spoken, the survey team chose research locations in the different areas so as to find villages that did not have a large mixture of ethnic groups. The variant of Nyiha and Nyika spoken in these locations was more likely to be “pure” and not so much influenced by other languages.

In the District of Mbozi (Mbeya Region, Tanzania), six research locations were selected with the help of government officials in the town of Vwawa, and the ward executive officer in the village of Igamba. Below is a list of the research locations chosen in Mbozi District.

- Itaka (Itaka Ward, Igamba Division)
- Nambinzo (Nambinzo Ward, Igamba Division)
- Iwalanje (Isansa Ward, Igamba Division)
- Mbozi Mission (Igamba Ward, Igamba Division)
- Igale (Iyula Ward, Iyula Division)
- Hasamba (Vwawa Ward, Vwawa Division)

An impromptu group interview was also conducted in the village of Halambo (Halungu Ward, Igamba Division).

See Map 1 where these locations have been marked.



Map 1: Research locations in Mbozi District, Tanzania

In order to find information about any Nyiha or Nyika living in Zambia, the government offices in the northern Zambian town of Isoka were visited. It was reported that the Nyika people live close to the Malawi border, and the village of Mulekatembo was suggested as a suitable research location.

Village chosen for research in Zambia:

- Mulekatembo (Isoka District, Northern Province)

See Map 2 where this research location has been marked.



Map 2: Research location in Zambia

During the survey team's stay in the Zambian village of Mulekatembo, they heard reports that there are Nyika speakers in and around the Malawian village of Chisenga. They also heard from people north of Chitipa that there are speakers of a Nyika or Nyiha variety in the far northwest of Malawi, around the village of Kameme. The villages of Chisenga and Kameme were chosen as research locations due to their reported centrality in relation to the respective Nyika and Nyiha speaking areas.

Villages chosen for research in Malawi:

- Chisenga (Chitipa Division, Northern Region)
- Kameme (Chitipa Division, Northern Region)

These research locations have been marked on Map 3.



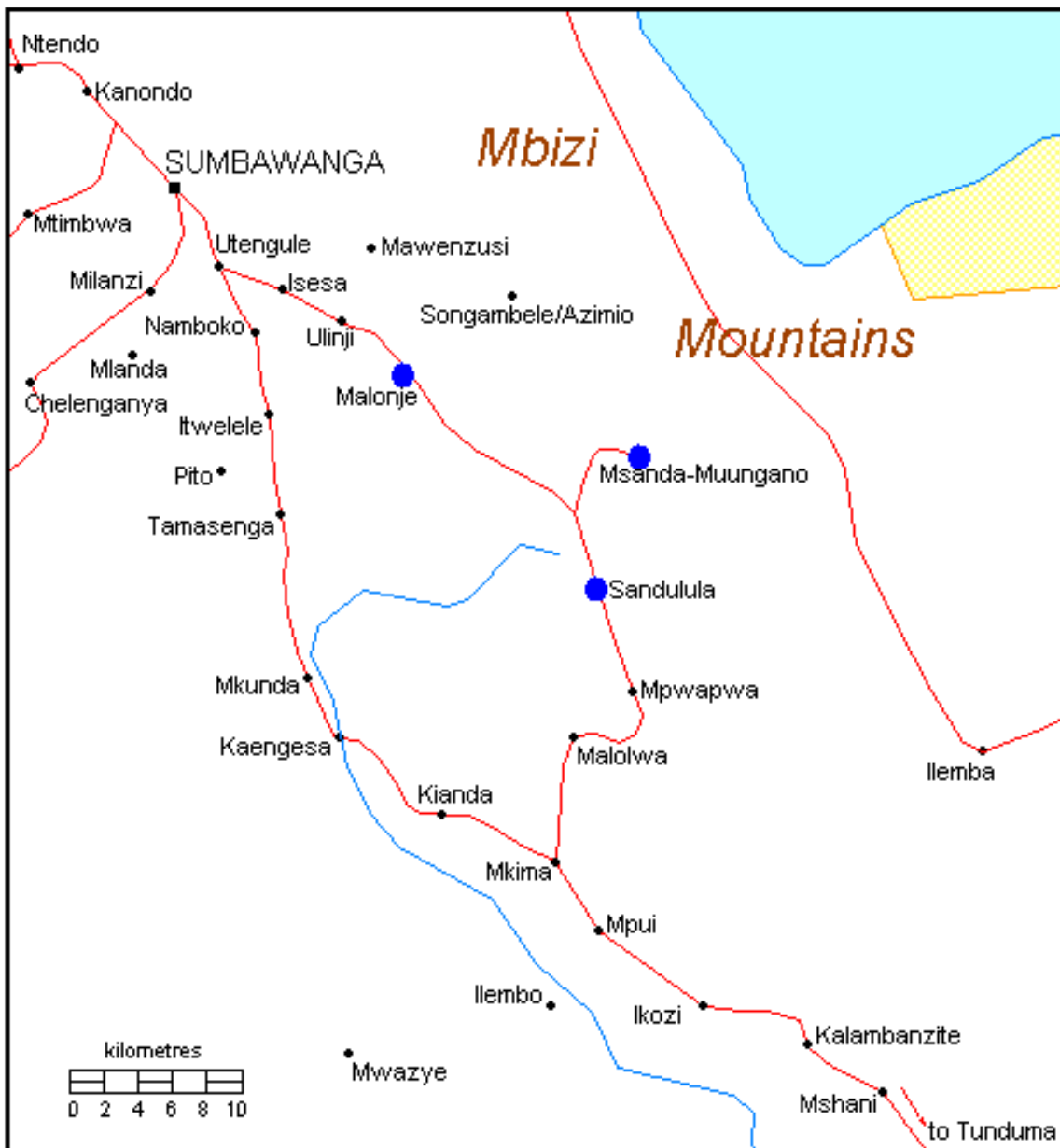
Map 3: Research locations in Malawi

In the town of Sumbawanga, Rukwa Region (Tanzania), it was reported that there are Nyika speakers in the highlands in and around the town of Sandulula. The survey team travelled to Sandulula and there chose three research locations with the help of local government officials. These research locations were chosen because the variety spoken in them was reported to be representative of that spoken in the surrounding area.

Villages chosen for research in Sumbawanga Rural District of Rukwa Region, Tanzania:

- Msanda Muungano (Sandulula Ward, Mpui Division)
- Sandulula (Sandulula Ward, Mpui Division)
- Malonje (Mollo Ward, Itwelele Division)

These research locations have been marked on Map 4.



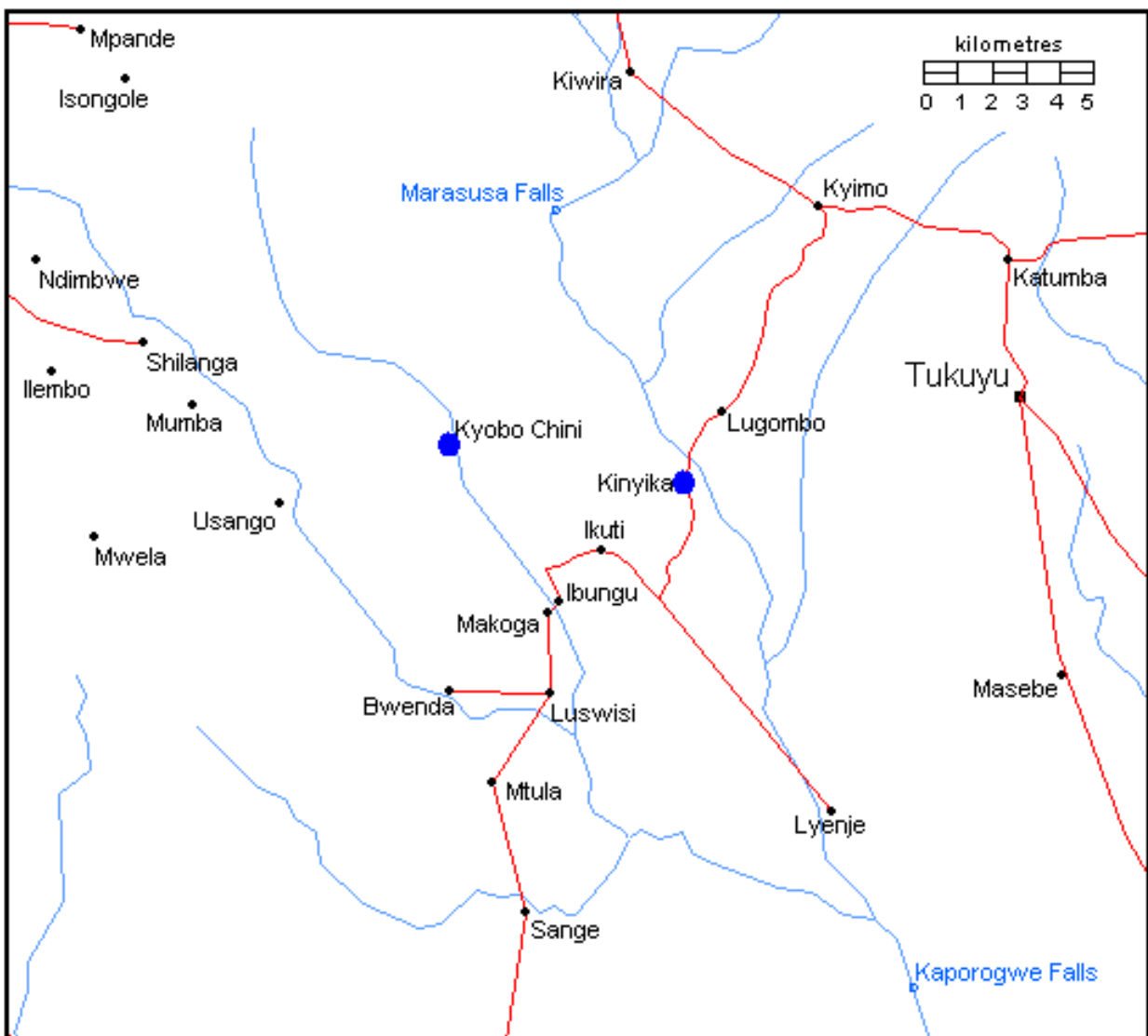
Map 4: Research locations in Sumbawanga Rural District, Rukwa Region, Tanzania

At the Rungwe District offices in the town of Tukuyu, the survey team learned that there are Nyika located in Ikuti Ward. After travelling to the area, two locations were chosen for research. The first was Ikuti village, which is the main village in Ikuti Ward, and the second was the village of Kyobo Chini, which was reported by the people in the village of Ikuti to be the heartland of the Nyika language and people.

Villages chosen for research in Rungwe District of Mbeya Region, Tanzania:

- Kinyika (sub-village of Ikuti Village, Ikuti Ward, Ukukwe Division)
- Kyobo Chini (Ikuti Ward, Ukukwe Division)

These research locations have been marked on Map 5.



Map 5: Research locations in Rungwe District, Mbeya Region, Tanzania

## 4.2 Wordlists

### 4.2.1 Elicitation procedures and data sources

For this study, a total of eleven wordlists were taken, one from each of the six research locations in Mbozi District (Tanzania): one from Mulekatembo (Zambia), one from Kameme (Malawi), one from Chisenga (Malawi), one from Ikuti, (Rungwe District, Tanzania) and one from Msanda Muungano (Sumbawanga Rural District, Tanzania). See section 4.1 for maps where these locations are marked.

In each village the village executive officer or the village chairman/headman was asked for help in selecting four or five men and women between the ages of 30 and 50 to participate in the wordlist elicitation. It was asked that only those people who were born in the village and were good speakers of the local language variety should be chosen as participants. In addition, they should not have lived away from the village for any significant period of time.

In most villages these criteria were met. However, in some villages only men were chosen by the village leadership to participate. Therefore, in the villages of Hasamba, Kameme and Mulekatembo, no women participated. In Chisenga, on the contrary, all the participants were women. In some of the villages there were one or two participants who were over 50 years in age. Only in Kameme and Chisenga were there no participants under the age of 50. In these locations, efforts were made to ask for the forms<sup>9</sup> used by young people today. These older participants were often able to give an old as well as a new form for the same gloss.

The elicitation list used consisted of 241 lexical items and contained a mixture of grammatical categories, including nouns, verbs, adjectives and question words.<sup>10</sup> In Tanzania, elicitation was carried out using the corresponding Swahili word. In Zambia and Malawi, English was used as an elicitation medium. This worked well in Mulekatembo and Kameme, although in Chisenga the elicitation was largely monolingual. Here, the elicitation was aided by actions demonstrating the glosses. This wordlist might be somewhat less reliable than the others.

The forms were first elicited from the wordlist participants and written down in broad phonetic script using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Tone was not noted. The verbs were elicited in both the progressive present as well as in the imperative. For some verbs (for example “know” and “sit”) it was more natural to elicit the perfect form (e.g. Swahili *amekaa* “he has sat down”) of the word. The italic items in the elicitation list are semantically close to the preceding items and have not been counted in the analysis if they are consistently the same as the preceding items in all languages compared (e.g. child/son and moon/month). They did help, however, to narrow down the correct meaning for the other items in regular type.

Where there was disagreement within the group, consensus was sought. Synonyms were noted but not intentionally sought. Sometimes multiple forms were elicited spontaneously either when writing the forms down or later when recording them. If the participants agreed that the meaning was the same for the two forms, then they were counted as synonyms. Finally, all the forms were recorded onto a minidisk to facilitate further analysis.

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<sup>9</sup> In this study, the term “form” denotes a word as elicited in the research locations, whereas “gloss” stands for the meaning in English/Swahili. The gloss and all the forms associated with it are an “item”.

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix B1 for a complete elicitation list.

## 4.2.2 Analysis

The wordlist analysis is a synchronic lexical comparison of the eleven wordlists taken in our research locations.

Whenever multiple forms for one gloss were encountered, both forms were counted in the analysis. There were also a few cases of suspected near synonyms displaying semantic differentiation. For example the Swahili gloss for 'he burns' *anachoma* resulted in two different forms (one probably meaning 'to roast meat' and the other 'to burn' e.g. rubbish), one of which was the same as the form elicited in a previous location. It was not practical to return to the previous location to determine its status there. There were eight items excluded because of this problem. See Appendix B2 for a detailed account of these forms.

There was also one item excluded from the count due to semantic overlapping. The gloss *kwa nini* 'why' was in several of the research locations the same as the gloss *nini* 'what'.

Since this is a synchronic study, loan words in current use remain in the data.

### 4.2.2.1 Probable cognates

Sanders has suggested that "it is phonetic similarity, not genetic inheritance that determines if a cognate word will be understood" (Sanders 1977:12). He therefore suggests using the "inspection method" for analysing wordlists in a synchronic study. He also remarks, that in such a case the term "cognate" should be redefined as "phonetically similar words" (1977:15). In order to avoid confusion, in this study words with the same meaning are called "probable cognates" if they are phonetically similar.

In the count of probable cognates, the old forms elicited were counted as synonyms with the modern forms that were also elicited.

The "inspection method" basically means that lexical items are compared phonetically. If the lexical items compared display the same phonetic sounds in the same location, they are counted as phonetically similar. Depending on the varieties analysed, a number of rules can be set for regular phonetic differences. If for example the phonetic sound x in Variety A generally corresponds to the phonetic sound y (in the same phonetic surroundings) in Variety B, and a regular phonological change from x to y or vice versa is possible or even likely, x and y can be counted as phonetically similar.

The following paragraphs explain the criteria for determining phonetic similarity as used in this study. They also determine some morphological rules that need to be taken into account when comparing items. All examples are taken from the wordlist data.

### **Adjectives**

It is commonly assumed that there are few true adjectives in Bantu languages. Adjectival concepts can be expressed in several other ways. Therefore, the adjectives in the wordlist display more variety than other word classes. For instance, adjectival concepts are often expressed with verbs. Similarly, true adjectives can be verbalized, "to be x" by using the affix [-p-] (Schadeberg 2003:84). See example in Table 1. These forms have been counted as probable cognates.

Table 1: Verbalized adjectives

'bu:mu	dull
icaku'bu:mpa	to be dull

There is a regular Bantu suffix, [-u], which adjectivizes verbs (Labroussi 1998:338), as illustrated in Table 2. Forms that follow this pattern have been counted as probable cognates.

Table 2: Adjectivized verbs

u'kugoma	to be difficult
'iʃigomu	difficult

### **Spirantization**

Spirantization is a phonological process that accounts for the fact that consonants are frequently realised differently before high and non-high vowels (Hyman 2003:53). This process is evident, for example, when the adjectival suffix [-u] is used. Most commonly, stops but also [l] are changed into fricatives, as illustrated in table 3. Whenever two forms reflect this process they have been counted as probable cognates.

Table 3: Spirantization

i'nje:la	narrow
i'nje:nzu	narrow
uku'to:nta	easy
i'ʃitonsu	easy

### **Metathesis**

Metathesis is a process whereby two syllables change place. If the difference between two forms can be attributed to metathesis they have been counted as probable cognates. See table 4.

Table 4: Metathesis

akuso'homola	he coughs
akuho'somola	he coughs
ulu'mili	tongue
ulu'limi	tongue

### **Derivational suffixes**

Verbal derivational suffixes were found in some of the forms. These were identified and only the roots were regarded when counting probable cognates. See table 5 which illustrates the regular verb extensions [-il-] for applicative and [-iz-] for causative (see Schadeberg 2003:73f).

Table 5: Derivational suffixes

aku'ʃu:ʒa	he asks
akuʃuzi'liza	he asks
aku'pu:ta	he blows
akuputi'liza	he blows

### **Extra syllable(s)**

In some cases, two forms differ only by one or two extra syllables of unknown origin, but the root is clearly the same. These forms have been counted as probable cognates. See table 6.

Table 6: Extra syllable(s)

i'papazula	bark
'i:zula	bark
ulu'se:ŋga	sand
uluse'se:ŋga	sand
umusele'se:ŋga	sand
'i:vwe	stone
ija'la:we	stone

Regular sound correspondences that were attested at least three times in the same environment in the data set were counted as same. Tone was not regarded in this comparison as it was not consistently recorded on the word lists.

Some lexical items were counted as probable cognates when the phonetic differences were minor and few but the data did not show a sufficient number of occurrences to prove a regular correspondence. A *minor* phonetic difference is defined as one where the sounds in question only differ in one feature (e.g. place of articulation or manner of articulation but not both). *Few* phonetic differences are defined as not more than two sounds that differ in any given lexical item. Vowel length, prenasalization, labialization and palatalization were considered minor phonetic differences.

