A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF L1 INTERFERENCE LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN ESL WRITTEN DISCOURSE: AN INVESTIGATION BASED ON SOME ZAMBIAN GRADE 12 LEARNERS' NARRATIVE ENGLISH COMPOSITIONS

by

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DECLARATION

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APPROVAL

This dissertation of Lazarous Fred Sinkala has been approved as fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Linguistic Science by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined first language interference lexical and grammatical errors in English as a Second Language (ESL) written discourse with particular focus on some Zambian Grade Twelve learners' written narrative English pieces of composition.

The aim of the study was to provide a description of some of the specific instances of first language interference lexical and grammatical errors in narrative pieces of composition produced by Grade Twelve pupils. The study sought to: identify lexical and grammatical errors committed by Grade Twelve pupils in narrative pieces of composition; classify the identified errors into specific types; relate the identified errors to specific first language aspects; establish and explain how the identified errors hamper discourse coherence.

The study was guided by two approaches: Contrastive Analysis (CA) and Error Analysis (EA). CA was used to identify similarities and differences between respective Zambian language (L1) and English (L2) while EA was used to explain the errors. Data were collected through analysis of the scripts produced by Grade Twelve learners under national examinations conditions.

Data were analysed by sorting out specific local language interference errors which were then categorized according to type: lexical (word selection and word formation) and Grammatical (wrong verbal tenses, incorrect verbal forms, and syntax problems). Follow up interviews with 15 examiners were conducted to deepen understanding and interpretation of the results. The research employed the interview guide to verify the status of the identified lexical and grammatical errors. The data revealed the existence of various categories of local language interference errors at both lexical and grammatical levels thereby confirming the theoretical framework that learners of L2 tend to transfer the meaning and structures from their mother tongue to the target language.

The implication of these findings is that the occurrence of L1 interference errors is widespread, thereby contributing to poor scores in the English Language examination by the learners. The study recommends that schools should undertake remedial teaching focusing on local language interference errors in order to enhance discourse coherence in the pieces of composition written by senior secondary school pupils.

KEY WORDS: First language (L1), Mother Tongue, Contrastive Analysis (CA), Error Analysis (EA), English as a Second Language (ESL), Lexical and Grammatical.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my parents Fred and Julliet Sinkala, mother-in-law Mrs Maumbi, my wife Chimuka and our lovely children Alinani, Namwila, Matale and Lukundo. Their love, sacrifice, inspiration, encouragement and advice kept me going stronger and stronger up to the final production of this thesis.

The dedication also goes to my brothers and sisters and in laws for their evergreen support and understanding.

Finally, I dedicate this work to all my pupils, current and former, and all teachers of English language.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Overview

Chapter One is an introduction to the study on the First Language (L1) lexical and grammatical errors that the Grade Twelve pupils make in their written English Language School Certificate examination which is conducted by the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ). In the study, English constitutes Second Language (L2). The chapter gives the background to the study. Specifically, the chapter further presents the statement of the problem, the aim of the study, the objectives and the research questions that were used to address the objectives of the study. The chapter also presents the significance of the study and the theoretical framework that is applied in this research. The scope and the structure of the dissertation are given at the end of this chapter.

1.1 Background

English is the official language in Zambia. Therefore, competence in English is necessary in all sectors of society. It is the language of commerce, trade and technology. In addition, until 2014, it was also the only official language of classroom instruction from Grade One to the highest level of education following official proclamation by the Ministry of Education in 1965. As a result of Government decisions, English is required to be used as the only medium of instruction in all forms of post primary education in Zambia, in parliament, for the administration of the country, for all national and international official communication and in the more important commercial and industrial sectors. Further, English is the only official language that is enshrined in the Zambian Constitution, and is perceived by many as a passport to upward socio-economic mobility (Sekeleti, 1983).

English is used as medium of instruction from grades 1 to 12 and throughout higher education. At secondary level, English is one of the compulsory subjects for all pupils. It is the subject that is taught more than any other in the school with seven periods of forty minutes each allocated to it per week. It is assumed most times that English is key to better grades in other subjects and consequently for a successful professional career. These and many other grounds make English the most important subject on the school time table.

According to the English Language Syllabus for Senior Secondary School (2013), there are four basic competence skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Of the four skills, writing is one of the most important language modes for school success and is the one that is examined at Grade Twelve school certificate level. According to Lerner (2000), these skill areas are interrelated in the sense that good listening skills promote speaking, good speaking skills enhance reading and good instruction in reading improves writing while good writing skills improve one's knowledge and skills in speaking and reading.

However, in spite of its importance as well as the time and huge amounts of money spent on the teaching of the English language, there is still poor performance in the subject especially at secondary school level. The 2012 English Language Paper One Chief Examiner's report on standards indicated that the quality of writing by the Grade Twelve pupils in their final English Language examinations (composition) is a matter of concern. Generally, the bulk of the errors committed can be attributed to mother tongue (L1).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Every year, reports by the English Language Chief Examiner for the Joint Examinations for School Certificate and General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level English Paper 1 (Composition) raise a number of concerns regarding the quality of writing produced by the school leavers resulting in poor scores and prompting the Chief Examiner in the 2012 report, to describe the candidates' linguistic ability as "not impressive" and their performance as "below expected standard." Most notable of these concerns are:

(i)   Poor handling of narrative composition;
(ii)   Widespread instances of first language interference;
(iii)   Widespread instances of run-on sentences and lack of paragraphing;
(iv)   Widespread use of colloquial and cell-phone language and;
(v)   Widespread instances of wrong spellings, and wrong usage of words.

The poor performance in English language written pieces of composition produced by Grade Twelve pupils in the final examinations has caused a lot of concern for many teachers and researchers. This is reflected in the Examiners' and Chief Examiners' reports. Of the five concerns raised by Chief Examiners as listed above, first language interference lexical and

grammatical errors appear to pose the greatest challenge impacting negatively on discourse coherence and comprehensibility in the written pieces of discourse produced by Grade Twelve pupils. While this challenge has been duly acknowledged, there is lack of systematic identification, description and explanation of the specific types of first language interference lexical and grammatical errors. This results in inability by teachers to implement effective remedial measures. In the Zambian secondary school context, there is limited understanding of the specific types of L1 lexical and grammatical errors in the written pieces of composition produced by Grade Twelve learners.

1.3 Aim

The aim of the study was to provide a description of some of the specific instances of first language interference lexical and grammatical errors in narrative pieces of composition produced by Grade Twelve pupils.

1.4 Objectives

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

(i)   To identify lexical and grammatical errors committed by Grade Twelve pupils in narrative pieces of composition;

(ii)   To classify the identified errors into specific types;

(iii)   To relate the identified lexical and grammatical errors to specific aspects of the first language; and

(iv)   To establish how the identified errors hamper discourse coherence or comprehensibility.

1.5 Research Questions

The study seeks to provide answers to the following questions:

(i)   What are some of the lexical and grammatical errors committed by Grade Twelve pupils in narrative pieces of composition?

(ii)   In what specific categories do the errors identified in (i) above fall?

