OPEN ACCESS

ISAR Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Volume 4, Issue 11, 2026 | pp: 29-37

Abbriviate Title- ISAR J Arts Humanit Soc Sci

ISSN *(Online)*- 2583-9691

https://isarpublisher.com/journal/isarjahss

The Importance of the English Language in a Mining Environment: The Case of Likasi

Mulenga Mutamba Henri*

M. Ed. From Exeter, lecturer at the University of Likasi, Haut-Katanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

***Corresponding Author**

Mulenga Mutamba Henri

Article History

Received: 22.09.2026

Revised: 16.10.2026

Accepted: 07.11.2026

Published: 25.11.2026

Abstract: English has become a working language of the global mining industry, yet its place in Congolese mining towns remains largely undocumented. This qualitative study examines how important English is in the mining environment of Likasi (Haut-Katanga) and what hinders its acquisition. It draws on fourteen semi-structured interviews with mining-sector personnel and on documentary data from a vocational-training institute, the INPP. Twelve of fourteen respondents consider that English influences recruitment or promotion, but its use is concentrated in the access to technical documentation and in the contacts with partners. In some firms a distorted Chinese language, is gradually becoming the language of work. Eleven respondents know of no mining-oriented English course, and obstacles are attributed mainly to missing training structures rather than to lack of motivation. The study concludes that English provision should be co-designed by universities, training institutes and mining companies, starting from real workplace documents.

Keywords: *English for specific purposes, mining, multilingualism, Likasi, INPP, vocational training, professional lingua franca*.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License

1. Introduction

1.1 Context and relevance

Likasi, situated in the copper-cobalt belt of Haut-Katanga, occupies a strategic position within the extractive economy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Over the past two decades, industrial, semi-industrial and artisanal mining operations in and around the city have attracted a heterogeneous workforce of Congolese nationals, expatriate technicians and foreign investors from Anglophone, Sinophone and other linguistic backgrounds. French remains the official language of administration and instruction, yet English has steadily asserted itself in technical, commercial and managerial exchanges within mining companies. This reconfiguration is neither incidental nor cosmetic: it reflects the insertion of the Katangese mining economy into global value chains that are themselves conducted largely in English.

Examining the phenomenon in Likasi, rather than in Lubumbashi where comparable enquiries have been undertaken by Lawela, is justified by the fact that Likasi hosts a dense concentration of mid-sized and artisanal operations whose personnel often lack the linguistic preparation available in the provincial capital. Its labour market is comparatively under-served by language-equipped institutions, which makes English proficiency, or its absence, more consequential for employability, safety communication and career progression.

1.2 Problem and research questions

Job announcements for technical, supervisory and safety-related posts increasingly specify English competence, yet the vocational and university programmes available in the city remain largely conducted in French, with English treated as secondary. This mismatch between

Cite this article:

Henri, M. M., (2026). The Importance of the English Language in a Mining Environment: The Case of Likasi. *ISAR Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, *4*(11), 29-37.

labour-market demand and educational supply is the central problem. The study asks three questions. (1) To what extent, and in which domains, is English used as a working language in the mining companies of Likasi? (2) What perceptions do mining personnel hold of the professional value of English? (3) What obstacles hinder its acquisition and effective use?

1.3 Hypotheses and objectives

Three hypotheses guide the study. H1: English occupies a growing but unevenly distributed place in the communicative practices of Likasi's mining companies, concentrated in technical and managerial registers. H2: employees and job seekers perceive English proficiency as a decisive factor of employability and advancement. H3: the main obstacles to acquisition are institutional and pedagogical rather than motivational, resulting chiefly from the scarcity of specialised English-for-mining curricula. The general objective is to assess the importance and functional weight of English in this environment. The specific objectives are to identify the domains where it is used, to document how personnel perceive it, and to diagnose the structural obstacles, with a view to informing curricular design.