Examples for lexical items counted as probable cognates on the grounds of the phonetic differences observed being considered minor and few:

Msanda Muungano:      Kameme:      Mulekatembo:      Chisenga:  
aku'wga:ta<sup>11</sup>      iku'bwa:ta      uku'vwa:ta      iku'vwa:ta

Msaanda Muungano:      lwalanje:  
ulu'go:βe      a'ho:βe

Msaanda Muungano:      All other lists:  
u'mŋa:na      u'mwa:na or u'mwana

In this section, the decision-making process for counting probable cognates has been accounted for. This procedure is intended to facilitate the correct identification of forms that could be recognized by speakers from the different language varieties.

#### 4.2.2.2 Identical forms

A count of forms identical to the Mbozi Nyiha variety was done for the Zambia and Malawi wordlists. This count was done because the Mbozi Nyiha variety was reported by a number of informants in the research area to be the origin of the other varieties and also because it is the variety in which there is language development going on. In this count, stress, tone and length were disregarded, as the wordlist format was thought not to be adequate for comparing these features. During elicitation it was noted that these features sometimes varied from time to time and from speaker to speaker.

<sup>11</sup> It is hard to explain the “wg” sequence in Msanda Muungano without further analysis as this is the only time it appears in the data set.

When identical forms were compared between the six wordlists taken in Mbozi District, Tanzania, all the forms that were considered very likely to be Swahili loanwords were counted as the same as the original Nyiha forms that were encountered in half or more of the research locations. This was done, as it is believed that these Swahili loanwords would be understood throughout the Nyiha speaking area of Tanzania. See Appendix B3 for a list of these loanwords in all of the research locations in Mbozi District.

A wordlist consisting of a combination of all the forms elicited in Mbozi District was used to compare identical forms between the Zambia and Malawi varieties and the Mbozi Nyiha variety.

When the survey team elicited the wordlist in Mulekatembo, the participants were in many instances able to give the old form as well as the form used today by young people. The old forms were not counted as synonyms, as the participants, who were all over 50 years old, thought young people would not understand these forms.

#### 4.2.2.3 Near-identical forms

In order to account for minor pronunciation differences between the variety spoken in Mbozi, Tanzania and the varieties spoken in Zambia and Malawi, a count of near-identical forms was done.

For the purpose of this count, a wordlist that consisted of a combination of all the forms elicited in Mbozi District was used. The old words elicited in Zambia and Malawi were disregarded, as they reportedly would not be used or understood by younger people.

Lexical items which only showed few and minor phonetic differences, even though the data did not give enough evidence for proving a regular sound correspondence, were counted as near-identical forms (see 4.2.2.1 for a definition of minor and few).

Examples for lexical items counted as near-identical forms on the grounds of the phonetic differences observed being considered minor and few:

Combined Mbozi list:	Mulekatembo:	Chisenga:	Kameme:
'i:lomu	'i:lomu	,umu'lomo	'i:lomo
'vwo:nti			'vjo:nti
'injiru			i'fj:ru
a'kwo:ŋka	a'ko:ŋka		a'ko:ŋka
akuga'ruŋkana <sup>12</sup>	aku'garuka		
'i:ziβa	'iziwa		'i:ziβa
aku'fu:na	aku'fju:na	aku'fju:na	aku'fju:na

A count of near-identical forms is not given for the Msanda Muungano wordlist.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The final “-na” in the combined Mbozi list is probably a grammatical suffix and was disregarded.

<sup>13</sup> The percentage of probable cognates for this wordlist compared to all other wordlists was relatively low. Therefore, a count of near-identical or identical forms was not needed for making a decision on language status (see 5.2.2.1.1).

## **4.3 Phraselists**

### **4.3.1 Elicitation procedures and data sources**

In order to compare some grammatical constructions and other features that would not be evident from a wordlist comparison, the survey team translated 65 short Swahili phrases and clauses<sup>14</sup> into the local language variety in the seven Tanzanian research locations. These included the six villages in Mbozi District and the village of Msanda Muungano in Sumbawanga Rural District. These phrases and clauses were meant to investigate noun class agreements, demonstratives, possessives, some verb forms and word order. An attempt was also made to compare tense and aspect morphemes, but due to elicitation difficulties it was decided not to include these clauses in the study.

The elicitation of the phrase lists was conducted in the following way. Village leaders were asked to select four people between the ages of 30 and 50 who had lived in the village most of their lives and whose speech was representative of the language variety of that village. These people were then asked to orally translate the 65 phrases and clauses into the language variety of that village. The translations were transcribed by the researcher and digitally recorded for further analysis.

### **4.3.2 Analysis**

Each phrase and clause elicited was compared with those elicited from the other villages in order to determine whether any difference was revealed between the language varieties of the various locations. In this study only simple qualitative statements are made. The tool is limited in scope and only serves to highlight some possible differences.

## **4.4 Interviews**

### **4.4.1 Government officials**

Government offices at regional and local levels were visited during the course of the research in order to gain permission for the work. In many cases the officials were also interviewed to elicit their opinions on various issues concerning the Nyiha and Nyika communities and their language varieties.

### **4.4.2 Religious leaders**

Whenever possible, church leaders were visited and interviewed. In each location, efforts were made to speak to at least one leader of every Christian denomination present in that village. The leaders were asked questions about a variety of issues, including language use within their church, and the availability and degree of use of the existing Nyiha New Testament.

### **4.4.3 School officials**

In most research locations school officials were sought out to elicit their views concerning the Nyiha and Nyika language varieties, and in particular their view of the language with respect to schools and education in general. In many cases the teachers in the different locations were originally from other areas. This was seen as beneficial since outsiders often have a different perspective on language and language use than that of the speakers themselves.

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<sup>14</sup> See Appendix C for the elicitation list for the phraselists.

#### **4.4.4 Group interviews**

For the purpose of the group interviews, village leaders were asked to assemble a group of at least 20 people, preferably more, of all ages from the particular research location. On one occasion, (in the village of Halambo), the interview was carried out spontaneously without any prior planning, with a group of villagers who were already gathered. In some cases, for example in Halambo and Nambinzo, a large crowd of 80 or more villagers of all ages was assembled, whereas in other locations, such as Igale and Hasamba, the village leaders selected only 10 or 15 people to participate. These tended to be the better-educated members of the community. The groups were asked a variety of questions concerning the language(s) spoken in that particular research location. The answers given were recorded, and general observations such as the reaction of the group to certain questions or answers were noted. Other factors, such as group dynamics, which may have influenced the answers given by the group, were also taken into account.

#### **4.4.5 Informal interviews**

During the course of the research many people were interviewed informally to find out their opinions about language use in the area. These people included government officials, church leaders, knowledgeable elders as well as ordinary citizens in the community.

#### **4.5 Observation**

As the above procedures were conducted, further insight into the various language issues was gained by means of observation. This was particularly pertinent during the group interview, where the reactions of others to the answers of one person were often a good indicator as to whether the majority of those gathered agreed with what was being said or not.

### **5 Results**

In section 0 it was shown that there are five different areas where Nyiha or Nyika speakers are said to be located. In this section, these ethnic groups are first described in more detail; second, the language varieties spoken in each of these five locations are discussed. Next, each language variety is discussed in turn, with reference to various factors which are relevant to any potential language development project.

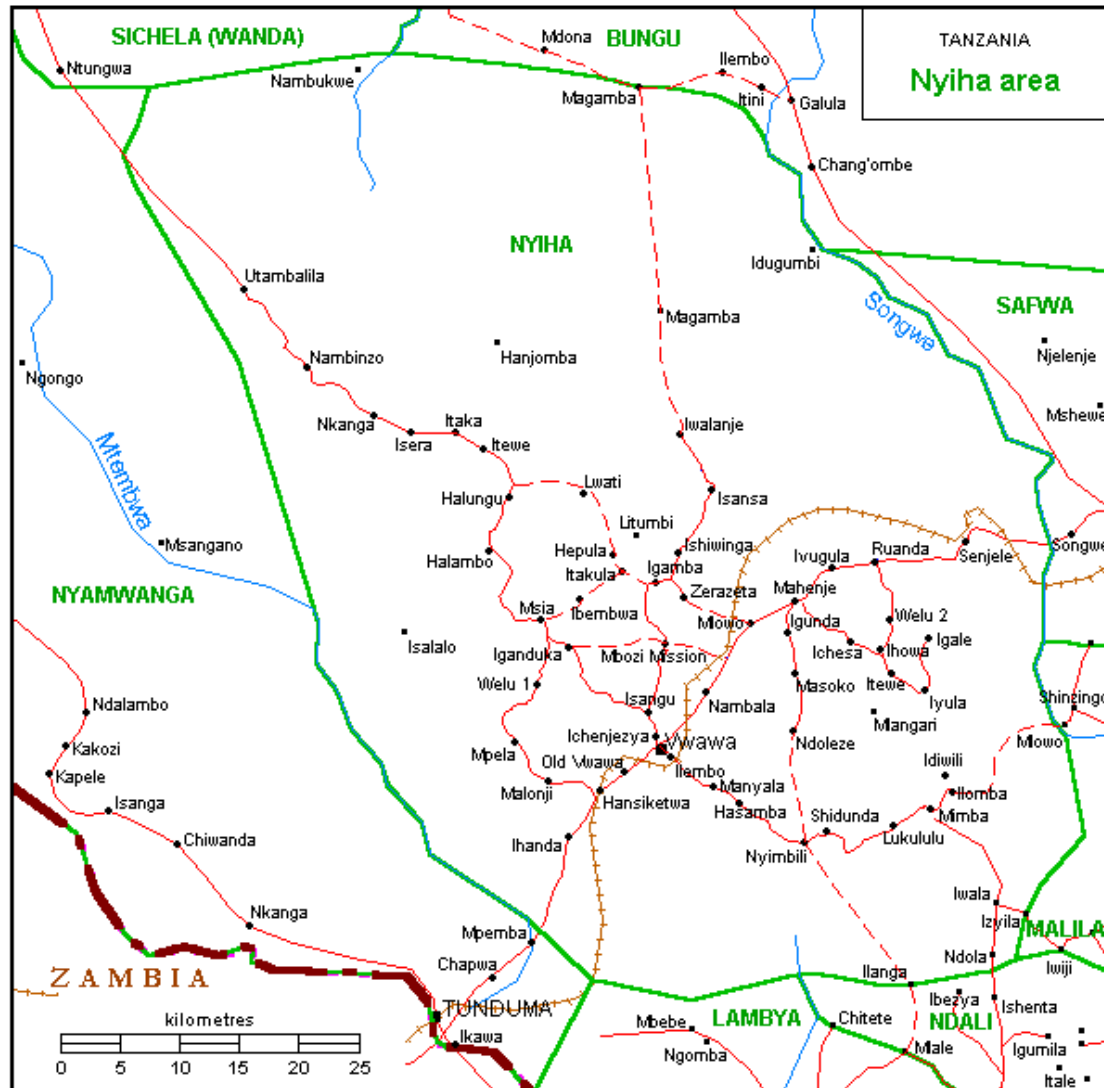
#### **5.1 Ethnic group identification**

This section deals with demographic issues and the ethnolinguistic composition of each of the five ethnic groups investigated. Estimated population figures are given as well as maps of the areas.

##### **5.1.1 Nyiha of Mbozi**

The Nyiha of Mbozi are located in Mbozi District of Mbeya Region, Tanzania. They are mostly in the Divisions of Igamba, Iyula and Vwawa. There are also one or two villages of Nyiha speakers in the far south of Chunya District.

In the group interviews a question was asked as to which ethnic groups bordered the Nyiha on each side, and also the last village in each direction where Nyiha was spoken. The answers were combined with knowledge from previous surveys conducted by SIL (e.g. Anderson 2004) to produce a map (Map 6) of the languages in the area.



Map 6: The Nyiha of Mbozi and the surrounding languages

It was reported many times during the course of the research that people from many other groups are now moving into the traditional Nyiha area. The immigrants are mainly Ndali, Nyakyusa, and Nyamwanga, although people of many other groups are also represented in the area, for example, Kinga, Malila, Fipa, and even Chaga from the north of Tanzania.

According to one of the traditional leaders in the village of Iwalanje, people have only started moving into the Nyiha area fairly recently, because in former times the chiefs would prevent people of other ethnic groups from settling in their area. The chiefs are no longer in authority and the administrative leaders employed by the government no longer enforce this exclusionist policy.

It is very noticeable upon travelling through the Nyiha area that the majority of community leaders – governmental, educational and religious – are not ethnically Nyiha, but from other groups, particularly Ndali. In the village of Hasamba a government official suggested that the Nyiha people as a group have low self-esteem, which is one of the reasons that people from other groups find it easy to move into the area and take up positions of leadership within the community.

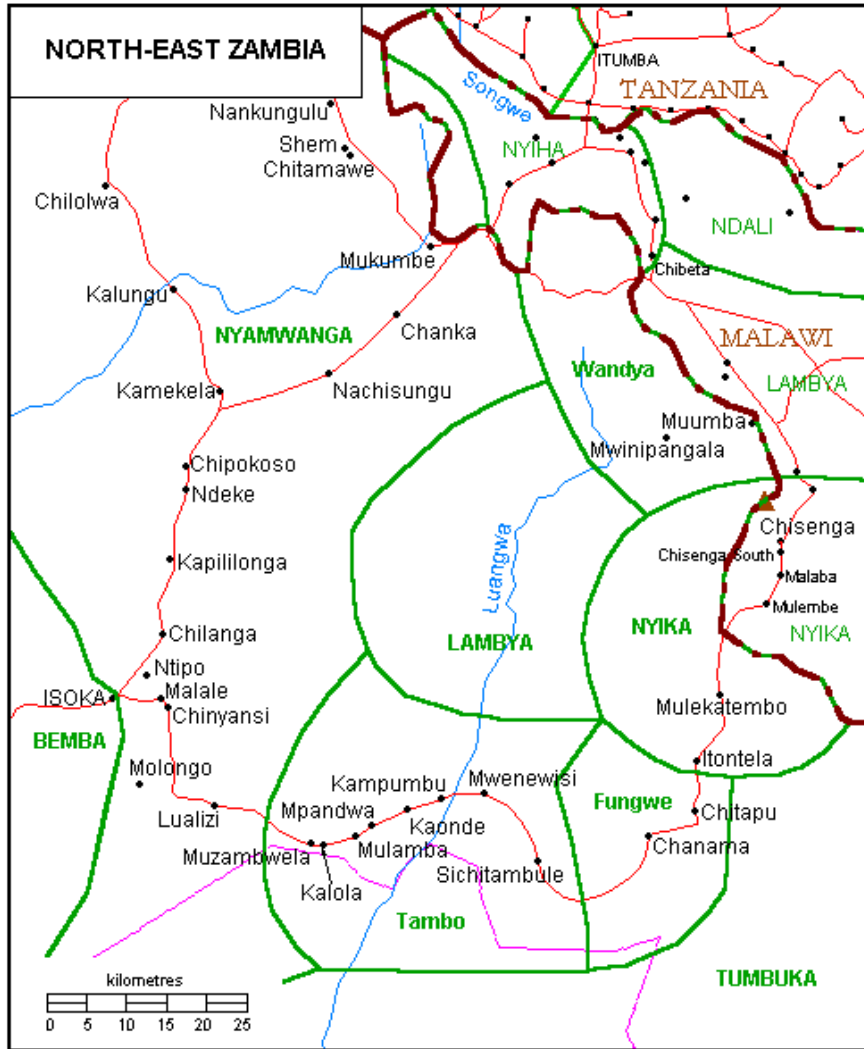
It was often reported that people of other ethnic origins moving to the Nyiha area would learn to speak the Nyiha language. However, the variety of Nyiha they learn to speak is often a reduced form, and influenced by their original language.

It is difficult to know what proportion of people in the Nyiha speaking area are ethnically Nyiha, and what proportion are speaking the Nyiha language. However from talking to many people, including government officers and community leaders, it is estimated that in most villages between 60 and 75% of people are ethnically Nyiha, with between 75 and 100% speaking the Nyiha language to some extent.

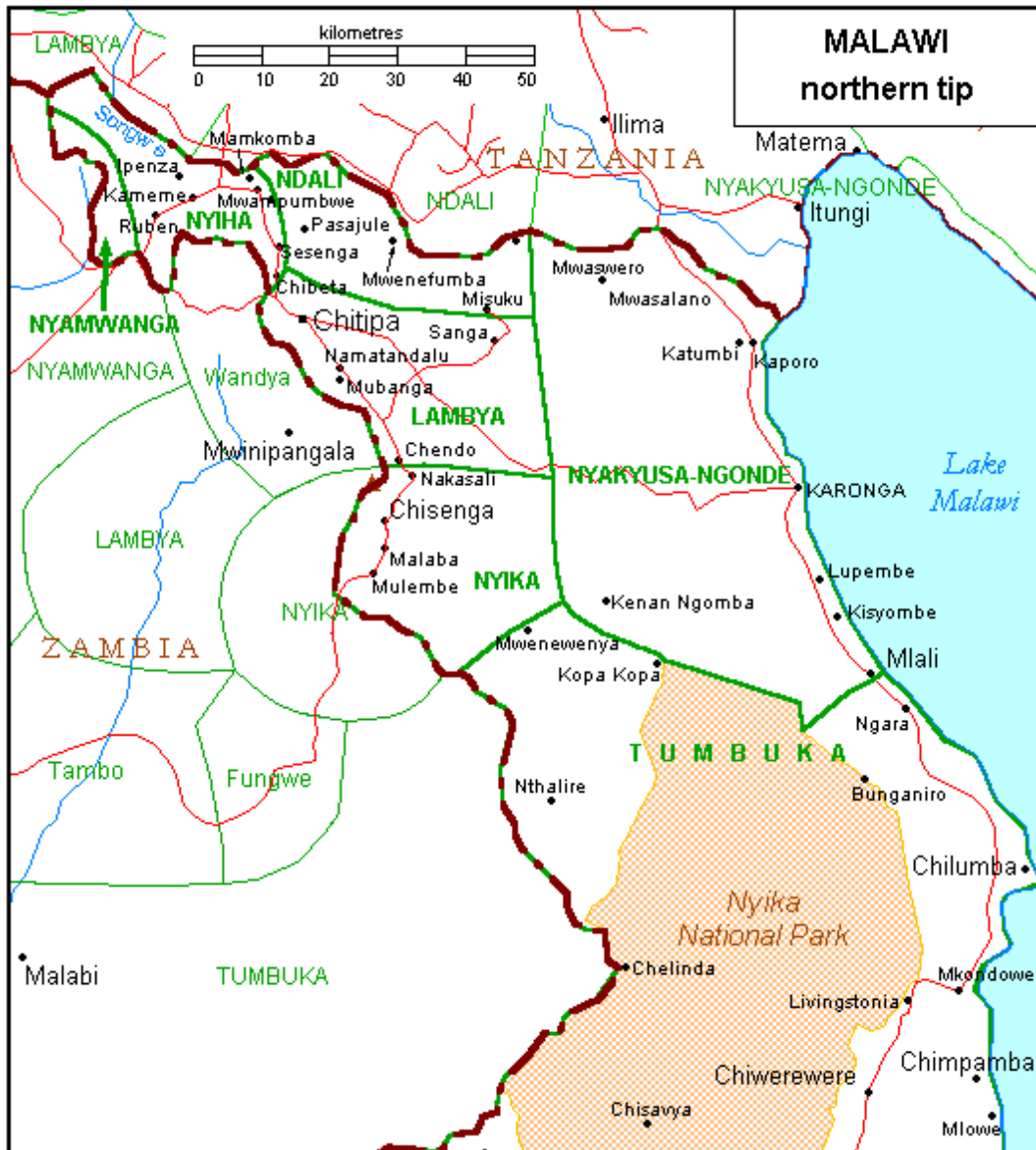
For every ward containing Nyiha people in Mbozi District, the proportion of people speaking the Nyiha language was estimated. From these estimates and the Tanzania Government Census (2002) figures, an estimate of 246,000 was obtained for the total number of Nyiha speakers in the traditional area. This figure therefore does not include speakers who have moved away from the area.