(iii)   From what aspects of the first language do these errors emanate? and

(iv)   How do the identified errors hamper discourse coherence or comprehensibility?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study has both theoretical and practical significance. With regard to theory, the study has potential to contribute to either re-enforcement of or adjustment to error analysis and first language interference theories. In practical terms, the study was expected to yield data which might be useful in packaging remedial materials by teachers of English. The findings might also be useful to language education practitioners, as well as curriculum specialists, because they might cause them to revisit some of the second language teaching approaches currently in use.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

In the field of Applied Linguistics, there are two major theories applicable to error analysis. These are contrastive analysis and error analysis which are based on the concept of structuralism, a branch of linguistics that emphasizes the significance of the interrelations between the elements that constitute a linguistic system.

The theoretical framework that guided this study was the error analysis (EA) theory which was used to analyze the errors made by Grade 12 pupils in their written pieces of discourse. However, in some cases where there was need to identify similarities and differences between a Zambian language (L1) and English (Target language) contrastive analysis (CA) was used.

Brown H.D (1980:205) has defined linguistic errors as "a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner." He cites an example "*Does John can sing?"* where a preceding '*do'* auxiliary verb has been used as an error. In Applied Linguistics, an **error** is defined as a deviation from accepted rules of a language made by a learner of a second language. Such errors result from the learner's lack of knowledge of correct rules of the target language. A significant distinction is generally made between **errors** and **mistakes** which are not treated the same from a linguistic viewpoint.

1.7.1 Sources of Errors

Selinker (1974:120) isolates five different strategies adopted by learners in interlanguage building as potential sources of errors. One of the five strategies, as isolated by Selinker, is a case of negative intralingua transfer. He states that negative transfer usually occurs when writers transfer items and structures that are not the same in both languages. He further says within the theory of CA (the systematic study of a pair of languages with a view to identifying their structural differences and similarities), the greater the differences between the two languages, the more negative transfer can be expected. The present study focuses on the errors that occur as a result of mother tongue interference.

The source of errors can be either Interlingua or Intralingua. Interlingua errors are attributed to L1 interference. They occur due to negative transfer from L1 to the target language. Intralingua errors are those due to the nature or structure of the target language. According to Richards (1976:6), they are items produced by the learner which reflect not the structures of the mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language. The learner in this case, tries to "drive the rules behind the data to which he /she has been exposed, and may develop hypothesis that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor the target language. What causes such errors is the inadequate knowledge of the rules of a target language by the learners, regardless of their L1. Intralingua errors can be experienced in overgeneralization, over-simplification and induced errors" (Corder, 1971).

1.7.2 Description of Errors

Description of errors aims at establishing how an error affects communication process under the themes such as omission, addition and distribution. Omission deals with the absence of a word such as an article or a preposition. e.g. what we are talking is that… (swe chotwaamba… – Tonga) instead of 'what we are saying is…'. Addition is concerned with the application of double grammatical markers (e.g. 'men they don't like…' instead of 'men don't like…'). Distribution deals with the disarrangement of elements in a sentence due to linguistic interference in terms of word order, agreement (concord)) and many others as in *Her closet always is nicely organized,* and *There was many people at the stadium.*

1.7.3 Categorisation of Errors

Ellis cited in Erdoga (2009: 246) made a distinction between a mistake and an error by arguing that "mistake is consistency of learner's performance. If the learners at times use the correct form and at other times use the wrong one, then that is a mistake. However, an error is when the learners always use a form incorrectly. Mistakes can be corrected by the learner. The learner can determine the correction of his/her own deviant utterance." From this we can conclude that errors are committed as a result of lack of knowledge and cannot be self-corrected whereas mistakes are slips which can be self-corrected by the learner.

1.7.3.1 Lexical Errors:

Lexical errors involve the choice of words. They are errors at the word level.

For example, according to the 2016 Chief Examiner's report, they include, choosing the **wrong word** for the meaning the learners want to express.

(i)   *'I **made** my homework'* instead of *'I **did** my homework.'*
(ii)   *'They drove **there** new car to Mbala last **weak.'*** instead of *They drove **their** new car to Mbala last **week.'***
(iii)   *'When you hear the siren, run to the **whole,'** the **Principle** ordered the students* instead of *'When you hear the siren, run to the **hall,'** the **Principal** ordered the students.*
(iv)   Other wrong words used:
          'pregnant' for 'pregnancy'
          'letter' for 'later'
          'where' for 'were'
          'there' for 'their' or 'they'
          'fair' for 'fare'

Wrong pronoun:

This is the wrong usage of pronouns which is influenced by many factors such as the first language usages and expressions. For example:

*My father was very upset with me for failing the examination. **They** could not talk to me for one week. **'They'** here is referring to the father.*

Colloquial/Slang: These are words that may be used in conversations but not suitable in formal writing. For example, the 2016 Chief Examiner's report record the following:

(i)   *'Mum' and 'Dad' for 'mother' and 'father'*

(ii)   *'Kids' for 'children'*

(iii)   *'Guys' for 'men'*

Preposition: The wrong preposition has been used.

    *'Francisco used to sit **in** his desk'* instead of *'Francisco used to sit **at** his desk.'*

1.7.3.2 Grammatical Errors

Grammatical errors involve writing faulty structures which may include wrong verbal tenses, incorrect verbal forms, and syntax problems, among others.

(i)   *'I **go** to town yesterday'* instead of *'I **went** to town yesterday'.*

(ii)   *'When my grandfather **start** teaching, there were very few teachers who were Zambian'* Instead of *'When my grandfather **started** teaching, there were very few teachers who were Zambian'*

(iii)   *'I was **very** happy that I hugged my friend'* instead of *'I was **so** happy that I hugged my friend'.*

Subject-verb agreement: The verb does not agree with the subject:

(i)   *'She come to school everyday'* instead of *'She comes to school everyday.'*

(ii)   *'The earth go round the sun'* instead of *'The earth goes round the sun.'*

(iii)   *'There was many people at the stadium'* instead of *'There were many people at the stadium.'*

(iv)   *'A computer **give** us access to important information'* instead of *'A computer **gives** us access to important information.'*

Subject omission: The subject is missing in the sentence.

    'She visited the doctor because had a terrible headache' instead of

    'She *visited the doctor because she had a terrible headache.'*

Singular –plural agreement

> (i) *'These photograph are mine'* instead of *'These photographs are mine'*
>
> (ii) *'The people is poor'* instead of *'The people were poor.'*

To-infinitive

> (i) *'It takes two hours **to driving** to Ndola'* instead of *'It takes two hours **to drive** to Ndola'*
>
> (ii) ***'To eating** nshima with cutlery is not easy'* instead of ***'To eat** nshima with cutlery is not easy.'*

Passivisation

> (i) *'The celebration was **hold** in May 2014'* instead of *'The celebration was **held** in May 2014.'*
>
> (ii) *'Mwanawasa stadium was **build** in 2010'* instead of *'Mwanawasa stadium was **built** in 2010.'*

Comparative adjective forms

> (i) *'The teacher speaks **more better** English'* instead of *'The teacher speaks **better** English.'*
>
> (ii) *'English is **most** widely spoken in England **than** in Zambia'* instead of *'English is **more** widely spoken in England **than** in Zambia.'*

Parallelism: In a series of elements, these are not presented in a parallel form.