1.4 Significance and structure

The study extends Congolese sociolinguistic scholarship on the mining sector to a smaller city, Likasi. It offers evidence to curriculum designers and university authorities, and speaks of the employability of the local workforce in a region whose prosperity depends on extraction. The article proceeds in six parts: the introduction, a literature review, the methodology, the results, a discussion and a conclusion, followed by the references and three appendices.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Multilingualism in mining firms

Lawela Ebino's study of the Francophone mining companies of Lubumbashi is the most immediate reference. Working from Louis-Jean Calvet's linguistic barometer, it measures the weight of the languages spoken in firms confronted with a workforce of several nationalities (121). Its central finding is that, under the pressure of globalisation, the language regime of these companies no longer strictly mirrors official policy, and that multilingualism is at once a professional asset and a source of communicative risk (121-22). This ambivalence is transposed here to Likasi, where the concentration of mid-sized and artisanal operators may amplify the risks identified in the provincial capital.

2.2 English as a professional lingua franca and specialised discourse

Millot's thesis defines English as a professional lingua franca, that is, a working language between non-native employees. Drawing on a field survey in French companies and a corpus built from some 1,400 emails, it shows systematic linguistic and discursive variation according to whether employees use English as a first or second language and according to the specialised situation of exchange (Millot). Sosin's doctoral research on job advertisements in scientific milieux shows that employment announcements form a composite genre combining human-resources, advertising and scientific discourse, the last being reduced to a minimum, and proposes a terminological architecture of hyper-domains, domains and sub-domains (Sosin 1). Together, these works supply a register-based and discourse-based framework for analysing how English is actually used and textualised at work.

2.3 Teaching and learning specialised English

Fanou's thesis investigates the link between the materials used to teach specialised English and the chances that learners genuinely appropriate the language, in a French-speaking environment and for economics and management students (Fanou). Its relevance here is practical: whatever the demand for English, provision succeeds or fails according to whether its supports fit the learners' professional context.

2.4 Contact with English across generations

Boissonneault's work on lexical borrowing from English among the Francophones of north-eastern Ontario, building on Thomas's earlier survey of perceptions, documents marked intergenerational differences and notes that anglicisation appears more pronounced among speakers born between 1940 and 1960 and is neither uniform nor linear (1-2). The study shows that the penetration of English into a Francophone community is gradual and generationally stratified, which argues for disaggregating data by cohort.

2.5 Power, symbolic domination and local content

An article published in Savoir/Agir treats English as the language of science and as an instrument of symbolic domination, with economics as its case ("L'anglais"). Taken at the level suggested by its title, the idea of symbolic domination invites the question of whether English operates as a form of capital that sorts people into posts. Kimonge situates the language question within a wider political economy of resource governance. Revisiting the resource curse and the mechanism of Dutch disease, the article frames the debate on local content in the Congolese mining sector (1). A candidate without English may be excluded from technical and supervisory posts whatever the formal qualification, which reproduces at the individual level the structural exclusions discussed at the national level.

2.6 Synthesis and research gap

Read together, these works delineate a coherent problem space. Multilingualism is a documented feature of

Katangese mining firms. English can be analysed as a professional lingua franca with its own registers. Specialised provision depends on its materials. Contact with English is generationally differentiated and language competence is bound up with power and local participation. What is missing is a focused, empirical account of how these dynamics play out in Likasi, a mining town whose modest institutional infrastructure has so far received no dedicated sociolinguistic attention.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

The study adopts a qualitative, exploratory design, suited to capturing the meanings, perceptions and lived experiences that mining personnel attach to English, dimensions that a standardised questionnaire would risk flattening. It privileges semi-structured interviews and documentary data, consistent with the discourse-based approach of Sosin and the perception-focused approach of Boissonneault, and it plans triangulation with observation and a corpus of job advertisements.

3.2 Study area and mining environment

Likasi is the second-largest city of Haut-Katanga Province and the administrative centre of Likasi Territory, about 120 kilometres north-west of Lubumbashi within the copper-cobalt arc that defines the regional economy. Founded around the smelting and refining activities of the former Union Minière du Haut-Katanga, it has kept a markedly industrial character, organised around established operators and a growing number of mid-sized and artisanal concerns active in copper, cobalt and associated ores. Unlike Lubumbashi, it has a comparatively narrow network of higher-education and vocational-training institutions, a feature that bears directly on the availability of specialised English instruction and justifies its choice as the empirical setting.

The mining environment is organised around a dense cluster of copper and cobalt processing plants, workshops and quarries that line the road to Lubumbashi and the road to Kambove. The companies recorded for this study fall into three areas, each with its own profile.