### **5.1.2 Nyika of Zambia and Malawi**

The Nyika of Zambia are located in the far east of Isoka District in Northern Province, Zambia, extending as far as the border with Malawi. In Malawi they are located in Chitipa Division of Northern Region. See Maps 7 and 8.



Map 7: The Nyika of Zambia and Malawi and the surrounding languages (Zambia)



Map 8: The Nyika of Zambia and Malawi and the surrounding languages (Malawi)

In Zambia and Malawi it was not possible to get comprehensive information concerning the ethnic or ethnolinguistic composition in the Nyika speaking areas due to time constraints on the researchers. However, the general impression from talking to people was that the Nyika are a homogenous group, and that there is little mixture of ethnic groups in the traditional Nyika area.

The Zambian Government Census (2000) gave a figure of 99,319 for the population of Isoka District. Judging from the perception of the relative size of the Nyika compared to the other ethnic groups in the District, a very rough estimate can be made of around 5,000 Nyika speakers in Zambia.

The Malawian Government Census (1998) gave a figure of 126,799 for the population of Chitipa District of Northern Region. Judging from the perception of the relative size of the Nyika compared to the other ethnic groups in the District, a very rough estimate can be made of around 5,000 Nyika speakers in Malawi.

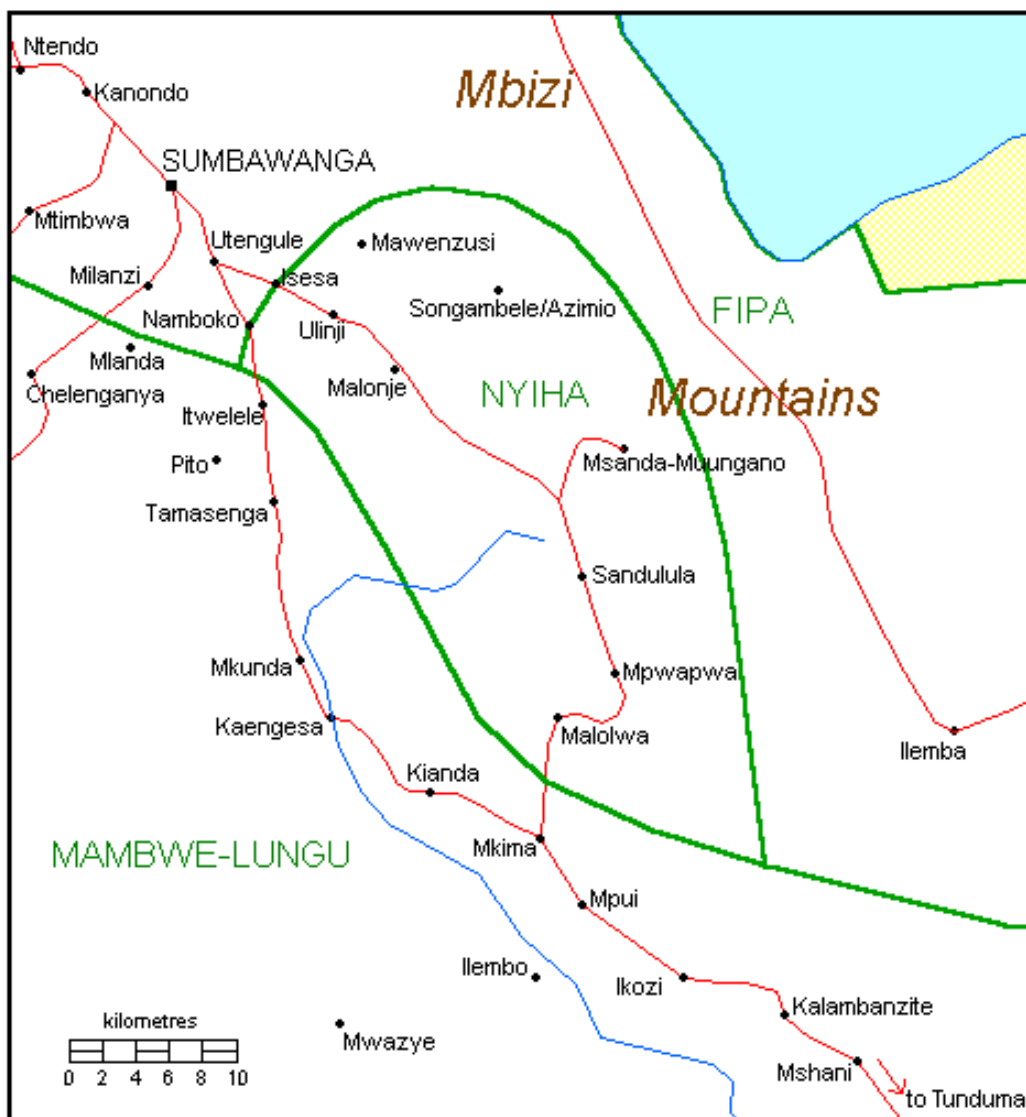
### 5.1.3 Nyiha of Malawi

The Nyiha of Malawi are situated in Chitipa Division of Northern Region, in the far northwest of the country as shown in Map 8. In this area it was not possible to get comprehensive information about the ethnic composition of the villages due to time constraints on the researchers.

In the village of Kameme in northwest Malawi, population figures were given for the Nyiha speaking villages. It was reported by one of the village leaders there that Nyiha is spoken in around 39 villages, and by an average of 75% of the people in each village. This led to an estimate of 10,000 for the number of Nyiha speakers in northern Malawi.

### 5.1.4 Nyiha of Sumbawanga

The Nyiha of Sumbawanga are located in Sumbawanga Rural District of Rukwa Region in Tanzania. They are mainly in Sandulula Ward, with a few speakers also in Mollo Ward. See Map 9.



Map 9: The Nyiha of Sumbawanga and the surrounding languages

The Nyiha of Sumbawanga are commonly referred to in Swahili as *Wanyika wa Sumbawanga* (Nyika of Sumbawanga). However, in their own language the people call themselves *aβanjiha*. Therefore it was decided to refer to this group as “Nyiha” in English.

It was noticeable on visiting the Nyiha of Sumbawanga that there is very little mixture of ethnic groups in the traditional Nyiha speaking area. For example, in the village of Msanda Muungano it was reported that there were a total of 546 children attending the village primary school, 540 of whom were ethnically Nyiha and speaking the Nyiha language. The other six were reported to be children of teachers at the school who had moved in from outside the area.

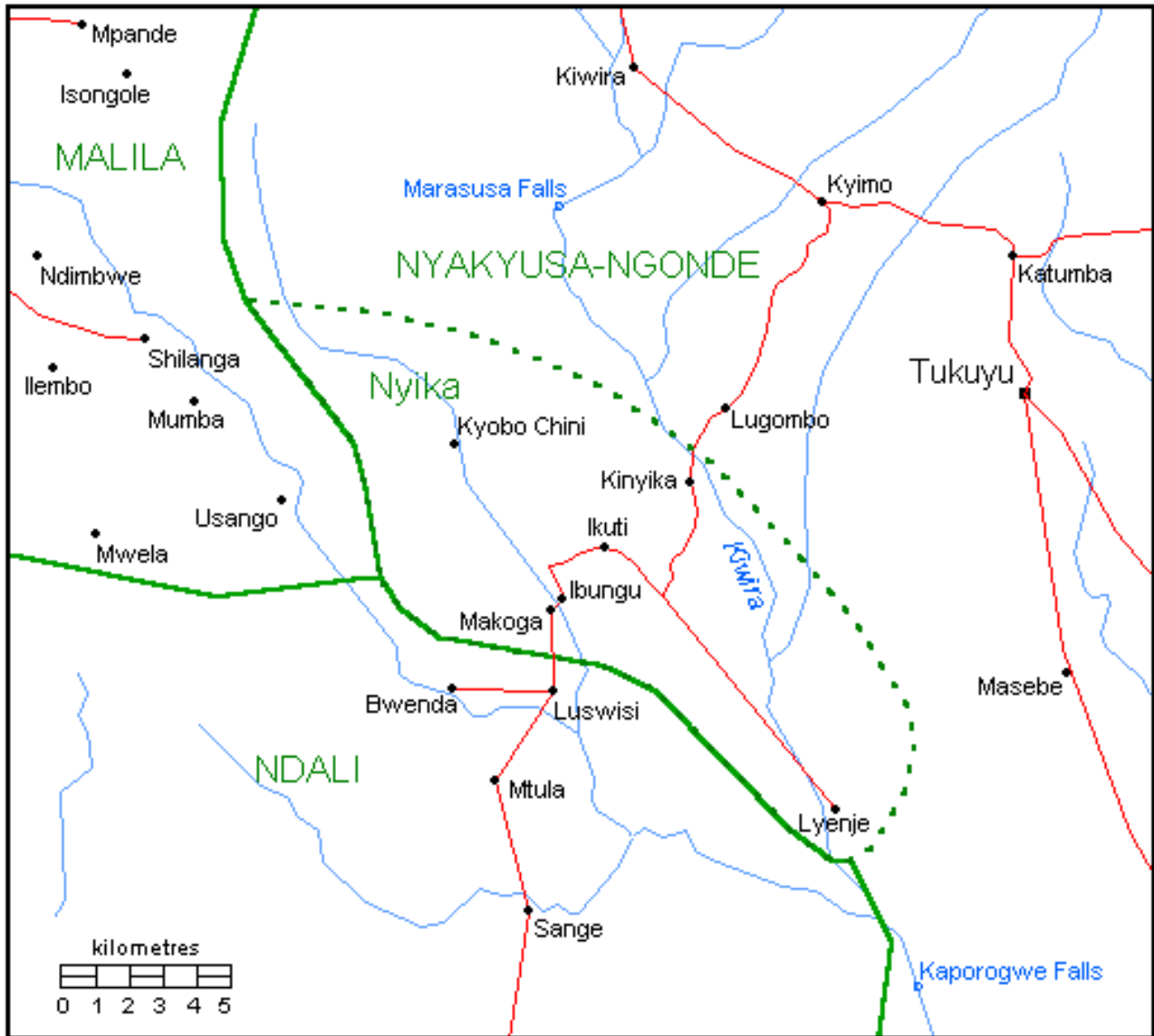
As part of the group interview, the participants were asked what ethnic groups are represented in their village. In each village the reply was overwhelmingly Nyiha, with the people in Sandulula not mentioning any other groups. In Msanda Muungano the interviewees said there are a few teachers at the school who are Nyakyusa (it was later found upon interviewing one of the teachers that there are in fact four Nyakyusa teachers and two Fipa) but other than these teachers and their families the whole village is ethnically Nyiha. In the village of Malonje the group interview participants reported there are one or two Fipa living in their village, and one teacher who is Pimbwe. Apart from these they said the whole village is ethnically Nyiha.

The village chairman in the village of Sandulula reported that around 95% of the people in Sandulula Ward speak the Nyiha language. In addition it was reported that there are Nyiha speakers in Mollo Ward. Using the Tanzania Government Census (2002) and the estimates of the percentage of Nyiha speakers in each ward, an estimate of 25,000 Nyiha speakers in these two wards was obtained.

#### **5.1.5 Nyika of Rungwe**

On arrival in the sub-village of Kinyika, in the village of Ikuti, (Ikuti Ward, Rungwe District, Tanzania) the researchers spoke with a group of around 15 villagers. When asked about the Nyika people, the villagers at first denied all knowledge of any group of Nyika or Nyiha, apart from the Nyiha of Mbozi District. However, after discussing the topic for a while, one of the group acknowledged that the people of that village and a few surrounding villages were often referred to as Nyika, at which point the entire group reluctantly acknowledged that this was in fact true.

According to the people in the sub-village of Kinyika, the Nyika people live in the villages of Ikuti, Kyobo Chini, Kyobo Juu and Ibungu. It was later reported in the group interview that there are Nyika people in the village of Lyenje. These villages are all located in Ikuti Ward, Ukukwe Division, Rungwe District, Mbeya Region. See Map 10.



Map 10: The Nyika of Rungwe and the surrounding languages

The Nyika were and sometimes still are known and feared by neighbouring groups for their harmful traditional practices. The residents of Kinyika reported that in the 1970s there were indeed many Nyika people who were involved in objectionable traditional religious practices, but that many of these people were forcibly removed by the government and sent to other areas, many to Morogoro. They said that the Nyika were a distinct ethnic group in those days, and that they still are today. However, their reluctance at first to admit to being Nyika, or even that they had ever heard of Nyika people in the area, suggests that their ethnic identity is now weak. This was confirmed by an elderly man and several youths who said that they introduce themselves as Nyakyusa when they go to town. In Kinyika, the village of Kyobo Chini was named as the heartland of the Nyika.

A group of around 20 middle-aged men were interviewed in the village of Kyobo Chini. They denied all knowledge of any Nyika people or Nyika language in their area. However, they did acknowledge that the area where they live is sometimes referred to as *Unyika*, meaning “the land of the Nyika”, but insisted that there is no Nyika ethnic group or Nyika language. They claimed that they themselves are Nyakyusa and that they speak the Nyakyusa language.

It appears that in the past there may have been a Nyika ethnic group who perhaps spoke a distinct Nyika language, but that now these people consider themselves to be Nyakyusa speaking the Nyakyusa language. One possible reason for this shift in language and ethnic identity is that the Nyika identity was often associated with a specific form of traditional religion from which many of the people wish to disassociate themselves.

## **5.2 Language and dialect identification**

In this section, we discuss both perceived and actual differences between the language varieties spoken by the five ethnic groups identified in section 5.1. First, we present perceived differences between the variants and suggest a potential reference dialect for each variety. Secondly, the results of the wordlists and the phraselists are given.

### **5.2.1 Perceived differences between the varieties of Nyiha and Nyika spoken in the various locations**

#### **5.2.1.1 Nyiha of Mbozi**

For the purpose of investigating possible dialectal differences within Mbozi District, the group interview participants in each of the six research locations were asked if there were names for different ways of speaking the Nyiha language, or varieties of it. The same questions were also asked in the village of Halambo, which was not selected as a research location, but was the location of an impromptu group interview.

In several places, it was reported that the *a'βanjiha* are distinguished from the *aβa'zosja*. The interviewees in Itaka, Igale and Hasamba mentioned that there was a name *aβa'zosja*, used to describe people who speak the Nyiha language in a certain way. It was reported that the pronunciation of the *aβa'zosja* is drawn out (they *vuta*), as opposed to the *a'βanjiha* whose pronunciation is clipped (they *kata*). In Nambinzo and Iwalanje, the people acknowledged the term *aβa'zosja* after being prompted. This name had also been mentioned by the ward executive officer in the village of Igamba. It was generally agreed that *i'zosja* (the name given to the place where the *aβa'zosja* live) is somewhere around the wards of Itaka and Nambinzo, although the southeast extent of this area differed according to who was asked. When talking to people the impression was given that *aβa'zosja* is not a prestigious name, evidenced by the fact that people would often report that the *aβa'zosja* start in the next village to the west of them, but they themselves are not *aβa'zosja*.

The name *aβa'doja* was mentioned in Hasamba to describe the Nyiha speaking people around the village of Ruanda. This name had also been mentioned by the village chairman of Mbozi Mission, who reported that the name is derogatory, although an elderly pastor from that area did not regard it as such. In general it seemed that this name is much less commonly used or known (or at least people were much less willing to mention it) than the name *aβa'zosja*.

It should be mentioned that in almost every research location within Mbozi District, when people mentioned these names for varieties of Nyiha, they were very quick to follow this with "...but we are all Nyiha". They were very insistent that even though names exist for various ways of speaking Nyiha, the people are all Nyiha and all speak the same Nyiha language.

As part of the group interview, participants were asked about possible different varieties of Nyiha. They were asked if all Nyiha speak exactly the same as they do, and if it is possible to tell where a person comes from by listening to how he speaks the Nyiha language. They were then asked in which villages the Nyiha used is exactly the same as theirs, in which it is slightly different, and in which villages it is very different to their own variety.

Without exception the participants answered that there are differences in the way people speak Nyiha, depending on where the people come from. In every research location the people also said that it is indeed possible to know where a person comes from by hearing how he speaks the Nyiha language. Tables 9 to 15 give a summary of the responses to the question as to the Nyiha spoken in other places and the perceived differences.