> (i) *'The role of the teacher is to teach and modeling pupils'* instead of *'The role of the teacher is to teach and model pupils.'*
>
> (ii) *'The teacher enjoys teaching and write novels'* instead of *'The teacher enjoys teaching and writing novels.'*
>
> (iii) *'He enjoys reading, to swim, and visit his friends'* instead of *'He enjoys reading, swimming, and visiting his friends.'*

Word order: The order of the words in a sentence is not correct.

> *'Her closet always is nicely organized'* instead of *'Her closet is always nicely organized.'*

Adjective / Adverb:

> An adjective form has been used instead of an adverb or vice versa.

'Fabio is carelessly' instead of *'Fabio is careless.'*

'My grandfather drives very careful' instead of *My grandfather drives carefully.'*

Verb form:

An incorrect form of the verb has been used.

*'Have you ever **imagine** today's society without computers?'* instead of *'Have you ever **imagined** today's society without computers?'*

Verb tense: An incorrect verb tense has been used.

*'She **get** pregnant when she was in high school'* instead of *'She **got** pregnant when she was in high school.'*

*'I **go** to town yesterday'* instead of *'I **went** to town yesterday.'*

Pronoun: The wrong pronoun has been used or the reference is not clear.

*'When my grandparents got married, **them** did not have any money'* instead of *'When my grandparents got married, **they** did not have any money.'*

Comparative: The comparative form is not correct; the student did not use a comparative form where it was required; the student used a comparative form where it was not required.

*'My brother grew **more stronger** than my cousin'* instead of *'My brother grew **stronger** than my cousin.'*

Demonstrative adjective: The wrong demonstrative adjective was used.

*'**These type** of beliefs is very common'* instead of *'**This type** of beliefs is very common.'*

Article: The student used the wrong article; the student did not use any article.

'Jessica likes to paint and play guitar' instead of *'Jessica likes to paint and play the guitar.'*

Possessive noun: The apostrophe + s ('s or s') was misplaced or omitted.

*'My two **sister's** dolls had been stolen.'* instead of *'My two **sisters'** dolls had been stolen.'*

Punctuation: Punctuation marks are misplaced, misused, or omitted.

(i) 'If you live with your parents your lunch will be ready when you get

Home' instead of *'If you live with your parents, your lunch will be ready when you get home.*

(ii) *'You have to go to the supermarket buy your food and prepare it Yourself'* instead of '*You have to go to the supermarket, buy your food, and prepare it yourself.'*

1.7.4 Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis

Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis are used in second language teaching and learning investigation. Fauziatic (2014:9) explains that "they constitute evolutionary phrases in the attempt to understand and explain the nature of the target language learners' performance." He identifies these two as being among the theories whose goal is to facilitate deeper understanding of the process involved in L2 teaching and learning.

Many studies have been conducted on EA and CA from different perspectives such as the ones mentioned and explained in 1.7.2 below.

1.7.4.1 Error Analysis (EA)

Brown (1980:166) defines error analysis as "the process carried out to observe, analyze, and classify the deviations of the rules of the second language and then to reveal the systems operated by learners." This perspective is similar to that of Crystal (1987:112) who has pointed out that "error analysis is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language, using any of the principles and procedures provided by linguists."

This is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make. Error analysis (hereafter EA) is the examination of the errors committed by learners (in this study Grade 12 learners) in both spoken and written discourse. Corder (1967: 125), who has contributed greatly to EA, says "the study of errors is part of the investigation of the process of language learning. In this respect, it resembles methodologically the study of the acquisition of the linguistic development of a learner and may give us indications as to the learning process."

Error analysis provides information on pupils' errors to teachers who in turn use it to correct the pupils' written work, hence improving the effectiveness of their teaching. Richards et al. (1996:127) state that "error analysis has been conducted to identify strategies which learners use in language learning to track the causes of learners' errors, obtain information on common difficulties in language learning or on how to prepare teaching materials." Similarly, Michaelides (1990:30) states that "the systematic analysis of students' errors can be of great value to all those concerned, i.e., teachers, students, and the researchers. For teachers, it can offer a clear and reliable picture of his students' knowledge of the target language."

According to Corder (1967), error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that looks at the errors learners make. It consists of a comparison between the errors that are made in the target language (TL) and the TL itself. Error analysis is therefore an activity carried out to review errors found in writing and speaking. Richards et al, (1985-96) state that error analysis is the study of errors made by the second and foreign language learners.

Error analysis has two objectives. Corder (1974) names the two objectives as theoretical and applied. The theoretical objective explains what and how a learner learns when he/she studies a second language. The applied objective serves to enable the learner learn more efficiently by exploiting the knowledge of his/her dialect for pedagogical purposes. However, this study is guided by the theoretical part because the applied is beyond the scope of the present study.

According to Richards (1992) cited in Lasten (2014:2) "error analysis has become an interesting task for teachers who teach writing as it helps them identify their own teaching methodologies and their students' ability in writing and guides them in choosing the strategies and topics that best suit the students' capacity."

Error analysis is particularly important for learners because it focuses mainly on their performance in formal contexts, in this case, the secondary school. Ellis cited in Erdoga (2009: 246) made a distinction between a mistake and an error by arguing that "mistake is consistency of learner's performance. If the learners at times use the correct form and at other times use the wrong one, then that is a mistake. However an error is when the learners always use a form incorrectly. Mistakes can be corrected by the learner. The learners can determine the correction of his/her own deviant utterance." From this we can conclude that errors are committed as a

result of lack of knowledge and cannot be self-corrected whereas mistakes are slips which can be self-corrected by the learner.

Errors occur when the learner does not know the rule and needs to be taught or shown that wrong knowledge has been applied to a particular situation. This therefore means that a mistake can be self-corrected but an error cannot. Errors are likely to occur repeatedly without being recognized by the learner. Hence, only the teacher or researcher would locate them, the learner would not (Gas and Selinker, 1994). It is in this light that the researcher chose to focus on the lexical and grammatical errors committed by the Grade Twelve pupils in their final examinations.

Mother tongue or LI interference is one of the sources or causes of errors. Wilkins (1972: 199) observes that, "When learning a foreign language an individual already knows his mother tongue, and it is this which he attempts to transfer. The transfer may prove to be justified because the structures of the two languages is similar - in that case we get 'positive transfer'or'facilitation' - or it may prove unjustified because the structures of the two languages are different in that case to get 'negative transfer'- or interference".

The process in which incorrect linguistic features or errors become a permanent part with which a person uses language is called fossilization. According to Nakuma (1998) fossilization is a term used to denote what appears to be a state of permanent failure on the part of an L2 learner to acquire a given feature of target language. On the other hand, interlanguage is regarded as the kind of language that has aspects that are borrowed, transferred and generalized from the mother tongue. It is the type of language produced by second language and foreign learners who are in the process of learning a language (Richards et al. 1992).

According to Thornbury (1999), errors can be classified into three different types taking into account lexicon, grammar, and discourse. Lexical errors are defined as the errors that are committed at the word level, and they include, for example, choosing the wrong word for the meaning the students want to express (*I made my homework* instead of *I did my home work*). Grammar errors involve writing faulty structures which may include wrong verbal tenses, incorrect verbal forms, and syntax problems, among others. On the other hand, discourse errors are those "which relate to the way sentences are organized and linked in order to make whole texts" (p.114).

