

**Cross-border Language Harmonization:
A Case of Xitsonga (South Africa) and Shangani (Zimbabwe)**

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ABSTRACT There has been much debate concerning language harmonization of some of the African languages in South Africa. These debates were fuelled by, among others, the close relationship that exists in the languages to be harmonized. Nhlapo and Alexander proposed the harmonization of the Nguni languages (IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, Siswati and IsiNdebele) and Sotho languages (Setswana, Sesotho and Northern Sotho), respectively. The reason for this proposal was because there were no linguistic reasons to be developed in the unrelated linguistic system. The objective of this paper is to discuss the harmonization of cross-border languages, namely, Xitsonga (South Africa) and Shangani (Zimbabwe). Historically, these languages originated from one parent language. However, political borders were used to serve the colonial government's divide and rule policy. The findings in this paper advocate for good reason to harmonize these two languages because there are more linguistic commonalities than differences.