*Table 9: Perceived differences between their own variety and the variety spoken in other areas, according to the people of Halambo village*

No difference	Small differences	Many differences
Halungu Hampangala Itaka Nambinzo	Mpela Igamba Isansa	Malonji Mpela Isansa Iyula

*Table 10: Perceived differences between their own variety and the variety spoken in other areas, according to the people of Itaka village*

No difference	Small differences	Many differences
Itaka Ward	Igamba Masoko Ruanda Isansa Isalalo	Nyimbili (According to the people in Itaka, they speak Malila) Hezya Iyula

*Table 11: Perceived differences between their own variety and the variety spoken in other areas, according to the people of Nambinzo village*

No difference	Small differences	Many differences
Nambinzo Ward Itaka Ward Halungu Ward	Igamba Isansa Iyula	none

*Table 12: Perceived differences between their own variety and the variety spoken in other places, according to the people of Iwalanje village*

No difference	Small differences	Many differences
Isansa Ward Vwawa Ward Ruanda Ward	Utambalila Hampangala Itaka Nambinzo Iyula	none

*Table 13: Perceived differences between their own variety and the variety spoken in other areas, according to the people of Mbozi Mission village*

No difference	Small differences	Many differences
Igamba Msia Vwawa Halungu	Itaka Iyula Mlowo Ruanda Isansa Isandula Ihanda Nyimbili	none

*Table 14: Perceived differences between their own variety and the variety spoken in other areas, according to the people of Igale village*

No difference	Small differences	Many differences
Isansa Mlowo Mbozi Mission Vwawa Mlangari Isandula	Itaka Msia Igamba Nambinzo Ilembo Nyimbili	none

*Table 15: Perceived differences between their own variety and the variety spoken in other areas, according to the people of Hasamba village*

No difference	Small differences	Many differences
Isansa Mbozi Mission	Ruanda Iyula Hezya Ihanda	none

It was clear from informally talking to people that the perception is of complete comprehension between the varieties. People were always quick to report that all the Nyiha speak the same language, the implication being that they can all understand each other, despite the reported differences in words and pronunciation.

As part of the group interviews in Mbozi District, participants were asked where a person should go if he wanted to learn good and pure Nyiha. The aim of this question was to see, in the opinions of the people, where the best Nyiha was spoken that could be used as a reference dialect for written material.

In every research location except Halambo, people mentioned Igamba Ward as being a place where good Nyiha is spoken. In Halambo the interviewees mentioned Msia Ward, which borders Igamba. The village of Mbozi Mission, which is also in Igamba Ward, was specifically mentioned in the villages of Nambinzo, Iwalanje and Mbozi Mission itself, as being a good place to learn pure Nyiha. This could be partly because it is historically significant, being the place where the first missionaries to the Nyiha settled at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and then where the first Nyiha books were written.

In many of the research locations, it was often reported that there is a big mixture of different ethnic groups in the Nyiha area, even in the traditional heartland around the village of Mbozi Mission and Igamba Ward. It was stressed in several locations, that while Igamba Ward is probably where the best Nyiha is spoken, even there it is being influenced by the mix of other languages spoken in the area. According to the people of Mbozi Mission, there is nowhere in the Nyiha area nowadays where there is not a mix of ethnic groups and languages. The village of

Mbozi Mission itself has a high concentration of outsiders as a result of a big hospital being there. Therefore, Swahili is also used to a great extent in that village.

In conclusion, it is proposed that the reference dialect be a variety spoken in Igamba Ward, specifically in and around the village of Mbozi Mission.

### **5.2.1.2 Nyika of Zambia and Malawi**

In the group interview in the village of Mulekatembo (Isoka District, Northern Province, Zambia), people were asked questions concerning the Nyiha spoken in Mbozi. Ten people claimed to have visited the Nyiha area in Tanzania, and all said they had spoken their own Nyika language with the Nyiha there. They reported that the Nyiha of Mbozi is good Nyiha, but that it is “deep”.<sup>15</sup> They claimed that they could understand each other, but that their own Nyika is “lighter”.<sup>16</sup>

In the village of Chisenga (Chitipa Division, Northern Region, Malawi), the group village headman was interviewed about the language situation. He reported, “The Nyika of Zambia and Malawi and the Nyika [Nyiha] of Tanzania all understand each other, but the Tanzanian one is deeper.” He went on to say that the pronunciation is different between his variety and the one spoken in Mbozi, giving the example of [ʃ] in Mbozi Nyiha compared with [ç] in the Zambia and Malawi version. As the conversation progressed it emerged that the group village headman had himself been to the town of Tunduma (the border crossing from Zambia to Tanzania) and spoken with Nyiha people there. He reported that he could “hear”<sup>17</sup> their Nyiha a little bit”, but that it was hard to understand.

The chief in the village of Mulekatembo asserted that the Nyika in Malawi speak the same language as his people in Zambia, adding that there is no difference in the language they speak. In the group interview in Mulekatembo, the people reported that they speak the Nyika language with Nyika people from Malawi (for example, from Chisenga), adding that the Nyika of Malawi can understand them more easily than they can understand the language spoken in Malawi. The group village headman in the Malawian village of Chisenga also reported that the Nyika spoken in Malawi and Zambia is the same language as that spoken in his village.

Concerning the Nyiha of Kameme, the village headman in Mulekatembo reported, “In Kameme they speak very good Nyika but it’s mixed with Lambya. It’s almost the same as here, but they try to make it deeper.”

In the group interview in Mulekatembo, Zambia, the people reported that the Nyika of Malawi understood the Zambian variety more easily than the Zambians understood the Malawian variety. Unfortunately there was no chance to conduct a group interview in Malawi to investigate the opinions of the Malawian Nyika, although the group village headman of Chisenga reported that the Nyika of Zambia was exactly the same as that of Malawi.

These opinions suggest that the Zambian variety should be taken as a reference dialect for any language development program, but further investigation should be carried out to verify this.

### **5.2.1.3 Nyiha of Malawi**

The Nyiha people in the village of Kameme (Chitipa Division, Northern Region, Malawi) in general said they perceived that there are only small differences between the language they speak and that spoken in Mbozi. A village elder, a retired postman and the group village headman in Kameme reported, “There is a small difference between [the language of] here and Mbozi...” They went on to say, “People would understand the Tanzanian Nyiha Bible very much... they

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<sup>15</sup> Understood to mean “difficult”.

<sup>16</sup> Understood to mean “easier to understand”.

<sup>17</sup> Understood to mean “understand”.

would use the Tanzanian Nyiha Bible with no problem.” However, it should be noted that most of the people spoken to in Kameme had never visited Mbozi, and their impression of Mbozi Nyiha was probably based mainly on the Nyiha New Testament published in 1965 but translated in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

During an informal interview, several of the Nyiha speakers in Kameme were shown a short story booklet, recently produced in the town of Mbeya, Tanzania in the Mbozi variety of Nyiha. They pointed out a number of alterations that would have to be made in order to adapt the booklet to their own language variety.

One pastor reported that he had been to Mbozi to preach. He said that he used his own Nyiha language while he was there, but that the Nyiha in Tanzania are “killing Nyiha with Kiswahili”. He also expressed concerns that the new Nyiha translation will be mixed with Swahili.

In conclusion, the Nyiha language variety spoken in Mbozi is perceived by the Nyiha of Kameme to be similar to their language. However, the reality could well be that the influence of Swahili and other neighbouring languages on both varieties of Nyiha has meant that the modern day version of the Nyiha of Mbozi is significantly different from that known by the Nyiha of Kameme.

When asked about the language spoken to the south of them in Chisenga (referred in this report as Nyika of Zambia and Malawi) the village elder, the retired postman and the group village headman in Kameme reported, “The Nyiha of Chisenga and Nyiha of Kameme are a bit different – quite different. The Nyiha of Chisenga is mixed with Tumbuka and Lambya.”

The Nyiha of Malawi is only spoken in a few villages in the far northwest of Malawi. Due to the limited time spent in the area it was not possible to find out if there are significant dialectal differences within this language variety. However, it is unlikely that there are significant differences due to the relatively small number of contiguous villages in which this variety is spoken.

#### **5.2.1.4 Nyiha of Sumbawanga**

As part of the group interview, the Nyiha of Sumbawanga (Sumbawanga Rural District, Rukwa Region, Tanzania), were asked about their relationship with the Nyiha of Mbozi, and in particular the relationship between the languages spoken.

In the three locations opinions were split as to whether the languages are similar or not, which is probably due in part to the ambiguity of the concept “similar”. In Sandulula and Msanda Muungano, the participants were asked what the differences are between the languages, and in both places they reported that the differences are both pronunciation and words. In both places they also reported that if they were to meet a Nyiha person from Mbozi they would speak Swahili with them. In all three research locations it was reported that a six year old child would not be able to understand the language of Mbozi.

As part of the village leader interviews, a question was asked as to whether there were any dialects of the Nyiha language. The village executive officer of Msanda Muungano and the village chairman of Malonje both reported that there are no dialects within the Nyiha language. However, the village chairman in the village of Sandulula reported that there are actually three different types of Nyiha. He gave a list of the villages in which, in his opinion, the three different types of Nyiha were spoken (some of these villages are marked on Map 9):

1. Mawenzusi, Mollo, Kinamlanga, Mponda, Ulinji, Isesa, Malonje
2. Senga, Wipanga, Kankwale, Kanondo
3. Makuzani, Sandulula, Mumba, Jangwani, Mpwapwa, Msanda Muungano, Malolwa

In the group interview, when asked about the best place for a person to go to learn Nyiha, the people of Sandulula said he should go to their village, Jangwani or Mpwapwa, because these villages are the heartland of the Nyiha language. The people of Msanda Muungano said that their village would be the best, because there was very little influence from people speaking other languages. On the other hand, the people of Malonje said that a person should learn Nyiha in their village or in the village of Ulinji. When asked where they considered the heartland of the Nyiha language to be, the people of Malonje replied that it is in Mbeya Region, presumably referring to the Nyiha of Mbozi.

When asked where bad Nyiha is spoken, the people of Sandulula mentioned the villages of Mponda and Wipanga in their replies. Those in Msanda Muungano said Mawenzusi and Wipanga, whereas those in the village of Malonje listed Sandulula, Mumba and Malolwa. However, it is perhaps significant that many of the group in Malonje laughed when they listed the Nyiha of Sandulula, Mumba and Malolwa as being bad Nyiha. This possibly indicates that the researchers did not fully understand the true meaning of their answers.

At this point it is not clear how significant the differences between the three mentioned dialects of Nyiha are. More investigation is needed to determine these differences and the best reference dialect for any language development project amongst the Nyiha of Sumbawanga. However, the geographical and political centrality of the village of Sandulula, together with the fact that many people seem to consider the area around Sandulula as being the heartland of the Nyiha language, suggest that this may be a good choice for a reference dialect for the Nyiha language.

#### **5.2.1.5 Nyika of Rungwe**

The interviewees in the sub-village of Kinyika (Ikuti Ward, Rungwe District, Mbeya Region, Tanzania) reported that they speak the Nyika language, the heartland of which is the villages of Kyobo Chini and Kyobo Juu. The opinion of the people in this village was that the Nyika language is between the Nyakyusa and Ndali languages. When asked if they would prefer to read the Bible in Nyakyusa or Ndali, the people replied that a Nyakyusa Bible would be easier to read. However, they reported that they find the current Nyakyusa Bible more difficult to read than the Nyakyusa people of Tukuyu do.

The group of around 20 people who were interviewed in the village of Kyobo Chini, which was said by the residents of Kinyika sub-village to be the heartland of the Nyika people, completely denied the existence of a Nyika language in the area (see 0). They claimed that they are Nyakyusa and that they speak the Nyakyusa language, albeit a version slightly influenced by the Ndali language.

### **5.2.2 Actual lexical and grammatical similarity between the varieties of Nyiha and Nyika spoken in the research locations**

#### **5.2.2.1 Wordlist comparison**

In this section, we present the results of the analyses of the eleven wordlists<sup>18</sup> taken in the research locations.

The first section deals with the percentage of probable cognates between the ten wordlists taken in varieties of Nyiha and Nyika. As discussed in 5.2.1.5, the Nyika of Rungwe do not consider themselves to speak a variety of Nyiha or Nyika. The comparison of the wordlist taken in Ikuti with the other Nyiha and Nyika wordlists confirms this analysis. Therefore, the wordlist from Ikuti is dealt with separately in this section.

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<sup>18</sup> For all eleven wordlists see Appendix B4.

The second section deals with the relationships between the six wordlists taken in Mbozi District, Tanzania. Here, a count of identical forms is given. It will be suggested that these wordlists represent the Nyiha of Mbozi language with minor dialectal differences between them. These differences will be commented upon briefly.

The third section compares and discusses the wordlists taken in the three locations in Zambia and Malawi. Here a count of forms identical and near-identical to the Mbozi variety is given and a few phonological differences between the wordlists in the research locations are discussed in order to partly account for the classification of these variants.

The fourth section discusses the wordlist taken in the village of Sandulula in Sumbawanga Rural District (Tanzania). Some phonological features as well as some loanwords in this wordlist are presented here.

In the final section, the wordlist taken in the village of Ikuti, Rungwe District (Tanzania) is presented. It will be suggested that this wordlist reflects a variant of the Nyakyusa language.

#### 5.2.2.1.1 Probable cognates between all ten Nyiha and Nyika wordlists

In this section, a presentation of the probable cognates of all ten Nyiha and Nyika wordlists from Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi is given. As can be seen from table 16, each of the wordlists from Mulekatembo (Zambia) and Kameme (Malawi) shares around 80-85% probable cognates with the Mbozi varieties. For Chisenga (Malawi), the percentage is about 10% lower. It should be noted however, that the reliability of this wordlist was lower than the other wordlists (see 4.1.1). The wordlist taken in Msanda Muungano (Sumbawanga Rural District, Tanzania) shares the lowest percentage of probable cognates, about 60%.

Table 16: Probable cognates between Nyiha and Nyika wordlists

	Ha	Ig	It	Iw	Na	Mb	Ka	Mu	Chi	Ms
Hasamba, Mbozi	100%	95%	96%	95%	96%	98%	84%	84%	70%	61%
Igale, Mbozi	95%	100%	96%	94%	94%	96%	83%	83%	69%	60%
Itaka, Mbozi	96%	96%	100%	95%	97%	99%	83%	84%	71%	61%
Iwalanje, Mbozi	95%	94%	95%	100%	96%	97%	81%	81%	68%	61%
Nambinzo, Mbozi	96%	94%	97%	96%	100%	98%	83%	83%	70%	62%
Mbozi Mission, Mbozi	98%	96%	99%	97%	98%	100%	85%	84%	70%	62%
Kameme, Malawi	84%	83%	83%	81%	83%	85%	100%	89%	79%	61%
Mulekatembo, Zambia	84%	83%	84%	81%	83%	84%	89%	100%	84%	62%
Chisenga, Malawi	70%	69%	71%	68%	70%	70%	79%	84%	100%	57%
Msanda Muungano	61%	60%	61%	61%	62%	62%	61%	62%	57%	100%

### 5.2.2.1.2 The wordlists from Mbozi District, Tanzania

As can be seen from table 16, the Mbozi (Mb) wordlists show a percentage of probable cognates that ranges from 94% to 99%. The percentages of identical forms for the six wordlists elicited in Mbozi, Tanzania are presented in table 17. This table shows a percentage of identical forms that range from 89% to 96%.

Table 17: Mbozi Nyiha identical forms

	Mbozi Mission	Itaka	Nambinzo	Hasamba	Igale	Iwanjanje
Mbozi Mission	100%	95%	96%	93%	91%	92%
Itaka	95%	100%	95%	93%	92%	92%
Nambinzo	96%	95%	100%	91%	89%	91%
Hasamba	93%	93%	91%	100%	91%	90%
Igale	91%	92%	89%	91%	100%	92%
Iwanjanje	92%	92%	91%	90%	92%	100%

A few possible influences from neighbouring languages are noted in the wordlists. The wordlists taken in Igale and Iwanjanje are the ones with the highest number of forms that are dissimilar from the other wordlists. Most of these forms are the same as the forms elicited for the same gloss in the SIL Malila wordlist.<sup>19</sup> The few different forms in the wordlist taken in Nambinzo, on the other hand, are the same as the forms elicited for the same gloss in the CBOLD Namwanga wordlist.<sup>20</sup> Both Malila and Namwanga are neighbouring languages. The wordlists did not reveal any influence from the Nyakyusa or Ndali languages, even though reportedly these ethnic groups have also moved into the Nyiha area (see 5.1.1).

In this section it has been shown that the six wordlists taken in Mbozi District, Tanzania, closely resemble each other. All of them represent the language of the Nyiha of Mbozi and the few differences that exist between them can probably to a great extent be attributed to influences from neighbouring languages.

### 5.2.2.1.3 The wordlists from Mulekatembo (Zambia), Chisenga and Kameme (both Malawi)

As can be seen in table 16, the three wordlists taken in Zambia and Malawi share a percentage of probable cognates that ranges from 79% to 89%. In order to account for the classification of these variants, some phonological features will be considered later in this section. First, the percentage of forms in the three wordlists taken in Zambia and Malawi that were identical and near identical to Mbozi Nyiha is presented.

Table 18 shows the percentages of forms in the Zambia and Malawi wordlists that were identical to the forms in the wordlist taken in Mbozi District, Tanzania.

Table 18: Percentage of Zambia and Malawi forms identical to Mbozi Nyiha

	Combined Mbozi wordlist
Combined Mbozi wordlist	100%
Kameme, Malawi	76%
Mulekatembo, Zambia	67%
Chisenga, Malawi	54%

<sup>19</sup> See Anderson (2004).

<sup>20</sup> See Nurse and Philippson (1975).

In order to account for minor pronunciation differences<sup>21</sup> between the varieties spoken in Zambia and Malawi and the variety spoken in Mbozi, a count of near identical forms was made (see table 19). This count shows that these minor pronunciation differences account for about 10% of the differences in both Mulekatembo and Chisenga and about 5% in Kameme. In the following section these differences will be dealt with in more detail by looking at the phonological differences.

Table 19: Percentage of Zambia and Malawi forms near-identical to Mbozi Nyiha

	Combined Mbozi Wordlist
Combined Mbozi wordlist	100%
Kameme, Malawi	81%
Mulekatembo, Zambia	78%
Chisenga, Malawi	66%

One of the most prominent consistent phonological differences is the lenition of [k] to [h] and [c] to [ʃ] as illustrated in tables 20 and 21. In this respect Kameme and Mbozi group together, as do Mulekatembo and Chisenga.