TABLE 1. MINING COMPANIES IN AND AROUND LIKASI

Company	**Profile**
Commune of Shituru (eastern industrial zone, Lubumbashi road)	
Macrolink Jiayuan Mining (MJM SARLU)	Major hydrometallurgical plant on Avenue Chemin Public; produces copper cathodes and crude cobalt
Shituru Mining Corporation (SMCO)	Large copper and cobalt processing complex, strongly established in the commune
Shituru plants (Gécamines)	Historic hydrometallurgical complex, emblematic of Likasi, operating since 1929
Metal Mines SARL	Processing and mining services, with installations and active social-responsibility programmes (cahiers des charges)
Divine Land Mining SARL	Processing company with installations on Avenue Chemin Public (Joli Site district)
Commune of Panda and Kakontwe zone (Kambove road)	
Huachin Metal Leach Ltd (HML)	Operator running leaching and copper-cobalt processing units, for the benefit of the Panda and Kakontwe communities
Rubamin SARL	Metallurgical plant specialised in the pyrometallurgical and chemical treatment of white copper-cobalt alloys
Grande Cimenterie du Katanga (GCK)	Works the Kakontwe limestone quarry to produce industrial lime, indispensable to copper plants, and cement
Panda central workshops (ACP, Gécamines)	Logistical and mechanical backbone: spare-parts manufacture and heavy maintenance for the region's large plants
Neighbouring projects and operating seats (Kambove territory / Likasi)	
Kambove Mining SAS	Joint venture between Gécamines and the Chinese group CNMC, managing copper-cobalt deposits linked to Likasi
New Minerals Investment SARL	Holder of an exploitation permit, with its administrative seat on Avenue Cobalt, Likasi
Shamitumba SAS	Mining company holding several exploitation permits in the mining zone around the city

Source: Mulenga Mutamba, Mining companies.

Three features matter for the language question. First, the cluster combines a historic State-owned complex, the Shituru plants of Gécamines, operating since 1929, with a number of private limited companies (SARL, SAS) in partnership. Second, it is functionally integrated: the Kakontwe quarry supplies the industrial lime that copper plants require, and the Panda central workshops manufacture spare parts and carry out heavy maintenance for the region's large plants. Such integration implies regular exchanges among operators, suppliers and contractors, and therefore shared working languages. Third, it is internationally connected: one joint venture associates Gécamines with the Chinese group CNMC (China Nonferrous Metal Mining Group Co., Ltd.)

3.3 Respondents and sampling

Participants were selected by purposive, criterion-based sampling, complemented by snowball referral, because no complete sampling frame of mining employees exists in Likasi and the aim was information richness rather than statistical representativeness. A sample of twenty-five to thirty participants was planned across three strata: technical and supervisory staff, human-resources personnel and job seekers. Fourteen respondents have been interviewed so far. Ten completed interview forms were transcribed and coded. Four further respondents, two heads of office at the Direction des Mines and two members of staff of Gécamines, are recorded as having given the same answers as respondent R7, an employee of a state technical service, and are numbered R11 to R14. No human-resources staff or job seekers are yet represented.

3.4 Instruments and data

Three sets of data were prepared. First, a semi-structured interview guide of fourteen questions, covering identification (Q1-Q3), use of English (Q4-Q6), perceptions (Q7-Q9), obstacles (Q10-Q12) and recommendations (Q13-Q14), administered in French and recorded on written forms (Appendix A). Second, documentary information collected on 30 October 2026 at the Institut National de Préparation Professionnelle (INPP) in Likasi and recorded in field notes. Third, an observation grid for worksites and induction sessions (Appendix B) and a corpus of job advertisements, both prepared for the next phase and not yet applied.

3.5 Data processing

Answers were transcribed from the forms and coded by theme; closed items were tallied, and Q12 allowed several answers. Because the answers of R11 to R14 replicate those of R7, results are given twice, for the ten transcribed forms (R1-R10) and for all fourteen respondents. Counts are descriptive and indicate tendencies, not statistical generalisation. Quotations are translated from French by the author.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Anonymity was guaranteed in writing at the head of each interview form. Respondents are identified by code only, and state institutions are named only at group level.