1.7.4.2 Error Analysis Procedures

The first stage in error analysis consists of what James (1998:19) calls the 'broad trawl'. He lists three reasons for describing data:

1. The need for labels so that intuitions can be compared with those of other people;
2. The need to the count errors; and
3. The need to create categories of errors which can be compared intralingually and crosslingually.

The second stage of error analysis is where one finds the number of obligatory contexts and calculates suppliance of the morpheme. Problems with this approach include instances where the learner avoids the structure. This is especially problematic when comparing learners where one learner uses the form and another avoids the form (Tarone, 1987).

1.7.4.3 Contrastive Analysis (CA)

Lado (1957) cited in Gass and Selinker (1983:2) defines Contrastive Analysis as "the systematic study of a pair of languages with a view to identifying their structural differences and similarities." Contrastive Analysis (CA) was first proposed by Charles C. Fries as an integral component of the methodology of foreign language teaching. Fries (1945:9) declared that "the most effective materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language of the learner." Fries can thus be said to have issued the charter for modern CA. According to Sridhar (1980:93:94) "the rationale for conducting contrastive studies comes mainly from three sources: (1) Practical experience of the foreign language teachers, (2) studies of language contact in bilingual situations and (3) Theory of learning." Weinrich in Fauziatic (2014:20) added that "there is also the phenomenon of language interference that those instances of deviation from the norms of either language that occur in speech of the bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language" From Sridhar's and Weinrich's writing, we can conclude that every experienced foreign language teacher knows that a substantial number of persistent errors made by his students can be traced to their mother tongue. The learner is carrying forward patterns of the mother tongue into his target language performance. This seems to result in the production of

deviant sentences in the areas where the structures of the native language and the target language differ the most.

Lado (1957) cited in Gass and Selinker (1983:1) wrote, "Individuals tend to transfer forms and meanings and the distribution of the forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language culture both productivity and when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture and respectively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and culture as practiced by natives" From Lado's writing, it can be concluded that Contrastive Analysis (CA) indicates that mother tongue influence is the main source of errors. CA thus pays attention to different languages at lexical, phonological, syntactical and semantic levels. Similarities and differences between languages can be traced through grammatical structures such as the use of pronouns, articles and verbs, sentence constructions such as the use of interrogatives, relative clauses, phrases and rules of the compared languages such as those pertaining to passivisation.

There are two types of contrastive analysis: Theoretical and Applied. Theoretical CA describes the similarities and differences between linguistic features in detail basing on a given theory. The description in turn is sufficient to be used for contrasting different language elements in question. Applied CA is an approach employed to compare linguistic features of two or more languages systematically. For this study, Applied CA was used to compare English learnt as a second language (L2) and the G12 pupils' mother tongue (L1).

Contrastive Analysis holds the view that L1 interferes with L2 acquisition negatively and that there is need to overcome the L1 interference in L2 writing (Hui, 2010). For example, from a grammatical perspective, a contrast can be made between the use of subject and object personal pronouns in English and the local languages.

1.7.5 Language interference

Language interference is defined by Corder (1981:84) as that which learners carry over to or generalize in their knowledge about their native language as they learn a target language. Duly, Burt and Krashen (1982) suggest two possible ways of looking at interference: the Psychological and Sociolinguistic perspectives of language.

The psychological perspective is due to interference from old habits when new ones are being learnt while the sociolinguistic perspective relates to language interactions that occur when two language communities are in contact. For example, '*can you hear the aroma of fresh fish*?' During the contact, there is borrowing, code-switching and fossilization. Borrowing is the incorporation of linguistic material from one language into another. Code-switching is the use of two language systems for communication. This is evidenced by a sudden brief shift from one language to another. Fossilization refers to relatively permanent incorporation of incorrect linguistic forms into ones second language competence (Duly, Burt and Krashen, 1982). This study is in line with the psychological perspective since it seeks to analyze some errors which were due to L1 interference.

1.7.5.1 Lexical interference

This interference is manifested in writing by way of words being borrowed from L1 into L2 (Target language). For example, '*I **made** my homework'* meaning '*I did my homework.'*

1.7.5.2 Grammatical Interference

Grammatical interference manifests itself in wrong sentence construction (structure) due to wrong word order, subject-verb agreement and coordination. For example, '*He was leaving to go to Lusaka'* meaning '*He left for Lusaka.'*

1.8 Methodological Framework

This study employed the qualitative approach to gather appropriate data to address the research questions raised in 1.5 above. This approach was found most suitable because the study sought to examine local language interference lexical and grammatical errors in English as a Second Language (ESL) written discourse, with particular focus on some Grade Twelve learners' written pieces of composition.

A study to identify, categorize and explain the errors as obtained from scripts written by Grade Twelve school leavers, has never been conducted in Zambia. This is the knowledge gap that this study seeks to fill. This study focuses on identification, categorization, and explanation of the errors in the English language written scripts obtained from the ECZ marking centre. Since English is the official and second language in the country of 73 local languages, competence in

English writing is necessary in all sectors of society. Due to this status given to English, it is mandatory for every citizen of school-going age to learn and use English to conduct official business or legally deal with authorities (Walters, 1979). A comprehensive description of the research procedures and techniques employed in the study is presented in Chapter Three.

1.9 Scope of the Study

This study focused on identification, description and explanation of L1 interference lexical and grammatical errors. It does not include the phonological, morphological and pragmatics related errors. Further, it was restricted to the specific scripts collected for analysis and may not be generalisable to other scripts.

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

This section presents an account of some terms which have been used in this study. They have been defined and explained in additional detail and in words suitable to this study to possibly avoid misunderstanding them.

1.10.1 First language (L1)

This is a person's home language which is acquired first or the mother tongue.

1.10.2 Language Interference

This occurs in language contact environments. These environments could be bilingual or multilingual speech communities where one language intrudes into or interferes with another. Language elements which intrude into or interfere with another language result in discourse incoherence/incomprehensibility.

1.10.3 English as a Second Language (ESL)

Nordquist (2015) defines ESL as a traditional term for the use or study of the English language by non-native speakers in an English-speaking environment. *English as a Second Language* also refers to specialized approaches to language teaching designed for those whose primary language is not English.

1.11 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is made up of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the study by providing background information to the entire study, stating the specific problem under investigation. The chapter further outlines the aim and objectives of the study, the specific research questions

addressed, and the research limitations experienced. The chapter further presents the theoretical framework within which the study was undertaken and also presents the operational definitions by defining and illustrating some of the major concepts relating to the study.

The second chapter focuses on the presentation of the literature review. It reviews some of the available literature that was considered to be of direct relevance to this study in order to place the investigation within the context of similar surveys, thereby enriching it and providing a justification for the study.

The third chapter describes the research design and methodology that was applied in this study in order to provide answers to the questions raised in chapter one. This chapter gives a brief summary of the methodological framework employed in data collection and analysis, the sample size, techniques, and the data collection. It has also defined the design which was used, the research instruments that were used for data collection, as well as the techniques that were applied in the analysis of data, and reflections on ethical issues.