Table 20: Lenition of [k] to [h]

Mulekatembo, Zambia	snake	'injoka
Chisenga, Malawi	snake	'injoka
Kameme, Malawi	snake	'injoha
Mbozi Mission, Tanzania	snake	'injoha
Mulekatembo, Zambia	year	u'mwa:ka
Chisenga, Malawi	year	u'mwa:ka
Kameme, Malawi	year	u'mwa:ha
Mbozi Mission, Tanzania	year	u'mwa:ha

Table 21: Lenition of [c] to [ʃ]

Mulekatembo, Zambia	leg	i'cinama
Chisenga, Malawi	leg	i'cinama
Kameme, Malawi	leg	i'ʃinama
Mbozi Mission, Tanzania	leg	i'ʃinama
Mulekatembo, Zambia	wife	'umuci
Chisenga, Malawi	wife	'umuci
Kameme, Malawi	wife	'umuʃi
Mbozi Mission, Tanzania	wife	'umuʃi

As shown above, there is some linguistic evidence to group Mulekatembo and Chisenga together and treat Kameme as a different variety, although Kameme and Mulekatembo share the highest percentage of probable cognates of all the Zambia and Malawi varieties. The lenition of [k] and [c] in Kameme suggests a historical development in this variety that did not occur in Mulekatembo

<sup>21</sup> For a definition of minor pronunciation (or phonetic) difference see 4.2.2.1.

and Chisenga. For a discussion on the sociolinguistic factors that were also taken into account for this classification see 5.2.1.

#### 5.2.2.1.4 The wordlist from Sandulula (Tanzania)

As seen in table 16, the wordlist taken in Msanda Muungano shares a percentage of probable cognates that ranges from 60-62% with the Mbozi wordlists. This low figure can be attributed to cross-linguistic influence. In this section, the loanwords and some of the phonological features of the Msanda Muungano wordlist are discussed.

Not surprisingly, the majority of the forms non-cognate with Mbozi Nyiha seem to be borrowed from the neighbouring Fipa language.<sup>22</sup> Table 22 gives a few examples of these loanwords.

*Table 22: Fipa loanwords in the Msanda Muungano wordlist*

Msanda Muungano	bull	i'ntwa:zi
Fipa	bull	i'ntwa:zi
Nyiha of Mbozi	bull	i'ŋka:mbaku

Msanda Muungano	sun	i'la:nzi
Fipa	sun	i'la:nzi
Nyiha of Mbozi	sun	'i:zuβa

Msanda Muungano	spear	i'su:mo
Fipa	spear	'i:sumo
Nyiha of Mbozi	spear	i'mpalala

Msanda Muungano	he hunts	a'kusola
Fipa	he hunts	a'lu:sola
Nyiha of Mbozi	he hunts	aku'vwima

Msanda Muungano	he stabs	a'kutota
Fipa	he stabs	a'lu:tota
Nyiha of Mbozi	he stabs	a'kulasa

Lenition of [k] to [h] was also observed in some of these loanwords, as illustrated in table 23.

*Table 23: Instances of lenition of [k] to [h] in loanwords in the Msanda Muungano wordlist*

Msanda Muungano	knee	i'hohola
Fipa	knee	i'kokola

Msanda Muungano	he vomits	aku'lu:ha
Fipa	he vomits	a'lu:luka

Msanda Muungano	he turns	aku'senuha
Fipa	he turns	'wa:senuka

<sup>22</sup> The Fipa examples are taken from Woodward et al (2005).

In the Msanda Muungano wordlist, a nasal sequence [mŋ] not found in the other Nyiha and Nyika wordlists was encountered.<sup>23</sup> Examples of this can be seen in table 24.

Table 24: Instances of [mŋ] in the Msanda Muungano wordlist

Msanda Muungano	child	u'mŋa:na
Mbozi Nyiha	child	u'mwa:na
Msanda Muungano	chief	u'mŋe:ne
Mbozi Nyiha	chief	u'mwe:ne
Msanda Muungano	sky	mu'mŋa:nja
Mbozi Nyiha	sky	ku'mwanja

### 5.2.2.1.5 The wordlist from Ikuti (Rungwe District, Mbeya Region, Tanzania)

The wordlist taken in Ikuti, Rungwe District of Tanzania, shares only 39% probable cognates with the Nyiha of Mbozi wordlists. On the other hand, it appears to be rather closer to the CBOLD Nyakyusa wordlist.<sup>24</sup> Of the 179 forms on the CBOLD Nyakyusa wordlist, 154 (86%) were probable cognates with the wordlist taken in Ikuti. However, one should take into account that the wordlists being compared were taken by different researchers, at different times and under different circumstances. Nevertheless, the variant spoken in Ikuti is clearly not a close variant of Nyiha or Nyika.

### 5.2.2.2 Phraselist comparison

In this section the results of the seven phraselists<sup>25</sup> taken in the Tanzanian research locations are presented. The following grammatical features are discussed: noun class agreements (class 1, 5 and 6), demonstratives, possessives, the verb 'to have', a number of other verb forms and word order. Finally the combined results are summarized and discussed.

#### Noun class agreements, demonstratives and possessives

The noun class 1, 5 and 6 agreement prefixes for numbers and possessives were the same in all research locations. The elicited demonstratives were the same in all locations with the exception of the demonstrative elicited for the Swahili *hawa* 'these', where two slightly different forms were encountered, as is shown in table 25.

Table 25: "these children"

9. <i>watoto hawa</i> these children	<i>watoto</i> children	<i>hawa</i> these
Itaka	a'βa:na	'a:βa
Nambinzo	a'βa:na	'a:βa
Iwalanje	a'βa:na	'i:βa
Mbozi	a'βa:na	'a:βa (used in the past) 'i:βa (used nowadays)
Igale	a'βa:na	'i:βa
Hasamba	a'βa:na	'i:βa 'a:βa
Msanda Muungano	a'βa:na	'a:βa

<sup>23</sup> Neither was this sound found in the neighbouring Fipa language. See Woodward et al (2005).

<sup>24</sup> See Nurse and Philippson (1975).

<sup>25</sup> For the seven phraselists see Appendix C.

The possessive forms elicited were the same in all locations, as were the personal pronoun object prefixes.

#### To have, to be and other verb forms

The elicited forms for 'to have' were the same throughout the research locations, as were the imperative forms. The forms for 'to be', however, seemed to have several variants based on *-li-* in the Mbozi locations. It was not practical to return to each of the locations to determine the status of each form. In Msanda Muungano however, the elicited form was clearly different than in Mbozi. Table 26 gives the elicited forms in each location.

Table 26: "He was big"

48. <i>yeye alikuwa mkubwa</i> "he was big"	<i>yeye</i> he	<i>alikuwa</i> was	<i>mkubwa</i> big
Itaka	u'we:ne	'a:li	uvu'so:ŋgo
Nambinzo	u'we:ne	'a:li, 'a:mile	u'so:ŋgo
Iwalanje	u'we:ne	'a:mile	u'so:ŋgo
Mbozi	u'we:ne	'a:li, 'a:mile, a'ma:li	u'so:ŋgo
Igale	u'we:ne	'a:li, 'a:mile, a'ma:li	u'so:ŋgo
Hasamba	u'we:ne, i'we:ne	'a:li, 'a:mile, 'a:me	uvu'so:ŋgo
Msanda Muungano	'u:jo	a'kija	a'hakula

The elicited forms for some of the Swahili tense and aspect morphemes varied more than other grammatical features throughout the research locations and especially in Msanda Muungano. It is not known whether this was due to the difficulties involved in eliciting these features or if it is an actual difference.

#### Word order

Most clauses elicited in the research locations display the same word order. Only a few of the clauses elicited in some locations have a different word order. This might have been due to emphasis as no pattern was evident. It was not practical to go back and check if these different word orders could also be used by speakers in the other research locations.

#### Conclusions to grammatical differences

The presentation of the phraselist data reveals few grammatical differences between the research locations. Most of the differences between the research locations within Mbozi District were minor differences in pronunciation. The phraselist elicited in Msanda Muungano seems to be the one most unlike the other six lists.

### **5.2.2.3 Conclusions to actual lexical and grammatical similarity**

It can be concluded on the basis of the wordlists and phraselists taken in the six research locations in Mbozi District, Tanzania, that the language variety spoken in Mbozi District is largely homogenous, although there is slight influence from neighbouring languages in the peripheral areas.

Of all the Nyiha and Nyika variants the lexical comparison shows that the Nyiha of Malawi variety is the one closest to the Nyiha of Mbozi variety with 76% of the wordlist forms identical. The Nyika of Zambia and Malawi variety is slightly more different, partly because of some consistent sound changes as well as influences from neighbouring languages. Finally, the Nyiha of Sumbawanga variety is linguistically the most removed from the Nyiha of Mbozi variety with only 60% probable cognates and some differences in the grammatical features investigated as well.

The wordlist analysis suggests that the Nyika of Rungwe have probably undergone language shift, as their language is now a variant of Nyakyusa.

### **5.2.3 Conclusions to language and dialect identification**

#### **5.2.3.1 Nyiha of Mbozi**

From sections 5.2.1.1 and 5.2.2.1.2 we conclude that the varieties of Nyiha spoken in Mbozi District of Tanzania are in fact all very similar varieties of the same language. Based on the perceived and actual differences within the Nyiha spoken in Mbozi District, we conclude that all the Nyiha speakers should be able to use the same literature, with very few, if any, problems due to lack of comprehension or negative attitudes towards a particular speech form.

#### **5.2.3.2 Nyiha of Zambia and Malawi**

There is some linguistic evidence to group the varieties spoken in Mulekatembo and Chisenga together (see 5.2.2.1.3). Sociolinguistic factors (see 5.2.1) were also taken into account for this classification. The people in Mulekatembo and Chisenga consider their varieties to be part of the same language, despite the international border dividing the area. The percentages of shared probable cognates (84%) support this claim.

The people interviewed in the Zambian village of Mulekatembo and the Malawian village of Chisenga reported that the language of the Nyiha of Mbozi, Tanzania was “deeper” than their own variety. In general they reported that they could still understand the Mbozi variety, but there is doubt as to whether they were referring to the variety spoken in Mbozi now, or that spoken in the past, as exemplified in the Nyiha New Testament.

The percentages of shared probable cognates and identical forms with the wordlists from Mbozi suggest that the people of Mulekatembo and Chisenga (78% and 66% respectively) suggests that at least people in Chisenga would have difficulty in using literature produced in the Mbozi variety.

#### **5.2.3.3 Nyiha of Malawi**

There is some linguistic evidence to treat Nyika of Zambia and Malawi as different from the variety spoken in Kameme, Malawi (see 5.2.2.1.3). Sociolinguistic factors (see 5.2.1.3) were also taken into account for this classification.

It was shown in 5.2.1.3 that the Nyiha of Kameme, Malawi consider their language variety to be similar to that spoken in Mbozi, Tanzania. However, it was also suggested that the perceived linguistic similarity with the language of Mbozi may not reflect the actual situation.

The percentage of shared probable cognates between the Kameme wordlist and the wordlists from Mbozi (around 80-85%) is in a middle range where further testing is recommended in order to clarify whether the people of Kameme would be able to fully comprehend literature produced in the variety now spoken in Mbozi, Tanzania, or whether they would benefit from having literature in their own language variety.

#### **5.2.3.4 Nyiha of Sumbawanga**

It is clear from 5.2.1.4 and from the wordlist and phraselist comparisons that the language spoken by the Nyiha people in and around Msanda Muungano is a different language from the Nyiha of Mbozi, and the other Nyiha and Nyika varieties. It is clear that the Nyiha of Sumbawanga would require literature in their own language variety.

### **5.2.3.5 Nyika of Rungwe**

The responses of the people interviewed (see 5.2.1.5) and the wordlist analysis show that the language variety spoken by the Nyika of Rungwe is not a variety of Nyiha or Nyika. This language variety will not be investigated further in this paper. The Nyika of Rungwe would likely be able to use written material in Nyakyusa.

## **5.3 Language development project strategy<sup>26</sup>**

In this section, four factors which are considered to be relevant when deciding an appropriate strategy for an existing or potential language development project are discussed. First, the factors themselves are discussed, and their relevance to a language development project is explained in 5.3.1. Then each of the four Nyiha and Nyika language varieties is dealt with in turn, with each of the four factors being addressed for each language variety in 5.3.2 to 5.3.5.

### **5.3.1 Factors relevant to existing or potential language development projects**

#### **5.3.1.1 Project coordination strategy**

Frequently it is preferable for several languages to be considered together in a language development cluster where the strategies for the languages in the cluster are best carried out in a coordinated way. The cluster may be determined by linguistic or social factors or both. This section deals with four issues that should be taken into account when considering how the language programs strategy in a given language could relate to the strategies for other languages:

- language vitality
- linguistic relationships
- social relationships
- centrality

The language vitality sections are intended to address the degree of vitality of each of the language varieties. The significant factors taken into account are whether the children are learning the language and if adults and children alike are using the language in their everyday activities. The degree of language vitality indicates the likelihood that materials of the language being used in future generations.

The sections on linguistic relationships address the degree of linguistic similarity between the language in question and the other languages in a potential language development cluster.

The sections on social relationships address the degree of social integration between the language group in question and the other languages within a potential language development cluster. This is an indicator of how these language groups could work together in a language development project. Special reference is given to the Nyiha and Nyika communities' relationship to the Nyiha of Mbozi, where a language development project has already begun.

The issue of centrality compares each of the language groups to the surrounding ethnic groups in a potential cluster based on population size, institutional infrastructure and the amount of existing literature, to help determine its potential to either provide resources to or receive resources from other languages in a project.

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<sup>26</sup> For more information on the guidelines used in this section, contact [survey\\_utb@sil.org](mailto:survey_utb@sil.org).

### **5.3.1.2 Access language strategy**

Access language is here understood to be the language or languages in which an ethnic group will ultimately have access to desired literature. It refers to how the linguistic repertoire of a language community can best be put to use in order to achieve this.

The access language might be the mother tongue or a neighbouring language if the latter is generally understood well by the ethnic group in question, or it could be a language of wider communication (LWC) if the community as a whole possesses adequate proficiency in it. It can also be a combination of the aforementioned.

The access language strategy is sensitive to the realities of multilingualism. When the strategy calls for making use of a language other than the local language, it is because the speakers are proficient in a neighbouring language, they are in the midst of language shift toward an LWC, or there is stable diglossia with an LWC.

### **5.3.1.3 Community cohesion and vision for development**

This section deals with the attitudes towards and possibilities for a mother tongue (MT) development program within an ethnic group. It describes how likely the community is to get involved in language development. First, we discuss the social cohesion of the community. Social cohesion may be investigated by looking at linguistic, cultural, geographical, political, economic, and socio-religious aspects of a community (Watters 1989). It is assumed here that the more homogenous a community is, the more likely it is to participate successfully in MT development. Second, we comment on the education level and the attitudes towards development in general and MT development in particular. In this section, social cohesion and a community's participation in general development are taken as indicators of probable participation in other development projects. Finally, we look at the history of existing written literature in the language variety.

## **5.3.2 The Nyiha of Mbozi**

The Nyiha of Mbozi is currently in a cluster language development project together with the Bena, Bungu, Kinga, Malila, Ndali, Nyakyusa, Safwa, Sangu, and Wanji languages. As of the time this report was written, the language development activities have been proceeding in parallel for all ten languages.

### **5.3.2.1 Project coordination strategy**

#### **5.3.2.1.1 Language vitality**

As part of a teacher interview schedule, teachers were asked about the languages used by the children in their school, as well as the proficiency of the children in the Swahili language.

Four of the six teachers interviewed reported that the children do not know any Swahili when they start attending primary school, indicating that they are only speaking Nyiha or another local language at home. Four teachers said that when the children do not understand what the teacher is saying in Swahili, the teacher will translate into Nyiha. All six teachers interviewed reported that the children use Nyiha (or another local language) when they are playing with each other between classes, indicating that the local language is their preferred language.

When the teachers were asked about the use of Swahili in their area, all six reported that Nyiha is used much more than Swahili. The teacher in the village of Halungu said that Swahili is used a lot in the towns, but very little in more rural areas. A teacher in the village of Igale reported that people do not use Swahili at all, and that if someone speaks Swahili to them, they feel insulted.

By observation and informal conversations, it was clear that outside of the towns, Nyiha is used in most domains including those of daily living. Swahili is used in the official domains of church, education and government. It was also reported that although many people from neighbouring ethnic groups have moved in, they learn and use Nyiha in the community.

In conclusion, the Nyiha language is vital amongst the Nyiha people, particularly in the rural areas where very little Swahili is used. The children are growing up learning Nyiha as their first language and children and adults alike are using Nyiha in their everyday activities.

#### **5.3.2.1.2 Linguistic relationships**

Compared to the other neighbouring languages, Nyiha of Mbozi is most similar to Malila, with which Nyiha informants in Mbozi reported a high degree of comprehension. A lesser degree of comprehension is reported with Safwa (see 2.5). The other languages in the existing cluster are Bantu languages and therefore structurally similar to Nyiha, indicating that the Nyiha are able to work together with speakers of these other languages.

#### **5.3.2.1.3 Social relationships**

As already mentioned in 5.1.1 it is evident upon travelling around the Nyiha area that there are many people of other ethnic origins living in traditionally Nyiha villages. Many from other groups, particularly Ndali, have taken up positions of leadership in the Nyiha area.

As part of the group interview, participants were asked if the Nyiha of their village married people of other ethnic groups, and if so whether this was something that happened often or rarely. In every research location it was reported that the Nyiha did indeed intermarry with people of many other ethnic groups, and that it was a regular occurrence. The ethnic groups participating in the cluster project were often mentioned as possible intermarriage partners. The fact that the Nyiha are so willing to intermarry with other ethnic groups suggests that their relationships with these groups are good.

As a part of the seven group interviews in Mbozi District, people were asked if they knew of any Nyiha in Zambia and Malawi. In four of the research locations the people said that they did not know of any Nyiha people in these countries. In three of the research locations someone within the group did know about the Nyiha and Nyika communities in Zambia and Malawi. This was because that person had travelled to Zambia or Malawi; however, it was not general knowledge among the people.

The groups interviewed were also asked about the Nyiha of Sumbawanga and how they relate to them. All of the seven groups in Mbozi District knew that there is an ethnic group called “Nyika” in Sumbawanga. Some of the groups knew that the Nyiha of Sumbawanga originated from the Nyiha of Mbozi. However, they were considered a different ethnic group and the Nyiha of Mbozi have no relationship with them.

#### **5.3.2.1.4 Centrality**

Currently the Nyiha of Mbozi is in a language development project working concurrently with nine other linguistically related languages.