4. Results

4.1 Profile of the respondents

TABLE 2. RESPONDENTS BY OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE

Profile	**Respondents**	**n**
Operators and technical staff (modelling, equipment operation, smelting, maintenance, other technical posts)	R1–R5	5
Logisticians	R8	1
Geologists and technical managers	R6, R7, R9, R10	4
Heads of office and staff of state institutions (Direction des Mines, Gécamines)	R11–R14	4
Total		14

Source: Mulenga Mutamba H, Interviews.

Among R1-R10, five report five years or more in the mining sector, two between three and five years, one between one and three years and one about a year; R10 ticked two categories. Only R3 and R7 report having followed an English course, online; R9 describes a beginner level, four respondents (R1, R2, R4, R8) state that they have had no training, and three (R5, R6, R10) mention only a state diploma or a degree in geology.

4.2 Use of English at work (Q4-Q6)

Reported use of English varies sharply with occupational profile. Geologists and technical managers describe regular use: R7 uses English daily, R9 relies on it

to read and compile geological data sheets and results, R10 uses it in professional practice, and R6 answers affirmatively. By contrast, R1 states that all tasks are carried out in Chinese languages, and R3 and R5 report little or no use; R4 meets English only through contact with Chinese colleagues, and R8 uses it "but with difficulty". Technical documentation is the document type most often cited as written in English (twelve of fourteen respondents), ahead of work meetings (five, all deriving from R7's profile) and safety instructions (three). Nine respondents describe use as frequent, four as occasional and one as rare.

A third language therefore competes with French and English in some firms. For R1 and R4, Chinese is the language of work and English serves, at best, as a bridge with Chinese colleagues, although R4 notes that most of them speak only their own language.

4.3 Perceived importance of English (Q7-Q9)

Twelve of fourteen respondents consider that mastery of English influences recruitment or internal promotion. The reasons are practical: employers and partners "always speak English" (R7), English is needed to understand and communicate with foreign technical partners (R9), and it matters for technical, administrative or commercial posts (R2, R10). The two dissenting answers come from R3, who says that this is not the case in their own firm, and R8, who answers "not at all", although R8 also reports having been disadvantaged in carrying out tasks because of their level. Nine respondents report some experience of advantage or disadvantage: R7 describes an advantage over colleagues who cannot communicate in English, R8 a disadvantage, and the others do not specify its direction.

No respondent presents French as the dominant language of the sector. Thirteen judge English important, rising or already influential, in R7's words "a strong influence, especially with American investors", and R1 places English and Chinese above French; R9 left the question blank.

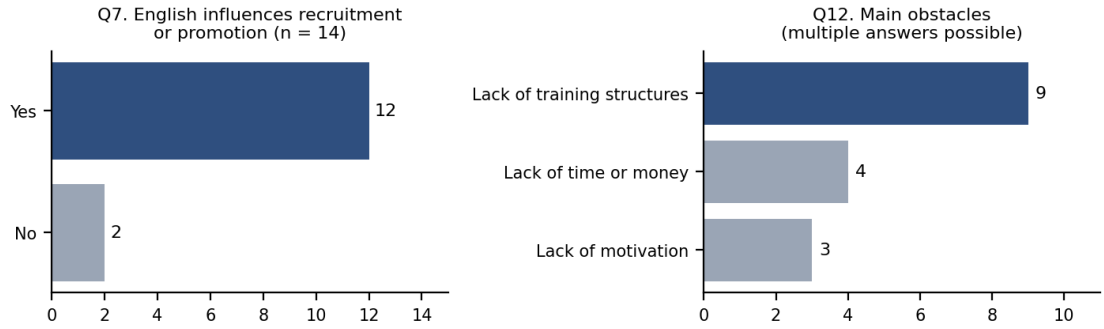


Figure 1. Perceived influence of English on recruitment (Q7) and main obstacles (Q12), all respondents.