The fourth chapter presents the research findings and a discussion. It has given the interpretations of the data based on the research objectives and questions raised in the introduction. It is a presentation and discussion of the findings of the study which was conducted at the marking centre for English paper 1(composition) for the 2015 marking session. The chapter further presents the answers to the research questions as drawn from the data that were collected. Research objectives provided headings under which the findings were discussed in order to find what answers have been provided from the data.

Finally, chapter five presents the conclusions and recommendations that need to be put in place by all stakeholders in order to solve the problem of L1 lexical and grammatical errors which are committed by the Grade Twelve pupils in their written English Language composition examinations. Based on the findings, the chapter draws conclusions and recommendations with regard to the L1 errors committed by the grade twelve pupils in their compositions. The chapter concludes with recommendations for policy development and further research on L1 interference.

1.12 Summary

The general introduction of the dissertation has been presented in this chapter. It has presented the background to the study and thereafter, the statement of the problem, the aim, objectives and research questions, and the theoretical framework. Explanation of the operational definitions and theoretical concepts in this section involved defining and exemplifying them to show how they were applied in this study. Finally, the chapter has presented the scope of the study and the structure of the dissertation.

The next chapter deals with a review of some of the available literature considered relevant to this study. This is to align the investigation with similar research so as to enrich it and provide a justification for it.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This chapter reviews some of the relevant literature available on L1 interference on writing with a view to identifying the gaps in our existing knowledge that this study intended to fill. It outlines some studies which have been conducted regarding mother tongue (L1) interference in the writing of English. The aim of the review is to anchor the study with similar research so as to enrich it and provide justification for it. According to Kombo and Tromp (2009:62), "Literature review enables the researcher to study different theories related to the identified topic. By studying these theories, a researcher gains clarity and better understanding of the theoretical foundations related to the current research."

This chapter opens with a review of the studies on L1 interference in written discourse in some countries where English is used as foreign language and where it is used as second language. The chapter ends with a conclusion and summary of the reviewed literature.

Extensive studies have been conducted regarding mother tongue (L1) interference in the writing of English.

2.1 Studies in Countries where English is used as a Foreign Language (EFL)

One of the studies reviewed was that of Abdallah (2011:3) entitled 'Lexical Errors Made by In-Service English Language Teachers in Jordan'. The author observes that "lexis is one of the major problems which confront EFL learners and due to their "anemic vocabulary, they are variable to communicate their ideas as clearly as they would like to." He observed that writing ability is hampered by EFL learners' limited vocabulary. He noticed that some of the pronunciation errors made by EFL learners were teacher-based. The learners' pronunciation is to a large extent influenced by that of their teachers'. He further observed that lexical errors are more serious than grammatical errors and distort comprehensibility.

Abdallah's study aimed at identifying the types of lexical errors made by in-service English Language teachers in Jordan. The sample of the study consisted of 50 in-service English

language teachers. The data were gathered from the final examination papers. The results showed two main categories of errors: interlingua and intralingua. He observes that Interlingua errors take the form of translation, assumed synonymity and wrong collocation motivated by LI interference, while intralingua errors were due to phonic and graphic resemblance as well as over generalization.

Abdallah's study is similar to the current study in that both studies gathered data from the final examination papers. However, whereas Abdallah's study emphasized establishing errors committed by in-service teachers of English language, the present study sought to look at the errors committed by Zambian Grade Twelve learners of English due to L1 interference. It involved a description of some instances of L1 interference in narrative pieces of compositions produced by Grade Twelve pupils.

Another study that was reviewed was that of Nesreen (2014:85) entitled 'Error Analysis: A Case Study of Saudi Learner's English Grammatical Speaking Errors' who states that "some errors reflect the conflict between the two systems, as students often transfer and over-generalize the rules of the two languages." The main objective of Nesreen's study was to investigate and analyze the most common speech errors that Saudi students commit during the second language learning process and to provide further knowledge regarding the source of these errors. The discussion included the linguistic differences between Arabic and English, as well as the unconscious development of student errors. He further noted that words and sentence structures in L2 can be altered because of the incorrect use of tenses, verb forms; which can be a result of various factors, which include L1 interference or personal and environmental factors. He concluded by saying that interference occurs because of the differences in the system of the mother tongue and the second language.

In conducting the study, Nesreen employed oral interviews for data collection. A total of 30 Saudi Arabian students were interviewed personally. The results were as indicted in previous studies. He identified transformation of the rules from first language to the foreign language as the most frequent source of errors in second language acquisition no matter what the first language is. He concluded by saying most of the errors were due to mother tongue interference.

While Nesreen's study investigated and analyzed the most common speech errors that Saudi students commit, the current study sought to analyze the errors committed by the Zambian Grade Twelve pupils in their written narrative pieces of composition. Nesreen studied Arabian students using English as a foreign language while in the present study, researcher investigated Zambian pupils using English as a second language. Further, while Nesreen's study was based on data collected through interviews, the present study is based on data collected from written scripts.

Hasyim (2002) conducted a study at Hasanuddin University on 'Error analysis in the Teaching of English'. The main purpose of this study was to discuss the importance of error analysis in the teaching of English as a foreign language. In this study, Hasyim analysed some Form Four Malay students English sentences containing grammatical errors. The analysis of the errors was based on the theories presented by the linguists using Corder's (2002) model. Using this model, sentences were analyzed in terms of grammar rules of the target language and whether the sentences were overtly or covertly idiosyncratic. Sentences were also examined to find out whether the writers were influenced by their mother tongue or not. The aim of the analysis was to show the students the causes of various kinds of grammatical errors. This way, the students were expected to increase their knowledge of English grammar.

The study identified the following causes of the Form Four students' errors: (i) Wrong use of adjectives (ii) Wrong presentation of subject and incorrect agreement (iii) Wrong use of question word 'how far' (iv) Wrong use of prepositions (v) Error in using passive voice, and (vi) Mother tongue interference. The study revealed that generalization was very common in the pupils' sentences.

There is a link between Hasyim's study and the present one as both aimed at establishing the types and source of error that the learners of English as a foreign and second language respectively make. Whereas Hasyim focused his study on analyzing grammatical error only, the current study is dealing with L1 interference lexical and grammatical errors made in Grade Twelve pupils' examination scripts. This is the knowledge gap that the present study is trying to fill up.

Bennui (2008: 72) conducted a study entitled 'A Study of L1 Interference in the Writing of Thai EFL Students' on L1 interference and observed that "thinking in English when writing in English

was very difficult for Thai students. Their Thai language structures and culture inevitably interfered with their written English." He further observed that the interference of the Thai linguistic elements in students' written English arose in three aspects: grammatical structures, vocabulary items and discourse'.

The main objective of Bennui's study was to analyse and describe L1 interference in the third year English-minor students' paragraph writing in the Basic Writing course at Thaksin University. There were 28 third year English-minor students whose papers were sampled. Three levels of L1 interference, namely words, sentences and discourse, were analysed from samples of the students' paragraph writing in the final examination paper. It was found that literal translation of Thai words into English mainly represented features of L1 lexical interference in students' written English. Bennui concluded that the three levels of L1 interference represented more of negative transfer than positive transfer in the students' written English. Bennui's study concentrated on Thai EFL students while the current one focuses on Zambian learning and using English as a second language.