The Nyiha of Mbozi could be considered to be the most central of all the Nyiha and Nyika groups. It is the only group that already has some literature published in its language variety, albeit in a now antiquated version, and it is the place where all the Nyiha and Nyika groups originated.

In addition, it has by far the largest population, 246,000, of any of the groups (see 5.1.1), and the main road from Dar es Salaam to Lusaka runs through the centre of the Nyiha area, facilitating communication.

### 5.3.2.2 Access language strategy

Swahili is the major LWC in Tanzania. It is also the national language and therefore promoted by the government. Swahili is the main language of choice in government offices and used as medium of instruction in primary schools. In addition, most churches throughout the country use Swahili for their activities. This section seeks to investigate the views of the community as to whether the Bible in Swahili is sufficient to meet the spiritual needs of the speech community. The current use of the existing Nyiha New Testament is also considered.

During the group interview participants were asked which translation of the Bible they used in church and at home. Without exception, in every research location the people reported that the Swahili translation of the Bible is used in church and at home.

When church leaders were asked what language was used for various church activities, most said they used Swahili, although some, especially in more rural areas said that they use a combination of Swahili and Nyiha.

One of the questions during the group interviews asked which people are able to read and understand the existing Nyiha New Testament well. Answers to this question varied between research locations, but in general it was agreed that the elderly people are better able to read the Nyiha New Testament than the youth. Some people in the village of Halambo reported that all ages are able to read it, although when asked, the young people reported that they could not understand it. Those in Igale reported that anyone who had been to school could read and understand it. In Nambinzo it was reported that those over the age of 18 could read and understand the New Testament, which agreed with the opinion of one speaker in the village of Itaka. However others in Itaka said that only people over the age of 30 are able to understand it. In the village of Iwalanje it was reported that only those over the age of 40 could understand the New Testament. They said that the language of the New Testament is very difficult and they struggle to understand the meaning of words. In the village of Mbozi it was reported that the Nyiha New Testament is hard to understand and only a few elderly people can understand it.

The group interview participants were then asked if they ever used the Nyiha New Testament. Of the seven locations, only the people in Iwalanje said there are people who use it, and they said that it was only a few people. In the other six locations it was reported that the Nyiha New Testament is not used at all.

The people were also asked why the Nyiha New Testament is or is not used. The people of every location except Mbozi Mission said the main reason the New Testament is not used is that it is not available. In Nambinzo and Mbozi Mission it was also reported that it is not used because people find it very difficult to understand.

As part of the religious leaders' interview, it was asked in which language would the Bible best meet the long-term needs of the Nyiha for spiritual growth and church life. A variety of responses were given, ranging from those who thought Swahili on its own would suffice, to those who believed both Swahili and Nyiha would be of benefit, and those who thought the needs of the people would be best met by using only the Nyiha Bible. Table 27 is an approximate summary of the answers given by 28 pastors.

*Table 27: Preferred language for Bible use*

Swahili only:	9
Both Swahili and Nyiha:	11
Nyiha only:	8

It can be concluded that the majority of pastors interviewed believe that the Bible in the Nyiha language would be of benefit to the Nyiha people in terms of spiritual growth and church life. It

also became evident during the interviews that the existing Nyiha New Testament is not widely used. This was said to be because it is not available and it is considered difficult to understand.

### **5.3.2.3 Community cohesion and vision for development**

#### **5.3.2.3.1 Social cohesion and homogeneity**

Linguistically and culturally the Nyiha of Mbozi seem to be fairly cohesive (see 5.2.1.1). People in many research locations were quick to point out that all the ethnic Nyiha spoke the same Nyiha language, although they also reported that there are slight dialectal differences.

The Nyiha of Mbozi live in contiguous villages within one administrative district. With this usually comes a strong sense of unity in the Tanzanian context. The Nyiha in this area are said to make a living mainly by farming, which means that in terms of economics there is not much diversity. Vwawa town is the main economic centre and there are no other competing centres.

The traditionally Nyiha villages do have residents of other ethnic groups, sometimes up to 40% percent (see 5.1.1). This does not seem to have affected cohesion to a great extent, as the outsiders tend to take on the Nyiha language and adjust into the Nyiha community. However, there was some concern expressed that the Nyiha culture and language were being diluted by the influx of outsiders.

The Nyiha of Mbozi were reported in all research locations to be either Christians or followers of their traditional religion. There are also many different Christian denominations in the area.

To conclude, the Nyiha of Mbozi form a somewhat, but not strongly, homogenous and cohesive community.

#### **5.3.2.3.2 Education and attitudes towards a mother tongue development program**

One of the questions asked of the people in the group interviews was, "If there were books written in the Nyiha language, who (or what types of people) would like to read them?" In every research location, the answer was overwhelmingly that all the people would like to read them. In the village of Igale it was said that everybody would like to read them, especially the young people.

When asked about what types of literature the people would like to read in Nyiha, the most common responses were religious books, with some specifying the Bible and songbooks. Other topics often mentioned were historical books about the customs and traditions of the Nyiha people, as well as literature on development topics such as agriculture and health.

The groups at each research location were also asked if there are people who write letters in Nyiha these days. Without exception they reported that most people write letters using Swahili only, although in the villages of Itaka, Nambinzo, Iwalanje, Mbozi Mission and Hasamba it was reported that a few elderly people write letters in the Nyiha language. As it appears that the practice of writing in Nyiha is only carried out by a few elderly people, it can be concluded that it is a dying practice.

When the local religious leaders were interviewed, one of the questions asked was whether they had any ideas as to how to teach people to read and write in the Nyiha language. Half of the 24 leaders asked said that, given the right training and support, the local churches could help to teach the people to read and write in Nyiha.

It was mentioned several times by various people in the Nyiha area, including Itaka, that the Nyiha are often thought to be behind in terms of education and development because the missionaries came to the Nyiha area later than other neighbouring groups, such as the Nyakyusa.

It can be concluded that there is likely to be an interest in any language development program that produced literature in the Nyiha language.

### **5.3.2.3.3 Existing literature in the language variety**

The people gathered for the group interviews in Mbozi District were also asked if they had ever seen anything written in the Nyiha language. People in every research location had indeed seen some written materials in the Nyiha language. In every location people mentioned that part of the Bible was written in Nyiha, which most correctly identified as the New Testament, or *Tesitamenti Umupwa*.<sup>27</sup> In Nambinzo, Iwalanje, Mbozi Mission and Hasamba people also remembered a book called *U Te Te*.<sup>28</sup> This was investigated further and it was found that one elderly resident of Vwawa town owned a photocopied copy of the *U Te Te*. He reported that in the past it functioned as a reading primer to teach people how to read the Nyiha language.

Another book, commonly referred to as *Ulufiingwe* (the published name being *Inongwa*<sup>29</sup>), was also mentioned in Iwalanje, Mbozi Mission and Hasamba. The same elderly informant reported that this book, which contains Bible stories, also was used as a reading primer. He recalled that people used to start by reading *U Te Te*, and then progress to *Ulufiingwe* and finally to reading the New Testament.

Other books mentioned as being written in Nyika were a church songbook and a magazine which is still being produced by the Jehovah's Witnesses.

## **5.3.3 The Nyika of Zambia and Malawi**

### **5.3.3.1 Project coordination strategy**

#### **5.3.3.1.1 Language vitality**

As part of the group interview in the Zambian village of Mulekatembo, the crowd was asked what languages were used in certain domains, particularly amongst the young people. They were asked what language the children use before they are old enough to attend school, what language the school-age children use when they are playing, and what language the young people prefer to speak. All the people interviewed said that Nyika is used for these activities.

The interviewees were then asked what language an outsider should learn if he were to move to the Nyika speaking area. Again, the answer was clearly Nyika.

Questions were then asked to ascertain the likely role of the Nyika language in coming generations. The people were asked if the children and the young people spoke Nyika correctly as it should be spoken, and they answered that they did speak it correctly. They were then asked if they thought that in the future people would stop speaking Nyika and only speak other languages. This suggestion was immediately dismissed as being impossible.

Finally the group interview participants were asked what language they considered would be spoken in the village by the children of their children. Again, it was reported that they would speak the Nyika language. Towards the end of these questions the crowd started to get slightly indignant, giving the impression that they believed many of the questions to be irrelevant because in their eyes the Nyika language was obviously going to be spoken well into the future.

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<sup>27</sup> *Tesitamenti Umupwa wa Mwene Witu Uyesu Chilisiti Umuposhi wa Nsi*. 1965. Dodoma: The Bible Society of Tanzania.

<sup>28</sup> *U Te Te – Shiniha*. Moravian Mission, Southern Highlands. 39 pp. Photocopy available at SIL library, Dodoma, Tanzania.

<sup>29</sup> *Inongwa - Shiniha*. 1913. Missionsanstalt der Evangelischen Brüderunität, Herrnhut. 183 pp. Photocopy available at SIL library, Dodoma, Tanzania.

On the Malawian side of the border, these questions were not asked. However, judging from the group interview in Zambia and other informal interviews as well as observation, this variety of Nyika is vital and there are no signs of language shift.

#### **5.3.3.1.2 Linguistic relationships**

As the Nyika language is believed to have originated in Mbozi, Tanzania only a few generations ago, it is not likely to be inherently intelligible to any of its neighbouring languages, with the exception perhaps of Lambya. However, as Nyiha and all its neighbouring languages are Bantu languages whose origins are not too distant, it should be presumed that they share structural similarity.

#### **5.3.3.1.3 Social relationships**

As already mentioned in 5.1.2, the general impression from the group interview in Mulekatembo was that the Nyika are a homogenous group, and that there is little mixture of ethnic groups in the traditional Nyika area.

As part of the group interview, participants were asked if the Nyiha of their village married people of other ethnic groups, and if so whether this was something that happened often or rarely. In the village of Mulekatembo it was reported that the Nyika do intermarry with people of other ethnic groups such as the Tumbuka, Bemba, Namwanga and Lambya. However, this happens only rarely. In addition, it was reported by the village headman in Mulekatembo that the Nyika have a strained relationship with the neighbouring Fungwe people.

Due to time constraints, social relationships were not investigated further on the Malawian side of the border.

Besides having a strong Nyika identity, the people in Zambia and Malawi also seemed to identify strongly with the Nyiha of Mbozi, Tanzania. In Mulekatembo, as part of the group interview, the Nyika people were asked about their relationship with the Nyiha of Mbozi. They replied that they have a very good relationship with them, since that is where they originated. However, it was observed that there is minimal contact between the two groups presently.

#### **5.3.3.1.4 Centrality**

The Nyika of Zambia and Malawi are not central in terms of a language cluster. The area they inhabit is quite remote on both the Zambian and Malawian sides of the border, with the nearest tarmac road being two hours' drive away.

There has never been any literature produced in the Nyika of Zambia and Malawi variety, although a few people still use the Nyiha New Testament which was translated in Tanzania at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

As an ethnic group they are relatively few – as stated above in 5.1.2, a very rough estimate would be a combined total of 10,000 Nyika speakers on both sides of the border.

#### **5.3.3.2 Access language strategy**

In Malawi the official languages are Chewa,<sup>30</sup> Tumbuka and English. In Zambia the official language is English (Gordon 2005). This section seeks to investigate the views of the Nyika community as to what translation of the Bible would be sufficient to meet the spiritual needs of the speech community.

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<sup>30</sup> Also known as Nyanja.

During the local religious leader interview, a question was asked as to which language or languages the leader uses for various aspects of church life. In the Zambian village of Mulekatembo, the pastor who is a Bemba, uses Bemba to preach. Songs are sung in several languages, including Nyika, Bemba, Tumbuka and Namwanga, but all other aspects of church life are conducted in the Nyika language. A member of the Roman Catholic Church reported that in his church, songs were sung in the Bemba language, but Nyika was used for all other activities.

A leader in the Malawian village of Chisenga reported that Tumbuka Bibles are used in the churches in his village. He said that around 25% of the people own Tumbuka Bibles, and they understand them, but they would prefer to have Nyika Bibles because they would understand them better. He reported that when the Tumbuka Bible is read in church it is translated into the Nyika language.

A leader of the Nyika people in Mulekatembo reported that the Nyika people still use the out-of-print "Nyika" New Testament from Mbozi in Tanzania. He claimed that all the people, even the young people, could understand it well, but that it needed revision because it had been influenced by Swahili and was not pure Nyika. It should be noted that modern Nyiha is even more influenced by Swahili than the Nyiha New Testament translated over fifty years ago.

It seemed that the Nyika in Zambia and Malawi are very much in favour of a language development project, whether it be in their own variety, or in the Nyiha of Mbozi.

The wordlist comparison (see 5.2.2.1), however, shows that a Bible translated into the Nyiha of Mbozi might not be sufficiently well understood by all the Nyika of Zambia and Malawi.

To summarize, the language situation within the church in the Nyika speaking area is multilingual, with both official languages and local languages used for church activities. However, the mother tongue is the primary and preferred language for the Nyika of Zambia and Malawi.

### **5.3.3.3 Community cohesion and vision for development**

#### **5.3.3.3.1 Social cohesion and homogeneity**

There are dialectal differences between the Nyika in Zambia and the Nyika in Malawi (see 5.2). Because they are in two different countries, they are politically non-cohesive. They are also under the administration of different traditional chiefs. However, economically they share the same market on the Malawian side of the border which is attended mainly by Nyika. There is a road passing through the Nyika area on either side of the border, facilitating contact between them. The Nyika on either side of the border are either Christians or followers of traditional religion.

#### **5.3.3.3.2 Education and attitudes towards a mother tongue development program**

Due to time constraints, no teachers were interviewed about education in the Nyika community of Zambia and Malawi.

In the Zambian village of Mulekatembo the group was asked questions concerning the development of the Nyika language. They were asked what language they used for writing letters, to which they replied that they use Nyika, Tumbuka and Bemba. It was reported that even the young Nyika use the Nyika language when writing letters. When asked, they also said that all the Nyika people would like to write stories and songs in their language, and that even the young people would like to read and write in the Nyika language.

The chief of the Nyika people in the village of Mulekatembo also reported that Nyika is used in primary school, although there are no books written in the Nyika language.

## **5.3.4 The Nyiha of Malawi**

### **5.3.4.1 Project coordination strategy**

#### **5.3.4.1.1 Language vitality**

In Malawi, the language situation in the area was discussed with a group of three or four elders in the village of Kameme. The elders were asked about the future of the Nyiha language, and what language they considered would be spoken in the area by the coming generations. They reported that people from other areas come into the area, so the language is getting mixed. They believed that the children of their children will end up speaking a mixture of languages.

From the limited information obtained, the vitality of the language of the Nyiha of Malawi may be threatened. This issue needs further investigation.

#### **5.3.4.1.2 Linguistic relationships**

The language of the Nyiha of Malawi is believed to have originated in Mbozi, Tanzania only a few generations ago. Therefore, it is likely to be largely intelligible to the variety spoken in Mbozi and also to neighbouring Lambya. In addition, as Nyiha and all its neighbouring languages are Bantu languages whose (common) origins are not too distant, it should be presumed that they share structural similarity.

#### **5.3.4.1.3 Social relationships**

Extensive data on the Nyiha language community's relationships with neighbouring groups was not gathered. However, it is clear that the Nyiha of Malawi feel a strong bond with the Nyiha in Mbozi. Three elders informed us that their group had come from Mbozi in 1911. They reported, "We are together with the Tanzanian Nyiha, but there are a few differences." They also believed that all the people between Kameme and Vwawa, Mbozi District, are Nyiha, when in reality there is a significant area where Lambya and Ndali are spoken separating the Nyiha of Mbozi Tanzania and the Nyiha of Malawi. However, this belief highlights the fact that the Nyiha in Kameme feel united with the Nyiha in Tanzania, believing that it is only the national border that separates them.

#### **5.3.4.1.4 Centrality**

The Nyiha of Malawi are quite remote in terms of access to larger centres, being located in the far northwestern corner of Malawi. Access is via dirt roads to Chitipa in the south, Tanzania in the north and Zambia in the west. It was reported that there is one bus to and from Chitipa scheduled per day. However, because this schedule is not always adhered to, those wishing to travel frequently rely on private vehicles.

No literature has been published in the variety spoken by the Nyiha of Malawi, but many people use, or have used, the Nyiha New Testament from Tanzania. It was reported that many people, particularly in the Pentecostal Holiness Association (PHA) Church still use this New Testament, although it is very hard to get hold of now because it is out of print.

Judging by the short time spent with the Nyiha people in Malawi, there is not a great deal of language development in the area. There was a vast amount of enthusiasm about any potential Bible translation project, but this group could not be considered central in any potential cluster project.

#### **5.3.4.2 Access language strategy**

In Malawi the official languages are Chewa,<sup>31</sup> Tumbuka and English (Gordon 2005). This section seeks to investigate the views of the Nyiha community as to what translation of the Bible would be sufficient to meet the needs of the speech community.

In the village of Kameme it was reported that in most churches, the activities of the church are conducted in the Nyiha and Tumbuka languages. There are a few people who own a copy of the Nyiha New Testament from Mbozi, Tanzania, however these are quite rare now as it has been out of print for many years. Most people use the Bible in the Tumbuka language. It was reported by a member of the New Apostolic Church, that when an outsider comes to preach he preaches in Tumbuka, but when a local person is preaching he uses Nyiha. He reported that most churches use the Tumbuka Bible, but use the Nyiha language for all other aspects of church life. Other people said that songs are sung in a variety of languages, including Nyiha, Tumbuka, Chewa, Ngonde, and even occasionally Swahili.

According to some knowledgeable elders in the village of Kameme, Malawi, the Nyiha would love to have the Bible in the Nyiha language, because it is their own language. They reported that Nyiha is used in church for all matters except for reading the Bible, when a Tumbuka Bible is used. They reported that in some churches the Nyiha New Testament from Tanzania is used, but that these are now very scarce, and the Nyiha people would love to have access to the whole Bible in their own Nyiha language variety. It was estimated that around 50 people in the area own a copy of the Tanzanian Nyiha New Testament. According to a leader in the Pentecostal Holiness Association (PHA) church, there also used to be an old hymnbook in the Nyiha language of Mbozi, Tanzania, of which around 2,000 copies were printed and many thousands more photocopies produced. According to this source, the Mbozi Nyiha New Testaments used to be brought from Tanzania by the PHA, who would sell them to their members first.