4.4 Obstacles and training supply (Q10-Q12)

Time is the difficulty most often named (eleven of fourteen), sometimes coupled with motivation (R3) or with the professional context (R1); R5 simply has "no time" to follow courses. R9 cites financial means and the absence of a training centre, R6 the scarcity of training centres, and R10 reports no difficulty. Asked whether English training adapted to the mining sector exists in Likasi, eleven respondents answer that it does not or that they do not know. R6 adds "except the INPP". R5 thinks such courses may exist in other companies. R10 answers yes with a reservation that could not be read; and R7 notes that everything is available online.

Lack of training structures is ticked by nine respondents, lack of time or money by four and lack of motivation by three (R1 and R3 ticked two options). Time is thus felt as a personal constraint, but the obstacle is attributed mainly to missing structures and motivation is the least frequent explanation.

4.5 Recommendations (Q13-Q14)

Four respondents call for training or language centres, including specialised centres (R10) and centres run by universities (R9). Four respondents ask employers to organise training for workers, free of charge (R1), through a dedicated programme (R2) or through incentives (R3, R8) and R7 proposes compulsory training. R6's answer was only partly legible. Q14 produced no additional remarks.

TABLE 3. SUMMARY OF CODED ANSWERS

Question and coded answer	**R1–R10**	**R1–R14**
Q6. Use of English: frequent / occasional / rare	5 / 4 / 1	9 / 4 / 1
Q5. Technical documentation cited	8	12
Q7. English influences recruitment or promotion: yes / no	8 / 2	12 / 2
Q8. Has experienced advantage or disadvantage: yes / no	5 / 5	9 / 5
Q9. English judged important or rising	9	13
Q10. Time cited as a difficulty	7	11
Q11. No adapted training known (or unaware)	7	11
Q12. Obstacle: structures / time or money / motivation	5 / 4 / 3	9 / 4 / 3
Q13. Centres / employer-organised training / compulsory training	4 / 4 / 1	4 / 4 / 5

Source: Mulenga Mutamba H, Interviews. Q12 allows several answers; for Q13, one answer (R6) is unreadable. Individual answers are given in Appendix C.

4.6 Documentary data: English training at the INPP Likasi

The Institut National de Préparation Professionnelle (Vocational Training Institute) was created by Presidential decree no. 206 of 29 June 1964 and later became a public establishment of a technical and social character, with legal personality and administrative autonomy (Nkwasa). Its mandate is the vocational qualification of the Congolese working population, associating the interests of the State, employers and workers (Nkwasa); it is presented today as the public body in charge of vocational training and skills upgrading in the country (ACP). Information recorded at the Likasi centre shows that its English courses attract four profiles of learner: workers with a language difficulty, job seekers who see English as an asset for obtaining a job, learners who simply wish to study the language, and candidates motivated by business interests (Ilunga Yakalombo, Field notes).

TABLE 4. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PROVISION AT THE INPP LIKASI

Dimension	**Information recorded**
Intake	About 75 learners per quarter (roughly 225 in total), from mining companies, banks and the business world
Partners	First Bank, Rawbank, TMB, mining companies, the army
Enrolment	Prior vocational survey form, used to design the learning programme and the learner's timetable
Syllabus	Not fixed in advance; built from needs expressed; "economic English"
Duration	Three to four months
Assessment	Jury of experts; certificate (brevet) if the score reaches about 60 per cent
Chinese companies	Workers sent for short periods; production prioritised over continuing training
Other streams	Aesthetics and computing for young women; equipment operation for unemployed young men

Source: Field notes, INPP Likasi, 30 Oct. 2026.

The figures imply about three quarterly intakes and a limited capacity in absolute terms, although no workforce figure is yet available against which coverage could be calculated. The notes give no breakdown by learner profile, employer, gender or pass rate.

5. Discussion

5.1 The main results

English is widely seen as decisive for recruitment and promotion, but it is used selectively, mainly in technical documentation and in relations with partners; in some firms Chinese is the language of work; and most respondents know of no mining-oriented course, attributing the difficulty to missing structures more than to motivation.

5.2 Confronting the results with the literature

Millot's professional lingua franca converges with our findings on two points: English in Likasi also bridges non-native speakers, as in R4's contact with Chinese colleagues, and its use varies with the professional situation, being dense among geologists and technical managers and thin among operators. The results diverge on scope. Millot's evidence is textual and observed, ours is declared, and Likasi adds a third language, Chinese, which has no counterpart in his French firms (Millot).