Kittiporn Nonkukhetkhong presented a paper entitled 'Grammatical Error Analysis of the First Year English Major Students, Udon Thani Rajabhat Unoversity' to the Asian Conference on Language Learning in 2013 in Osaka, Japan. The purpose of the research paper was to investigate types of grammatical errors made by the first year English major students at Udon Thaui Rajabat University and to explain the characteristics of the errors. Guided by Error Analysis to analyse the results, Kittiporn collected data from 49 first year English major students' 200-250 word essays. Frequencies and percentages were used for data analysis. The results indicated that the most frequent errors were general grammatical errors regarding use of verbs, nouns, and possessive ease, as well as syntactic errors such as sentence structure, ordering and co-ordination. The characteristics of grammatical errors found in the study were omission, misinformation, misordering and overgeneralisation.

It was concluded that the evidence of grammatical errors indicated that the first year English majors had some difficulties in using correct grammatical forms and structures. However, the errors did not affect the communication process much since the students could get themselves understood.

On the other hand, although Kittiporn investigated and explained the types of grammatical errors made by the first year English major students, the paper did not address the lexical and grammatical errors arising from L1 interference. Further, the paper concentrated on English as a foreign language while the current study investigated instances of use of English as second language.

Subramanian (2009) undertook a study in Malaysia 'Error Analysis of the Written English Essays of Secondary School Students in Malaysia' to examine errors in a corpus of 72 essays written by 72 participants. The objective of the study was to investigate the types of errors made by Form Four students in their written work. The study sought to address the question: What are the six most common errors that students make in their essays?

The participants were 37 male and 35 female Form Four Malay students who were studying at a secondary school in Malaysia. They came from a non-English speaking background and hardly communicated in English outside the school. The instrument used for this study was participants' written essays and the Markin software was utilized to analyze the errors in the essays. Markin is a Windows 95/98/ME/NT4/2000/XP program developed by Martin Holmes in 1996. It was used as a tool to allow teachers to mark written materials done by students electronically. It is a program for marking and annotating text documents using a Windows computer. All of the errors in the essays were identified and classified into various categories.

The results of the study revealed that the six most common errors committed by the participants were singular/plural form, verb tense, word choice, preposition, subject-verb agreement and word order. These aspects of writing in English posed the most difficult problems to participants. The study shed light on the manner in which students internalize the rules of the target language, which is English.

Subramanian's study is similar to the current study in the sense that both studies analysed written essays from which they identified and classified errors into various categories. However, the instruments used and the procedure for analysis of data and the findings are different. Whereas Subramanian analyzed the errors using a designed computer programme, the analysis in the current study was done manually by the researcher because he was not aware of the existence of the same program.

Hamjah (2012) in an article entitled 'Error Analysis in Mother Tongue (Bima Language) Interference in Writing Skill' reports results of a study conducted on Bima language interference on English writing skills among students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. The objectives of the study were to describe the type of errors made by the students at the university by showing error dominance, and to show the pedagogical consequence in language teaching of writing skills. The method used was case study because the study involved the writer observing activities by students when they conducted the teaching-learning process. He observed students of Bima from the English department. The techniques of collecting data were observation, interview, record and transcription. The result of the study showed three categories of errors made by students of Bima. The three were identified as morphological, lexical and syntax levels. Morphological level consists of omission of the prefixes and suffixes. Lexical level contains verbs, articles, pronouns, adverbs, nouns and conjunctions. The syntactical level include the tenses and the 'to be' verb.

However, while Hamjar concentrated on how one language interferes in the writing skills in English, the study did not give the causes as well as the explanation of the specific instances of L1 interference lexical and grammatical errors.

2.2 Studies in Africa where English is a Second Language.

Another study that was reviewed was that of Noemi Soares Silva 'The Impact of Mother Tongue on Teaching English as a Foreign Language at Beginner Level'. In the dissertation, Silva (2008) examined the influence that Creole has on Capeverdean students learning English as a foreign language. Some theories of language acquisition and language transfer, such as Contrastive Analysis were employed in trying to describe, analyse and explain the errors made by low level students in their written work in order to carry out the research, a questionnaire for teachers was designed. A pilot-testing with English teachers was done and based on the difficulties observed by the teachers, some modifications were made concerning some words and clarity of some questions. Silva found that lack of materials was one of the many problems that had negative impact on the learning of a foreign language. The situation got worse when students do not have sufficient opportunities for speaking, listening and writing the target language. Further, some teachers used Portuguese or Creole as median of instruction in the classroom, thereby

diminishing students' exposure to the target language. The native language dominates at home and in some cases in the classroom.

Out of these findings, it was concluded that Creole has a negative impact on the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. In terms of learning the structures, the mother tongue, in this case, Creole exerts a negative influence because the students transfer what they know in their mother tongue into English language.

However, while Silva's study concentrated on how the mother tongue impacted negatively on the teaching and learning of English language as a foreign language, it did not give a descriptive analysis of specific instances of L1 interference through lexical and grammatical errors. In addition, Silva used a questionnaire to elicit information while the present study used naturally occurring written discourse as some of data.

Moonga (2012) examined general errors committed by Grade Eleven pupils learning English as a second language in selected schools in Kabwe and Monze districts of Zambia. Written essay questions were administered to 120 pupils in six selected schools. Using Error Analysis, the errors were categorized according to types. Through the focus group discussions, a variety of possible sources of pupil errors were pointed out. The study revealed four main groupings of errors: grammatical, morphological/lexical, semantic and phonological. The study revealed that most of the errors were due to Interlingua rather than intralingua influence. Multilingualism affects the quality of written English in the schools.

Whereas Moonga examined the general errors committed by some selected Grade Eleven pupils from two districts, the current study is based on written scripts produced by Grade Twelve examination writers sampled from the whole country with specific focus on L1 interference errors. The results of this study can be generalized to all the local languages in the country as opposed to two languages; Bemba and Tonga represented by Kabwe and Monze districts respectively in Moonga's study.

Mukuka (2010) in the study entitled 'An Analysis of Syntactic Errors committed by Bemba-Speaking High School Pupils Learning French in Lusaka Province of Zambia' examined the

errors that were committed by Bemba-Speaking learners of French in Zambia. The study aimed at testing the theoretical position that First Language (L1) and Second Language (L2) interfere with the learning of Third Language (L3). Survey questionnaires were administered and were followed by written tests. The study revealed four major categories namely: Agreement, Word Order, Coordination and Sentence Structure. The results suggested that both L1 and L2 interfere with the learning of L3 construction.

Mukuka's study is relevant to the current study in that the aim is in line with the aim of this study; to identify, classify and analyze error in students' written productions. However, Mukuka's focus was on the syntactic errors made by Bemba-Speaking pupils in the learning of French while the focus in the current study is on L1 interference lexical and grammatical errors made by Grade Twelve pupils in their English Language examinations. The study concentrated on how First Language (L1) and Second Language (L2) interfere with the learning of Third Language (L3), it did not give a descriptive analysis of specific instances of L1 interference through lexical and grammatical errors. In addition, Mukuka used a questionnaire to elicit information while the present study used naturally occurring written discourse as some of data.

2.3 Summary

This chapter has presented a review of some literature which was considered to be of direct bearing and relevance to the current study so as to place the research within the context of similar studies thereby enriching it and providing further justification for it.