Several of the people in the village of Kameme were shown a short story booklet, recently produced in the town of Mbeya, Tanzania, in the Mbozi variety of Nyiha. They were able to point out a number of alterations that would have to be made in order to adapt the booklet to their own language variety.

It can be concluded that, according to the people spoken to, the Bible in the Nyiha variety of Malawi would best serve the spiritual needs of the Nyiha of Malawi. Nyiha is used for all activities in the church. The official language, Tumbuka, is only used for reading the Bible. The other official languages, Chewa and English, are not used in church, with the exception of the occasional use of Chewa in singing.

#### **5.3.4.3 Community cohesion and vision for development**

##### **5.3.4.3.1 Social cohesion and homogeneity**

Due to the limited time spent in the area it was not possible to find out if there are significant dialectal differences within the language variety spoken by the Nyiha of Malawi. However, it is unlikely that there are significant differences due to the relatively small number of villages in which this variety is spoken.

The Nyiha occupy the whole northwest corner of Malawi with only a few Namwanga villages interspersed. The village of Kameme is in the geographical middle of the area and there are no other competing centres. All of the Nyiha are under one chief in the same administrative division.

To conclude, the general impression is that the Nyiha of Malawi are a homogenous group with a strong Nyiha identity.

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<sup>31</sup> Also known as Nyanja.

#### **5.3.4.3.2 Education and attitudes towards a mother tongue development program**

Due to time constraints, no questions were asked to help determine education level within the Nyiha group. However, the Nyiha people interviewed in the village of Kameme, Malawi were very enthusiastic about the possibility of having a language development program either in their own language or in Nyiha of Mbozi. When the people were shown a short story booklet, recently produced in the town of Mbeya, Tanzania in the Mbozi variety of Nyiha, they were very enthusiastic about the possibility of further materials being produced.

#### **5.3.5 The Nyiha of Sumbawanga**

##### **5.3.5.1 Project coordination strategy**

###### **5.3.5.1.1 Language vitality**

The Nyiha of Sumbawanga were asked many questions concerning the use of and attitudes towards their own language during the course of the group interviews. They were asked what language the children use before they have entered school, and also what language the school age children use when they are playing. In all three locations the answer was given that they use Nyiha, with only the people of Malonje adding that the school age children use Swahili together with Nyiha.

When the youth were asked what language they speak, in all three locations they replied that they speak Nyiha and Swahili, reporting that the language used depended on whether there are only Nyiha present, or also people from other ethnic groups.

In each location the women unanimously said they preferred to speak Nyiha. The men in each of the three group interviews also said they preferred to speak the Nyiha language.

When the interviewees were asked what language they would use if they met other Nyiha in town, the response in each research location was that they would use the Nyiha language.

Questions were also asked about the future of the Nyiha language, and opinions were sought as to whether it would continue to be spoken in the coming generations. In each of the research locations the very strong answer was that it would continue to be spoken. At times the questions were almost treated with disdain, giving the impression that the Nyiha themselves believe that language shift is certainly not an issue.

In conclusion, it appears from these interviews that there are no signs at this point of time that would indicate any shift among the Nyiha to speaking a different language.

###### **5.3.5.1.2 Linguistic relationships**

Narrow Bantu languages share a number of structural similarities. Although not closely related to any of its neighbouring languages, it is presumed that Nyiha of Sumbawanga, being a Bantu language, shares at least some structural similarity with the surrounding Bantu languages. This is confirmed by Helen Eaton (p.c.) who works in the area and has done some grammatical analysis on Nyiha and surrounding languages. Nurse also mentions Nyiha and other languages in the area commenting on the structural similarities (Nurse, 1988). Therefore, we assume that the speakers of Nyiha of Sumbawanga could work together with speakers of the neighbouring languages in a cluster project.

###### **5.3.5.1.3 Social relationships**

As part of the group interview, the Nyiha of Sumbawanga were asked if they are one group with the Nyiha of Mbozi. In Sandulula and Msanda Muungano, they replied that they used to be one ethnic group, but that now they are separate. The group in Malonje reported that they are still

one, however when later asked about the relationship they had with the Nyiha of Mbozi, they reported that there is no relationship now.

The Nyiha of Sumbawanga are somewhat socially isolated, evidenced by the almost total absence of other ethnic groups in the Nyiha villages. One of the questions asked during the group interview concerned whether the Nyiha married people of other ethnic groups, and if so if this was a common occurrence. In all three research locations it was reported that the Nyiha did marry people of other ethnic groups, particularly the Fipa. The group in Malonje reported that it happens often, and those in Sandulula and Msanda Muungano said it happened rarely.

#### **5.3.5.1.4 Centrality**

The area inhabited by the 25,000 Nyiha of Sumbawanga gives the impression of being quite remote, because there are very few outsiders living in the area. However, in terms of communications with the outside world, this may be a misleading impression. The centre of the Nyiha area is a mere 45 minutes drive from Sumbawanga town, which is the main town in Rukwa Region, and has much to offer in terms of modern development and communications facilities. In a southeasterly direction, the Nyiha area is about four hours' drive from the border town of Tunduma, from where there is easy access to central and eastern Tanzania and Zambia.

However, the Nyiha area itself has very little in terms of development and communications facilities. At the time of the research (November 2004) most of the area was not covered by mobile phone networks, and the nearest post office was in Sumbawanga town. During the course of the research, little sign of development projects was seen, although the government leaders interviewed in Msanda Muungano and Malonje reported that there had been agricultural projects in the area in recent years. No literature has ever been published in the variety spoken by the Nyiha of Sumbawanga.

The most prominent languages surrounding the Nyiha-speaking area are Fipa and Mambwe-Lungu. The Bible Society has reportedly begun an Old Testament translation program in Fipa and has plans to possibly revise the New Testament published in 1988 (see Woodward, Lindfors and Nagler 2005). If there were interest in a cluster approach, it might be possible for the Nyiha people of Sumbawanga to work together to share resources with the Fipa and Mambwe-Lungu in a language development project.

#### **5.3.5.2 Access language strategy**

Swahili is the major LWC in Tanzania. It is also the national language and therefore promoted by the government. Swahili is the main language of choice in government offices and used as medium of instruction in primary schools. In addition, most churches throughout the country use Swahili for their activities. This section seeks to investigate the views of the community as to whether the Bible in Swahili is sufficient to meet the spiritual needs of the speech community.

When asked about the New Testament published in the variety of the Nyiha of Mbozi, one person in the village of Sandulula reported having seen it, but he said he could not understand it at all. No one else encountered had seen this New Testament. From the linguistic information presented in 5.2 which shows a low level of shared probable cognates, it is likely that Scripture in Mbozi Nyiha would not serve the Nyiha of Sumbawanga.

During the group interview, participants were asked which Bible translation they used in church and at home. Without exception, in every research location the people reported that they use the Swahili Bible in church and at home.

Fourteen church leaders were asked which language is used for various church activities. Most said they use Swahili or a combination of Swahili and Nyiha. However, when asked if they ever have to translate into Nyiha, all of the church leaders responded that they sometimes have to do that in order for people to understand what is being said.

One of the questions in the religious leader interview asked the leader what Bible translation would best suit the long term needs of the Nyiha for spiritual growth and church life. Table 29 is a summary of the responses given by the 14 leaders interviewed.

*Table 28: Preferred language for Bible use*

Swahili only:	1
Nyiha and Swahili:	7
Nyiha only:	6

It can be concluded that the majority of pastors interviewed in the Nyiha of Sumbawanga area believes that the Bible in the Nyiha language would be of benefit to the Nyiha people for spiritual growth and church life.

### **5.3.5.3 Community cohesion and vision for development**

#### **5.3.5.3.1 Social cohesion and homogeneity**

As already discussed in 5.2.1.4, there are some slight dialectal differences within the Nyiha community in Sumbawanga. As explained in 5.1.4, the Nyiha of Sumbawanga are a relatively isolated group, with very few outsiders living among them.

The Nyiha live in contiguous villages mainly in the same ward, with a few speakers also in a neighbouring ward. The economic centre of the area includes the villages of Sandulula, Jangwani and Mumba where all the interviewees reported they go for their market needs.

The Nyiha of Sumbawanga were reported to be either Christians or followers of traditional religion. There are several different Christian denominations in the area.

It can be concluded that the Nyiha are a cohesive group on the whole, although the socio-religious composition is diverse.

#### **5.3.5.3.2 Educational level and attitudes towards a mother tongue development program**

A teacher in the village of Msanda Muungano said that many Nyiha people do not see the importance of education. He gave the example that many teachers in the Nyiha area are not ethnically Nyiha, suggesting that the reason was that the Nyiha themselves do not place a high value on education. This concurred with the opinion of a teacher in the village of Malonje, although he added that things are changing and that the Nyiha are now starting to recognise the importance of education. When asked if any Nyiha have ever attended university, the teacher in Sandulula reported that there are a few who have, but the teachers in the villages of Msanda Muungano and Malonje reported that they did not know of any Nyiha who had attended university.

When asked whether the Nyiha would use a Bible translated into their language, all three teachers, and 13 out of 14 religious leaders, reported that they would indeed use a Bible in their own Nyiha language. A few people added the comment that they would understand it more fully than they understand the Swahili Bible.

As part of the group interview in the Nyiha area, participants were asked if they would read books in their own language, if they existed. In all three research locations, people agreed unanimously that they would read them. They reported that all the Nyiha people would learn to read the Nyiha language, including the young people. A village officer in the village of Sandulula reported, "We would really like to have a Bible in [our variety of] Nyiha. It would encourage us and show that our

language is known. It would help to teach believers because some don't understand the Swahili words."

In conclusion, indications are that the Nyiha would use literature produced in their own language, although the lack of education of many Nyiha, together with their perceived indifference to education in general, may provide a challenge to a language development project.

## **6 Summary and conclusions**

This paper has sought to investigate the Nyiha and Nyika language varieties and their speech communities in Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi.

In section 0, the existing documentation of these language varieties was presented. It was shown that the classification of these language varieties is complex and not sufficiently investigated. The main problem is the lack of reliable data and the lack of consensus as regards language names, as well as the fact that several of these languages are spoken across international borders.

In section 0 five different ethnic groups were identified:

- The Nyiha of Mbozi
- The Nyika of Zambia and Malawi
- The Nyiha of Malawi
- The Nyiha of Sumbawanga
- The Nyika of Rungwe

According to the literature reviewed as well as the opinions of the people themselves, these ethnic groups all originated in Mbozi District of Tanzania. Their language varieties have now undergone changes independently of each other, under the influences of different neighbouring groups.

Based on linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis, it was suggested that the Nyiha of Mbozi all speak the same language (Nyiha of Mbozi) with only slight dialectal differences. It was concluded that all the Nyiha speakers in this area would be able to use the same literature with little, if any, problem due to lack of comprehension or negative attitudes towards a particular speech form.

Furthermore, it was suggested that the varieties spoken by the Nyika of Zambia and Malawi constitute one language (Nyika of Zambia and Malawi), despite the international border dividing the language area. The analysis suggests that at least some of the Nyika people of this area would have difficulty in using literature produced in the Mbozi variety.

There is some linguistic and sociolinguistic evidence to treat the Nyika of Zambia and Malawi variety as different from the variety spoken by the Nyiha of Malawi. It was shown that the Nyiha of Malawi consider their language variety to be similar to Nyiha of Mbozi. A comparison of lexical forms is not immediately conclusive. Further testing would be needed to clarify whether the Nyiha of Malawi could adequately understand literature in Nyiha of Mbozi.

It was clearly shown that the language spoken by the Nyiha in Sumbawanga is a different language from the Nyiha of Mbozi, and the other Nyiha and Nyika varieties. It is clear that the Nyiha of Sumbawanga are not able to use literature produced in any of the other Nyiha or Nyika varieties.

Finally, the linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis also showed that the language variety spoken by the Nyika of Rungwe is not a variety of Nyiha or Nyika. Therefore, this variety was not investigated further.

Four factors which are considered to be relevant when deciding an appropriate strategy for an existing or potential language development project were discussed. In particular we considered whether the speakers of one language variety could work together with people from another linguistically related variety in a language development program. One example of this would be using one variety as a reference for another related variety, with literature produced in the reference variety being adapted for speakers of the other variety.

The Nyiha of Mbozi are already involved in a language cluster project. It is suggested here that the Nyika of Zambia and Malawi and the Nyiha of Malawi could work together with the Nyiha of Mbozi in their language development program. However, the translations produced would need to be adapted to these two language varieties. Another potential source for an adapted translation for these language varieties would be Tumbuka or Bemba.

It was suggested that, although they share common origins with the Mbozi, the Nyiha of Sumbawanga will require literature in their own language variety. If there were interest in a cluster approach, it might be possible for the Nyiha people of Sumbawanga to work together with the Fipa and Mambwe-Lungu in a language development project.

## APPENDIX A 1: CENTRAL NYIHA RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### 1 LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION

- a. Where are the Nyiha located? Where are the borders with neighbouring languages?
- b. What are the neighbouring ethnic groups and languages?
- c. What is the ethnolinguistic composition where the Nyiha are located?
- d. What is the estimated population of Nyiha speakers?

### 2 DIALECT IDENTIFICATION

- a. Are there different varieties of Nyiha? What are they? Where are they?
- b. What are the perceived differences?
- c. What are the actual differences?
- d. What is the perceived comprehension between the varieties?
- e. If comprehension appears to be low, what is the actual comprehension?
- f. Is the social cohesion and homogeneity within the Nyiha language group strong or weak?
- g. What is a potential reference dialect(s) for written material?

### 3 PROJECT COORDINATION STRATEGY / SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

- a. What degree of social integration is there between the Nyiha and neighbouring groups?

### 4 COMMUNITY VISION

- a. What interest does the Nyiha community have in a MT development program, including Bible translation, producing other literature, and literacy?
- b. Is there literature written in Nyiha?
- c. Are there people who write in Nyiha?
- d. What types of literature would people be interested in reading in Nyiha?
- e. What is the educational level of the Nyiha community?
- f. What are potential strategies for a literacy project?

### 5 WHOLE BIBLE ACCESS STRATEGY / PREFERRED LANGUAGE FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

- a. Nyiha pastors judge that the whole Bible in what language would best meet the long-term needs of the Nyiha for spiritual growth and church life?

### 6 VERNACULAR LANGUAGE PRODUCTION GOAL/EXISTING TRANSLATION

- a. Is the Nyiha New Testament available?
- b. Is the Nyiha New Testament intelligible to Nyiha people today?
- c. Is the Nyiha New Testament used?
- d. Why/why not is the Nyiha New Testament used?
- e. By whom is the Nyiha New Testament used?
- f. Where is the Nyiha New Testament used?
- g. If the Nyiha New Testament is used, how do people learn to read it?
- h. Is the Nyiha New Testament perceived as natural, clear and accurate?
- i. What is the attitude towards the Nyiha New Testament? Is it perceived as adequate?
- j. Are Swahili Bibles readily available?
- k. Are Swahili Bibles used by the Nyiha?
- l. Are Swahili Bibles perceived to be sufficient for the Nyiha?

## APPENDIX A 2: SOUTHERN NYIHA RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### 1 LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION

- a. Where are the Nyiha located? Where are the borders with neighbouring languages?
- b. What are the neighbouring ethnic groups and languages?
- c. What is the ethnolinguistic composition where the Nyiha are located?
- d. What is the estimated population of Nyiha speakers?

### 2 DIALECT IDENTIFICATION

- a. Are there different varieties of Nyiha? What are they? Where are they?
- b. What are the perceived differences?
- c. What are the actual differences?
- d. What is the perceived comprehension between the varieties?
- e. What are potential reference dialect(s)?

### 3 PROJECT COORDINATION STRATEGY / LANGUAGE VITALITY

- a. Are the language attitudes toward Southern Nyiha favorable/neutral/ unfavorable?
- b. What are the domains of use of Nyiha?
- c. Are the children using Nyiha? In what domains?
- d. What are the domains of use of English?
- e. What are the domains of use of neighbouring languages?
- f. Do the Nyiha perceive their language as vital or dying out?

### 4 PROJECT COORDINATION STRATEGY / LINGUISTIC RELATIONSHIPS

- a. What is the perceived lexical similarity between Nyiha and other neighbouring languages, including Central Nyiha?
- b. What is the actual lexical similarity between Nyiha and other neighbouring languages, including Central Nyiha?
- c. Is there perceived intelligibility between Nyiha and other neighbouring languages, including Central Nyiha?

### 5 PROJECT COORDINATION STRATEGY / SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

- a. What degree of social integration is there between the Nyiha and neighbouring groups?
- b. What is the relationship between the Southern Nyiha and the Central Nyiha people?

### 6 PROJECT COORDINATION / CENTRALITY

- a. What is the population of the Nyiha in comparison to their neighbours?
- b. Do the Nyiha have more or less infrastructure than their neighbours?
- c. Does the Nyiha language group have more or less literature and development than the neighbouring language groups?
- d. Is the Nyiha language group more or less prestigious than the neighbouring groups?

### 7 WHOLE BIBLE ACCESS STRATEGY / OTHER LANGUAGE PROFICIENCIES

- a. Are the majority of the Nyiha between the ages of 20 and 45 adequately proficient in another language?
- b. Are the above motivated to use this other language?

### 8 WHOLE BIBLE ACCESS STRATEGY / PREFERRED LANGUAGE FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

- a. Nyiha pastors judge that the whole Bible in what language would best meet the long-term needs of the Nyiha for spiritual growth and church life?

## **9 COMMUNITY VISION**

- a. What forms of development has the Nyiha community initiated or participated in?
- b. What interest does the Nyiha community have in a MT development program, including Bible translation, producing other literature, and literacy?
- c. What types of literature would people be interested in reading in Nyiha?
- d. Is there literature written in Nyiha?
- e. Are there people who write in Nyiha?
- f. What is the educational level of the Nyiha community?

## **10 VERNACULAR LANGUAGE PRODUCTION GOAL/EXISTING TRANSLATION**

- a. Is the Central Nyiha New Testament adequate and usable?
- b. Is there Scripture in another language that the Nyiha could transition to use?
- c. Are any local language Scriptures available?
- d. Are any local language Scriptures intelligible to Nyiha people today?
- e. Are any local language Scriptures used?
- f. Why or why aren't local language Scriptures used?
- g. By whom are local language Scriptures used?
- h. Where are local language Scriptures used?
- i. How are local language Scriptures used? (If they are used, how do people learn to read them?)
- j. Are the local language Scriptures perceived as natural, clear and accurate?
- k. What is the attitude toward the local language Scriptures?
- l. (If different) What is the attitude towards the Central Nyiha Scriptures?
- m. Are English Bibles readily available?
- n. Are English Bibles used by the Nyiha?
- o. Are English Bibles perceived to be sufficient for the Nyiha?

