

Abstract

While Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution officially recognises previously marginalised languages, existing studies expose the dominance of Shona and Ndebele in the public domain. Among existing newspapers, only two use indigenous languages. These are *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa*, which publish in Shona and Ndebele respectively. However, presently *Kwayedza* publishes a column in Nda, and *uMthunywa* includes a column in Kalanga. In the context of the prevailing politics of language in Zimbabwe, this study interrogates the autonomy of previously marginalised languages using hegemony, post-structuralist and political economy perspectives to unpack the conundrums of minority-language publishing. The study shows that, whilst the inclusion of previously marginalised languages in these newspapers improves their visibility in the public domain, it inadvertently legitimates the hegemonic position of Shona and Ndebele and the subtle subservience of previously marginalised languages. This study is an important addition to scholarship on the nexus between politics of language and the press in Zimbabwe.