A review of literature on L1 interference has shown that the Interlingua errors take the form of translation, assumed synonymity and wrong collocation motivated by L1. Intralingua errors are due to phonic and graphic resemblance and overgeneralization. The literature reviewed has also shown that words and sentences in L2 can be altered because of the incorrect use of tenses, and verb forms which can be as a result of L1 interference. This interference occurs because of the differences between the systems of the mother tongue and the second language. Literal translation of L1 words into English, for instance, mainly brings out features of L1 lexical interference in students written English. The review of literature has also indicated that in terms of learning the structures, the mother tongue exerts a negative influence. Students transfer what they know in their mother tongue into English.

The next chapter presents the methodology that applied in the current study, the research design, study area and sources, sample collection, and data collection and analysis procedures that were used for this research.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Overview

The previous chapter provided a review of some of the available literature that was considered relevant to this study in order to situate this study in the perspective of similar studies as well as provide a justification for the study. In this regard, the chapter discussed studies on L1interference in some written pieces of compositions. Thereafter a summary of the chapter was done. The current chapter presents the research methodology that was applied in the study. It commences by presenting the research design that was used, followed by the study population investigated, the sample size, data collection procedure, the instrument employed in the collection of data, the administration of the instrument, data analysis, some of the ethical issues that were taken into account during the research and closes with a summary of the chapter.

3.1 Research design

Kumar (1996) defines research design as a procedural plan that is adopted by a researcher to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately and economically. As Kombo and Tromp (2006) state, research design is the conceptual structure within which the planned research is conducted. Research design shows the planned outline the researcher has opted to use to generate answers to the research problems identified. Arising from this definition, it is the case that a research design provides the basis for the selection of appropriate research methods to be used in investigating a given phenomenon. In the present study the researcher employed descriptive research design with text analysis as specific research approach based on the perspective of written discourse as rule-structured object or product of a completed activity (Hyland, 2016).

Triangulation was applied in both data collection and analysis. This approach involves use of two or more theories, methods, data sources, or investigators in the study of a given phenomenon. As Mukonde (2009:45) indicates, "using triangulation can capture a more complete, holistic and contextual portrayal and reveal varied dimensions of a given phenomenon." Of the many types of triangulation given above, this study employed data triangulation and methodological triangulation. For data collection triangulation which involves

collecting data at different sites and from different participants, the researcher collected Grade Twelve ESL learners' written pieces of composition scripts from a cross section of learners who had written the examinations from different centers in the country. Data analysis triangulation involved analysis carried out by the researcher as well as verification by markers and examiners at the examination centre where the data were being generated from. According to Polonsky and Waller (2011:149), "Qualitative research methods involve utilizing a diverse range of data, including the spoken and printed word, record sound and vision, and images, forms, and structures in various media." In this study, the type of data is qualitative because it is in form of words even though in some cases, descriptive statistics in form of frequency tables were used to display the type and frequency of errors.

3.2 Sample Collection

The sample or corpus for the study was collected in December, 2015 at the Grade 12 marking centre for English paper 1 (composition) during the marking exercise. Collecting data from scripts provided under final examinations ensured uniformity of questions answered and conditions for all the selected scripts under which they were answered. The marking centre as research site was deemed suitable to give a balanced picture of the types and sources of errors that Grade 12 examination candidates make in terms of their written compositions.

3.3 Sample Size

A total of 150 naturally produced pieces of written discourse (scripts) produced by the Grade Twelve candidates who wrote their examination in 2015 were selected out of which the errors were identified. The Examinations Council of Zambia English Language paper 1 which was written in 2015 comprised of two sections. Candidates were to answer two questions, one from each section, in 1 hour 45 minutes. In section 1, candidates were asked to write on one out of six topics. They were to write pieces of composition of about 250 to 350 words. Section 2 consisted of one guided composition question. Candidates were expected to write an article for the school magazine using the information from the table of traffic accidents statistics. The length of the article was to be between 250 and 350 words.

3.4 Data Collection

The researcher examined each of the selected scripts for the presence of L1 lexical and grammatical errors by reading each script several times in order to identify specific occurrences of the errors. The identified errors were further presented to Fifteen examiners who were interviewed, through employing open-ended interviews, to ellicit from them information and confirmation of the errors that pupils make as obtained from the scripts. The interviews were recorded. The examiners responses were relied upon and were validated by the Chief and the Deputy Chief Examiners. An examiner is a teacher who has been trained and certified by ECZ to mark the examinations scripts. The training is conducted by the Chief Trainer, who in most cases is the Chief Examiner, and the Deputy. It is intensively conducted in seven days at a designated venue. At the end of the training session, those who pass are certified as examiners and are henceforth invited to mark the Grade 12 and GCE examination scripts. Both the Chief Examiner and the examiners identified instances as examples of lexical and grammatical errors.

The researcher sampled and analysed naturally produced pieces of written discourse (scripts) by the Grade 12 candidates who had written under final examinations conditions which are set by the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) and invigilated by teachers. Further, the Chief Examiner's reports and the transcribed responses from the interviews were analysed.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

It is the case that data collection was conducted as follows: The researcher read each script several times to collect information about L1 lexical and grammatical errors. Based on errors collected, the researcher interviewed 15 examiners at the marking centre including the Chief Examiner to verify the identified cases as errors of L1 interference. The interviews responses were recorded and transcribed. The research employed the interview guide as research instrument to verify the status of the identified lexical and grammatical errors. According to Punch (2009:147), "the interview is the most prominent data collection tool in qualitative research. It is a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality. It is also one of the most powerful ways of understanding others." Since the study was qualitative, no questionnaires were devised for this task.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedure

3.6.1 Analysis

Data analysis was conducted in such a way as to answer the research questions and meet the set objectives. The study used document analysis as technique. Document analysis involves the process of collecting various documents and examining them in terms of content, discourse process, linguistic peculiarity or styles. The identified errors were categorised as either lexical or grammatical in nature. They were further subdivided into wrong word, concord, wrong expressions, tense, and spelling. The errors were analyzed qualitatively under these categories and in relation to the objectives of the study.

3.6.2 Procedure

The study involved the description of some of the specific instances of first language interference lexical and grammatical errors in narrative pieces of composition produced by Grade Twelve pupils as they existed at the time of data collection. Various errors were taken note of, after which Error Analysis (EA) as well as Contrastive Analysis (CA) was applied to analyse them. The researcher discussed the data under the guidance of the CA and EA theories.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

In order to uphold confidentiality during research, the examiners that were interviewed were assured that the information they gave would be used only for academic purposes. Furthermore, pseudo names for the interviewees were used. This helped to disguise them, thus upholding their ethical status.

3.8 Summary

This chapter has endeavoured to give an outline of the methods and techniques applied in the collection and analysis of data at the centre of this study. It has highlighted on the research design, sample collection, sample size, data collection, data collection instruments, data analysis and data procedures. The chapter closes with a reflection on research ethical issues observed. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Overview

In the previous chapter, the methodological aspects of the investigation were dealt with by focusing on the research procedures which were adopted in the study so as to provide answers to the research questions in chapter one of the study. The chapter discussed the research design that was used in the study and why this particular design was selected. It also presented some specific details of the study area and sources, sample size, the data collection instruments and the process of data analysis.