Fanou's concern with materials converges with the INPP, whose programme is built from a vocational survey and each learner's declared needs, and with respondents' calls for specialised centres: provision works when it fits the learner's professional context. The settings differ, since Fanou's learners are university students with institutional materials, whereas in Likasi we are concerned with workers having little time and no mining-specific materials. The technical documentation cited by twelve respondents is, however, a ready source of authentic material (Fanou).

The idea of symbolic domination helps to read R7's advantage over colleagues who cannot communicate in English and R8's disadvantage: English acts as a capital that sorts people into posts ("L'anglais"). It does not fit all the data, since no respondent describes English as imposed, most present it as a practical asset, and the weight of Chinese shows that workplace dominance is not only Anglophone. Demands for free or compulsory training can be read as a wish to redistribute that capital. Lawela Ebino's finding that multilingualism is both an asset and a risk (121) is confirmed and extended to a smaller, less equipped town, and the recommendations echo the local-content debate reviewed by Kimonge.

5.3 Interpretation and hypotheses

Three factors explain the pattern. Global value chains impose English on technical documentation and on relations with partners. The ownership and management of firms shape the working language, hence Chinese in some of them. The local supply is short and general, three to four months of "economic English" for about 75 learners per term, and cannot absorb the demand. H1 is therefore supported, with the nuance of a third language. H2 is supported, since twelve of fourteen respondents see English as affecting recruitment or promotion and none treats French as dominant. H3 is largely supported, since obstacles are attributed mainly to missing structures and eleven respondents know of no mining-oriented course.

5.4 Implications

Pedagogically, mining-specific materials should be built from workplace documents, following Fanou's insistence on materials and Millot's attention to real registers. Institutionally, universities, the INPP and firms could create specialised centres with release time, since time is the most cited constraint. As policy, language training could be included in local-content obligations.

5.5 Limits

The findings rest on fourteen interviews, four of them replicating one respondent's answers, with no human-resources staff or job seekers yet. Use of English is self-reported, the observation grid and the corpus of advertisements have not yet been applied, the INPP data come from a single institution and its own account, and some sources were consulted through their abstracts or titles only. Several handwritten answers were partly legible and were treated with caution.

6. Conclusion

This study set out to establish how important English is in the mining environment of Likasi and what hinders its acquisition. It shows that English is a working asset but a selectively used one, that the language question is trilingual rather than a contest between French and English, and that the obstacles are mainly institutional. It offers a first empirical picture of a mid-sized Congolese mining town and links workplace demand to the local training supply.

Three recommendations follow. Universities, the INPP and mining companies should co-create mining-specific English courses built from technical documents. Employers should grant release time and, where possible, fund or require training. Language training could be included in local-content obligations. Future research should enlarge and diversify the sample, apply the observation grid, build a corpus of emails and technical documents in the manner of Millot, compare generations as Boissonneault suggests, and test pilot courses in Likasi.