## APPENDIX A 3: EASTERN NYIKA RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### 1 LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION

- a. Where are the Eastern Nyika located? Where are the borders with neighbouring languages?
- b. What are the neighbouring ethnic groups and languages?
- c. What is the ethnolinguistic composition where the Eastern Nyika are located?
- d. What is the estimated population of Eastern Nyika speakers?

### 2 DIALECT IDENTIFICATION

- a. Are there different varieties of Eastern Nyika? What are they? Where are they?
- b. What are the perceived differences?
- c. What are the actual differences?
- d. What is the perceived comprehension between the varieties?
- e. What are potential reference dialect(s)?

### 3 PROJECT COORDINATION STRATEGY / LANGUAGE VITALITY

- a. Are the language attitudes toward Eastern Eastern Nyika favorable/neutral/unfavorable?
- b. What are the domains of use of Eastern Nyika?
- c. Are the children using Eastern Nyika? In what domains?
- d. What are the domains of use of Swahili?
- e. What are the domains of use of neighbouring languages?
- f. Do the Eastern Nyika perceive their language as vital or dying out?

### 4 PROJECT COORDINATION STRATEGY / LINGUISTIC RELATIONSHIPS

- a. What is the perceived lexical similarity between Eastern Nyika and other neighbouring languages and Central Nyiha?
- b. What is the actual lexical similarity between Eastern Nyika and other neighbouring languages and Central Nyiha?
- c. Is there perceived intelligibility between Eastern Nyika and other neighbouring languages and Central Nyiha?

### 5 PROJECT COORDINATION STRATEGY / SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

- a. What degree of social integration is there between the Eastern Nyika and neighbouring groups?
- b. What is the relationship between the Eastern Nyika and the Nyiha people?

### 6 WHOLE BIBLE ACCESS STRATEGY / OTHER LANGUAGE PROFICIENCIES

- a. Are the majority of the Eastern Nyika between the ages of 20 and 45 adequately proficient in another language?
- b. Are the above motivated to use this other language?

### 7 WHOLE BIBLE ACCESS STRATEGY / PREFERRED LANGUAGE FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

- a. Eastern Nyika pastors judge that the whole Bible in what language would best meet the long-term needs of the Eastern Nyika for spiritual growth and church life?

### 8 COMMUNITY VISION

- a. What forms of development has the Eastern Nyika community initiated or participated in?
- b. What interest does the Eastern Nyika community have in a MT development program, including Bible translation, producing other literature, and literacy?
- c. What types of literature would people be interested in reading in Eastern Nyika?
- d. Is there literature written in Eastern Nyika?
- e. Are there people who write in Eastern Nyika?
- f. What is the educational level of the Eastern Nyika community?

**9 VERNACULAR LANGUAGE PRODUCTION GOAL/EXISTING TRANSLATION**

- a. Is the Nyiha New Testament adequate and usable?
- b. Is there Scripture in another language that the Eastern Nyika could transition to use?
- c. Are any local language Scriptures available?
- d. Are any local language Scriptures intelligible to Eastern Nyika people today?
- e. Are any local language Scriptures used?
- f. Why or why aren't local language Scriptures used?
- g. By whom are local language Scriptures used?
- h. Where are local language Scriptures used?
- i. How are local language Scriptures? (If they are used, how do people learn to read them?)
- j. Are the local language Scriptures perceived as natural, clear and accurate?
- k. What is the attitude toward the local language Scriptures?
- l. (If different) What is the attitude towards the Nyiha Scriptures?
- m. Are Swahili Bibles readily available?
- n. Are Swahili Bibles used by the Eastern Nyika?
- o. Are Swahili Bibles perceived to be sufficient for the Eastern Nyika?

## APPENDIX A 4: WESTERN NYIKA RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### 1 LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION

- a. Where are the Nyika located? Where are the borders with neighbouring languages?
- b. What are the neighbouring ethnic groups and languages?
- c. What is the estimated population of Nyika speakers?

### 2 DIALECT IDENTIFICATION

- a. Are there different varieties of Nyika? What are they? Where are they?
- b. What are the perceived differences?
- c. (What are the actual differences?)
- d. What is the perceived comprehension between the varieties?
- e. What are potential reference dialect(s)?

### 3 PROJECT COORDINATION STRATEGY / LANGUAGE VITALITY

- a. Are the language attitudes toward Western Nyika favorable/neutral/ unfavorable?
- b. What are the domains of use of Nyika?
- c. Are the children using Nyika? In what domains?
- d. What are the domains of use of Swahili?
- e. What are the domains of use of neighbouring languages?
- f. Do the Nyika perceive their language as vital or dying out?

### 4 PROJECT COORDINATION STRATEGY / LINGUISTIC RELATIONSHIPS

- a. What is the perceived lexical similarity between Nyika and other neighbouring languages, including Central Nyiha?
- b. What is the actual lexical similarity between Nyika and other neighbouring languages, including Central Nyiha?
- c. Is there perceived intelligibility between Nyika and other neighbouring languages, including Central Nyiha?

### 5 PROJECT COORDINATION STRATEGY / SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

- a. What degree of social integration is there between the Nyika and neighbouring groups?
- b. What is the relationship between the Nyika and the Nyiha people?

### 6 PROJECT COORDINATION / CENTRALITY

- a. What is the population of the Nyika in comparison to their neighbours?
- b. Do the Nyika have more or less infrastructure than their neighbours?
- c. Does the Nyika language group have more or less literature and development than the neighbouring language groups?
- d. Is the Nyika language group more or less prestigious than the neighbouring groups?

### 7 WHOLE BIBLE ACCESS STRATEGY / OTHER LANGUAGE PROFICIENCIES

- a. Are the majority of the Nyika between the ages of 20 and 45 adequately proficient in another language?
- b. Are the above motivated to use this other language?

### 8 WHOLE BIBLE ACCESS STRATEGY / PREFERRED LANGUAGE FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

- a. Nyika pastors judge that the whole Bible in what language would best meet the long-term needs of the Nyika for spiritual growth and church life?
- b. What language(s) are currently used in church?

## **9 COMMUNITY VISION**

- a. What forms of development has the Nyika community initiated or participated in?
- b. What interest does the Nyika community have in a MT development program, including Bible translation, producing other literature, and literacy?
- c. What types of literature would people be interested in reading in Nyika?
- d. Is there literature written in Nyika?
- e. Are there people who write in Nyika?
- f. What is the educational level of the Nyika community?

## **10 VERNACULAR LANGUAGE PRODUCTION GOAL/EXISTING TRANSLATION**

- a. Is the Nyika New Testament adequate and usable?
- b. Is there Scripture in another language that the Nyika could transition to use?
- c. Are any local language Scriptures available?
- d. Are any local language Scriptures intelligible to Nyika people today?
- e. Are any local language Scriptures used?
- f. Why or why aren't local language Scriptures used?
- g. By whom are local language Scriptures used?
- h. Where are local language Scriptures used?
- i. How are local language Scriptures used? (If they are used, how do people learn to read them?)
- j. Are the local language Scriptures perceived as natural, clear and accurate?
- k. What is the attitude toward the local language Scriptures?
- l. What is the attitude towards having the Nyika Scriptures?
- m. Are Swahili Bibles readily available?
- n. Are Swahili Bibles used by the Nyika?
- o. Are Swahili Bibles perceived to be sufficient for the Nyika?

## APPENDIX B 1: NYIHA-NYIKA ELICITATION WORDLIST

Language:     Nyiha-Nyika     Alternate names: \_\_\_\_\_

Village: \_\_\_\_\_ Ward: \_\_\_\_\_ Division: \_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_ Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: *Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi*

Recorded by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Home village: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

<i>English Gloss</i>	<i>Swahili Gloss</i>	<i>WL on trip</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. eye	jicho		
2. ear	sikio		
3. mouth/lip	mdomo		
4. nose	pua		
5. tooth	jino		
6. tongue	ulimi		
7. head	kichwa		
8. human hair	nywele		
9. neck	shingo		
10. belly	tumbo		
11. back	mgongo		
12. knee	goti		
13. leg	mguu		
14. foot (if unclear sole)	mguu (unyayo/wayo)		
15. arm	mkono		
16. hand (if unclear palm)	mkono (kiganja)		
17. fingernail	kucha		
17b*. finger	kidole (cha mkono)		
18. skin (human)	ngozi (ya mtu)		
19. skin (of an animal)	ngozi (ya mnyama)		<i>check if different words for dead or alive</i>
20. bone	mfupa		
21. blood	damu		

<i>English Gloss</i>	<i>Swahili Gloss</i>	<i>WL on trip</i>	<i>Comments</i>
22. heart	moyo		
23. liver	ini		
24. horn	pembe		
25. wing (of a bird)	ubawa (wa ndege)		
27. tail	mkia		
28. egg	yai		
29. milk (of a cow)	maziwa (ya ng'ombe)		
30. meat/flesh	nyama		
33. person/ human	mtu		
34. man	mwanamume		
35. <i>husband</i>	<i>mume</i>		
36. woman	mwanamke		
37. <i>wife</i>	<i>mke</i>		
38. father	baba		
39. mother	mama		
40. brother (older) (same sex)	kaka (wa mwanamume)		<i>Modifying to older brother.</i>
41. mother's brother	mjomba		
42a*. child	mwana (mtoto)		<i>Adding generic word.</i>
42. <i>son</i>	<i>mwana (mtoto)</i> <i>wa kiume</i>		
43. <i>daughter</i>	<i>mwana (mtoto)</i> <i>wa kike</i>		
44. chief/king	mfalme		
45. God	mungu		<i>Possibly ask for plural to get info on trad. relig.</i>
47. sickness	ugonjwa		
48. body (human)	mwili		
49. name	jina		
51. wild animal	mnyama wa porini		
52. dog	mbwa		
53. elephant	tembo		

<i>English Gloss</i>	<i>Swahili Gloss</i>	<i>WL on trip</i>	<i>Comments</i>
54. goat	mbuzi		
55. cow	ng'ombe		
56. bull (male cow)	fahali (ng'ombe dume)		
57. chicken	kuku		
58. cock	jogoo		
59. bird	ndege		
60. snake	nyoka		
61. fish	samaki		
62. insect (biting)	mdudu (aumaye)		<i>Hard to specify. Possibly use malaria mosquito.</i>
63. head louse	chawa		
64. ant (biting/safari ant)	siafu		
65. tree	mti		
66. bark (of a tree)	gamba (la mti)		
67. leaf	jani (la mti)		
67b*. shade	kivuli		
68. walking stick	fimbo (ya kutembelea)		<i>May need to specify for a man.</i>
69. root (of a tree)	mzizi		
70. seed	mbegu		
71. grass	majani		
72. flower	ua		
73. thorn	mwiba		
74. field	shamba		
77. house	nyumba		
78. path	njia		
79. thing – object	kitu		
80. thing – affair	jambo		
81. rope	kamba		
82. thread	uzi		

<i>English Gloss</i>	<i>Swahili Gloss</i>	<i>WL on trip</i>	<i>Comment</i>
83. stool	<i>kigoda/kiti cha kienyeji</i>		
84. chair	kiti (kirefu)		
85. salt	chumvi		
87. rice (uncooked)	mchele		
88. utensil	chombo		
89. cooking pot (clay)	chungu/chombo cha kupikia		
90*. burden, load (carried on head)	mzigo (uliobebwa kichwani)		
91. iron/metal	chuma		
92. hoe	jembe		
93. knife	kisu		
94. big knife	panga		
95. dull (knife)	kisu kisicho kikali		
96. sharp(knife)	kisu kikali		
97. axe	shoka		
98. spear	mkuki		
99. arrow	mshale		<i>Usually same as bow (upinde).</i>
100. trap	mtego		
101. hole	shimo		
103. enemy	adui		
104. war	vita		
105. fire	moto		
106. firewood	kuni		
107. smoke	moshi		
108. ash(es)	(ma)jivu		
109. night (time)	usiku		
110. darkness	giza		
111. moon	mwezi		
<i>112. month</i>	<i>mwezi</i>		
113. star	nyota		

<i>English Gloss</i>	<i>Swahili Gloss</i>	<i>WL on trip</i>	<i>Comment</i>
114. sun	jua		
115. daytime	mchana		
116. today	leo		
117. yesterday	jana		
118. tomorrow	kesho		
119. sky	mbingu		
120. clouds (passing, not rain)	mawingu (ya kupitapita)		
121. wind (normal)	upepo		
122. rain	mvua		
123. water	maji		
124. river	mto		
125. lake	ziwa		
126. dew	umande		
127. mountain	mlima		
128. rock (fist-sized)	mwamba (jiwe)		
129. earth (soil)	udongo		
130. sand	mchanga		
131. dust	mavumbi		
131b*. he/she	yeye		
131c*. I/me	mimi		
132. year	mwaka		
133. one	moja		
134. two	mbili		
135. three	tatu		
136. four	nne		
137. five	tano		
138. six	sita		
139. seven	saba		
140. eight	nane		

<i>English Gloss</i>	<i>Swahili Gloss</i>	<i>WL on trip</i>	<i>Comments</i>
141. nine	tisa		
142. ten	kumi		
143. hot (weather)	joto		
144. cold (weather)	baridi		
145. long (thing)	ndefu		
146. short (thing)	fupi		
147. big	kubwa		
148. wide	pana		
149. small	ndogo		
150. narrow (path)	nyembamba (njia)		
151. heavy	nzito		
152. light (weight)	kitu chepesi		
153. difficult	ngumu		
154. easy	rahisi		
155. good	nzuri		
156. bad	mbaya		
157. left (side)	kushoto		
158. right (side)	kulia		
158b*. far	mbali		
158c*. near	karibu		
159. new	mpya		
160. all	yote		
161. many/much	nyingi		
162. few	chache		
163. red	nyekundu		
164. black	nyeusi		
165. white	nyeupe		
166. who?	nani?		
167. why?	kwa nini?		

<i>English Gloss</i>	<i>Swahili Gloss</i>	<i>WL on trip</i>	<i>Comments</i>
168. what?	nini?		
169. dirty	chafu		
170. rotten (fruit)	bovu (tunda)		
171. dry (cloth)	(kitambaa) kikavu		
172. wet (cloth)	(kitambaa) kilicholawana????		
173. it is full	imejaa		
174. he sits  sit	amekaa  kaa		
175. he stands up  stand up	amesimama  simama		
176. he lies down lay down	amelala  lala		
177. he awakens  awaken	ameamka  amka		
178. he takes  take	anachukua  chukua		
179. he carries  carry	anabeba  beba		
180. he holds  hold	anashika  shika		
181. he fears  fear	anaogopa  ogopa		
182. he gives him  give him	anampa  umpe		
183. he bites  bite	anauma  uma		
185. he eats  eat	anakula  kula		
186. he drinks  drink	anakunywa  kunywa		
187. he pours  pour	amemimina  mimina		
188. he vomits  vomit	anatapika  tapika		

<i>English Gloss</i>	<i>Swahili Gloss</i>	<i>WL on trip</i>	<i>Comments</i>
189. he coughs cough	anakohoa kohoa		
190. he breathes breathe (norm.)	anavuta pumzi vuta pumzi (pumua)		
191. he sucks suck	ananyonya nyonya		
192. he spits spit	anatema mate tema mate		
193. wind blows/ he blows blow	unavuma anapuliza vuma/puliza		<i>Separate into two separate items. Wind blows &amp; he (person) blows.</i>
194. he whistles whistle	anapiga mluzi piga mluzi		
195. he yawns yawn	anapiga miayo piga miayo		
196. he sings sing	anaimba imba		
197. he plays play	anacheza (mtoto) cheza (mtoto)		
197b*. he dances dance	anacheza (ngoma) cheza (ngoma)		
198. he laughs laugh	anacheka cheka		
199. he weeps weep	analia lia		
200. he barks bark	anabweka bweka		
201. he says say	anasema sema		
202. he asks ask	anauliza uliza		
203. he sees see	anatazama tazama		
204. he shows show	anaonyesha onyesha		
205. he hears hear	anasikia (sauti) sikia (sauti)		

<i>English Gloss</i>	<i>Swahili Gloss</i>	<i>WL on trip</i>	<i>Comments</i>
206. he dies (die)	anakufa (kufa)		
207. he knows know	anajua jua		
208. he counts count	anahesabu hesabu		
209. he wants/likes want/like/love	anapenda penda		
210. he helps help	anasaidia saidia		
211. he walks walk	anatembea tembea		
212. he runs run	anakimbia kimbia		
213. he pulls pull	anavuta (kamba) vuta (kamba)		
214. he comes come	anakuja kuja		
215. he leaves leave	anaondoka ondoka		
217. he falls fall	anaanguka anguka		
218. he turns turn	anageuka geuka		
219. he burns (sth.) burn	anawasha/-choma washa/choma		
220. he burys (people) bury	anazika zika		
221. he digs dig	anachimba chimba		
222. he weeds weed	anapalilia palilia		
223. he plants plant	anapanda panda		
224. he hunts hunt	anawinda winda		

<i>English Gloss</i>	<i>Swahili Gloss</i>	<i>WL on trip</i>	
225. he cultivates cultivate	analima lima		
227. he works work	anafanya kazi fanya kazi		
228. he touches touch	anagusa gusa		
229. he pushes push	anasukuma sukuma		
230. he makes make	anatengeneza tengeneza		
231. she sews sew	anashona shona		
232. he throws throw	anatupa tupa		
233. he hits hit	anapiga piga		
226. he slaughters slaughter	anachinja chinja		
234. he cuts cut	anakata kata		
235. he washes wash	anasafisha (vyombo) safisha (vyombo)		
236. he hides hide	anaficha ficha		
237. she gives birth (give birth)	anzaa (zaa)		
238. he marries marry	anaoa oa		
239. he steals steal	anaiba iba		
240. he kills kill	anaua ua		
241. he stabs stab	anachoma kwa kisu choma		
242. it flies (bird) fly	ndege anaruka ruka		

The items in italics are semantically close to the ones before and should not be counted in the analysis if they are consistently the same as the ones before in all languages compared. They should help, however, to narrow down the correct meaning for the items in Roman type.