Works Cited

1. ACP. "RDC : formation professionnelle comme volet de création d'emplois." Agence congolaise de presse,

22 May 2026, acp.cd/nation/rdc-formation-professionnelle-comme-volet-de-creation-demplois/.

2. Boissonneault, J. (2023). Perspectives intergénérationnelles de l'emprunt à l'anglais chez les francophones du Nord-Est ontarien. *Nouvelle Revue Synergies Canada*, (17), 1-25.
3. Fanou, C. C. (2009). *Les supports dans l'enseignement/apprentissage de l'anglais de spécialité dans un environnement francophone: cas de l'anglais des filières d'économie et de gestion* (Doctoral dissertation, Université de la Sorbonne nouvelle-Paris III).
4. Fray, P., & Lebaron, F. (2022). L'anglais, langue de la science et instrument de domination symbolique. Le cas des sciences économiques. *Savoir/Agir*, *6162*(2), 89-109.
5. Kimonge, F. (2019). Le contenu local dans le secteur minier en RDC: pour quel résultat?. *Conjonctures de l'Afrique centrale*, 312.
6. EBINO, O. L. (2024). LE MULTILINGUISME, L'IMPORTANCE ET LE POIDS DES LANGUES CIBLES PARLEES DANS LES ENTREPRISES MINIERES FRANCOPHONES DE LA VILLE DE LUBUMBASHI. *ANADISS*, *21*(37), 121-130.
7. Millot, P. (2012). *Caractérisation de l'anglais comme lingua franca professionnelle à travers une analyse de corpus de courriels échangés en entreprise: une étude de registre* (Doctoral dissertation, Université de Grenoble). theses.hal.science/tel-00919362.
8. Mulenga M. H., (2026). Interviews with mining-sector personnel in Likasi. Unpublished data.
9. Mulenga, M. H., (2026). Field notes on English-language training at the INPP Likasi. Unpublished manuscript.
10. Mulenga, M. H., (2026). Mining companies operating in and around Likasi. Unpublished data.
11. Nkwasa, José Mulenga. Conception et réalisation d'une base de données pour la gestion du person nel : cas de la direction générale de l'Institut national de préparation professionnelle. MémoireOnline, www.memoireonline.com/09/19/10994/m_Conception-et-realisation-d-une-base-de-donnees-pour-la-gestion-du-personnel-Cas-de-la-direction14.html.
12. Sosin, G. (2015). *Le rôle et la place de l'anglais de spécialité dans les petites annonces pour l'emploi en milieu scientifique* (Doctoral dissertation, Université de Bretagne occidentale-Brest).

Appendix

A. Interview Guide

Appendix A. Interview Guide

The Importance of the English Language in a Mining Environment: The Case of Likasi.

Semi-structured interviews with technical staff, HR, and job seekers in Likasi. Anonymity guaranteed.

Q1. What is your current role within the company or in your job search?

Q2. How long have you been working or looking for a job in the mining sector? (1 year; 1 to 3 years; 3 to 5 years; 5 years and over; other)

Q3. What is your level of education, and have you received any training in English?

Q4. In what specific circumstances do you use the English language on a daily basis?

Q5. Which professional documents are most frequently written in English? (technical documentation; safety instructions; hierarchical correspondence; job interviews; work meetings)

Q6. Is the use of English frequent, occasional, or rare in your environment? Can you give a concrete example?

Q7. In your opinion, does proficiency in English influence recruitment or internal promotion in Likasi? Why?

Q8. Have you ever been professionally advantaged or disadvantaged because of your level of English? Describe your experience.

Q9. How do you perceive the respective place of English compared to French in the mining sector in Likasi?

Q10. What are the main difficulties you encounter in acquiring a good level of English in Likasi?

Q11. Are there English training courses adapted to the context of the mining sector in Likasi?

Q12. In your opinion, are these obstacles mainly related to: lack of support structures / qualified schools; lack of time or financial resources; lack of motivation or interest?

Q13. What measures or recommendations would you advocate to higher education institutions or mining companies in Likasi?

Q14. Do you have any other remarks, comments, or personal experiences to share regarding the use of English in the mining sector?

Appendix B. Key Answers by Respondent

Code	Profile and tenure	Use of English (Q4, Q6)	Q7	Q12	Q13
R1	Technical (modelling); 5 y or more	None, tasks in Chinese; occasional	Yes	Time or money; motivation	Free training by firms
R2	Equipment operator; 5 y or more	At work, sometimes; safety instructions	Yes	Motivation	Training programme for workers
R3	Smelter; 3–5 y	Hardly; online course	No	Structures; motivation	Employers to organise training
R4	Maintenance; 5 y or more	Through Chinese colleagues; occasional	Yes	Time or money	Language centres
R5	Technical post; 5 y or more	None; occasional	Yes	Time or money	Training centres
R6	Technical manager; 5 y or more	Yes; occasional	Yes	Structures	Unreadable
R7	Geologist, state service; 3–5 y	Daily; online course; frequent	Yes	Structures	Compulsory training
R8	Logistics; 1–3 y	With difficulty; frequent	No	Time or money	Organised training
R9	Assistant geologist; about 1 y	Geological data sheets; beginner; frequent	Yes	Structures	University training centres
R10	Geologist, director; 1–3 or 5 y	Professional practice; frequent	Yes	Structures	Specialised centres
R11–R14	State institutions; not recorded	As R7	Yes	Structures	Compulsory training

Source: Mulenga Mutamba, Interviews.