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The presentation is done in line with the subheadings which were derived from the objectives of the research. As outlined in Chapter One, the objectives of the study were:

(i) To identify lexical and grammatical errors committed by Grade Twelve pupils in narrative pieces of composition
(ii) To classify the identified errors into specific types
(iii) To relate the identified lexical and grammatical errors to specific aspects of the first language
(iv) To establish how the identified errors hamper discourse coherence or comprehensibility.

4.1 Identification of errors

The first objective required the researcher to indentify the lexical and grammatical errors that the Grade Twelve (G12) pupils make in their written narrative pieces of composition. In line with the first objective, it was discovered that a variety of L1 errors were committed by the G12 candidates in their final examinations due to various reasons. Generally, as pointed out by the Chief Examiner in one of the reports, the errors that were discovered fell under lexical and grammatical groupings. Grammatical errors constituted the construction of faulty sentences, coordination, agreement and word order. These made up the grammatical category. The lexical category was made up of words that are used wrongly in the target language. For example, some of the pupils use the words 'walk' or 'run' as 'move' in relation to mobility. This is an error influenced by L1 because in the local languages, the concept of motion is expressed using only

one lexical item, while in English, the concept is expressed using different words depending on what is moving or the type of entity that is moving. This finding renders support to Moonga (2012) who observes that, in line with Corder (1974), a single word may show more than one error and appears, therefore, in more than one category or list.

The subsequent sections present the specific errors that were observed in the G12 pupils' scripts which were confirmed by the Chief Examiner and the examiners' recorded interviews.

4.2 Classification of Errors

4.2.1 Lexical Errors

Most of the lexical errors identified involved use of wrong words or wrong expressions. In English, concepts are expressed differently using different words such as state verbs of the senses and verbs of belonging. This is not the case with local languages in which the same word is used to refer to different concepts. When such words are used in English, they are considered as wrong words because they hamper discourse coherence or comprehensibility.

From the scripts which were analysed, some of the lexical errors observed are presented below.

4.2.1.1 Verbs of the senses

In English, state verbs of the senses describe 'states' over which we have no control. For example, we *hear* with our ears, we *see* with our eyes, we *smell* with our noses, and we *taste* with our mouths. In response to ECZ 2015 English Paper1question 2, 'Give an account of an occasion when you felt it was too late to do anything' the following errors extracted:

4.2.1.1.1 The Verb 'hear'

From the scripts, it was observed from the errors that the word ***'heard'*** in local languages refers to hearing, smelling, feeling, and tasting hence:

1. 'I *heard* something smelling' instead of 'I smelt something'
    (Naliumfwa fimo filenunka - Bemba)
    (Naumvwine kintu kya nunkilenga – Kaonde)
    (Naliumwfine ikintu ikyali kununka – Lamba)

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(Namvela vinthu vinunka – Ngoni)

(Ndakamvwa cintu cinunka-Tonga)

(Napulika chintu kununkha-Tumbuka)

In **1** above, the stative verb *'hear'* was used to represent the concept of sense of smell instead of the appropriate verb *'smelt'*. This is similar to **2** and **3** below where the verb *'heard'* was misapplied to refer to the sense of feeling and taste respectively.

2. 'I *heard* the kidneys paining' instead of 'I felt the kidneys paining'.

    (Ni ngumfwa infyo shilekalipa - Bemba)

    (Naumvwine nfyo yakolelenga – Kaonde)

    (Naliumwine infyo shali kusomena – Lamba)

    (Ninvela mumene cikalipile – Ngoni)

    (Ndakamvwa nsa zilacisa-Tonga)

    (Napulika ziso kubaba-Tumbuka)

3. 'The food was *heard* nicely' instead of 'The food tasted nice'.

    (Ifyakulya nafyunfwika bwino - Bemba)

    (Baikuja bia umvwanikile bulongo – Kaonde)

    (Naliumfwine ifyakulya ukuwama – Lamba)

    (Vakudya vimveka bwino - Ngoni)

    (Cakulya cakali kulimvisya kabotu-Tonga)

    (Chakulya capulikika makola-Tumbuka)

4.2.1.1.2 The Verb 'eat'

The verb *'eat'* in English refers to the act of putting food in the mouth, chewing it and swallowing. Unlike in English the word *'eat'* in local languages is not only applied to the sense of taste but also to squandering and to scoring points or high marks in academic subjects such as mathematics. In **4** and **5** below the errors were due to misapplication of the verb *'eat'*; this was in response to question 4, 'Teachers deserve much more money than what they currently get. Discuss.'

4. He *ate* the church money instead of 'he squandered the church money'

    (Alilya indalama sha chalici)

(Wajile mali a kibwilo – Kaonde)

(Alilile indalama shakipwilo – Lamba)

(Anadya ndalama sha chichi – Ngoni)

(Wakaalya mali akucikombelo – Tonga)

5. I ate all the Mathematics questions. (Nalilya insamushi shonse)

(Najile nsamushi yonse – Kaonde)

(Nalilile insamushi shonse – Lamba)

(Ninadya samuzonse – Ngoni)

(Ndakazijana nsamuzi zyoonse – Tonga)

(Nangulya ghose mafumbo mu masamu – Tumbuka)

4.2.1.2 Concept of Motion

'Run', 'climb', and 'jump' are verbs that denote motion in English. However, in response to question 2 *'Give an account of an occasion when you felt it was too late to do anything',* the candidates' scripts revealed that these verbs were wrongly used to express the concept of motion, thereby committing the following lexical errors;

4.2.1.2.1 The Verb 'to run'

The bus was *running* very fast. Here, the verb *'run'* was misused to mean 'move'. This was so because the word *'run'* in local languages refers to mobility regardless of what is moving or the entity that is moving.

(Run) Ukubutuka (Bemba/Lamba)

Kunyema (Kaonde)

6. 'The bus was *running* very fast' instead of 'The bus was moving very fast'

(Sacha yacilabutuka sana -Bemba)

(Sakya wanyemenenga kyakine kine – Kaonde)

(Sakya alibutuka ukwachi – Lamba)

(Basiyeze yathamanga ngako – Ngoni)

(Bbaasi yakali kulunduka kapati-Tonga)

(Yaendanga-Tumbuka (I was moving/walking)

7. 'The snake was _running_ in the grass' instead of 'The snake was moving in the grass'.

    (Insoka yacilabutuka mufyani - Bemba)

    (Mulolo manymenenga munsono – Kaonde)

    (Insoka yalikubutuka mufyani – Lamba)

    (Njoka yenze utuka mumauzu – Ngoni)

    (Inzoka yakali kulunduka mubwizu-Tonga)

    (Njoka yacimbilanga mu matheka -Tumbuka)

8. 'The heart is _running_ fast' instead of 'The heart is beating fast'.

    (moyo ulalunduka –Tonga)

    (Mutima uthamanga ngako – Ngoni)

    (Mtima wacimbilanga -Tumbuka)

9. 'Time is _running'_ instead of 'Time is moving'.

(Ciindi cilalunduka – Tonga)

(Inshita ilebutuka – Bemba)

(Impindi ikusamala – Namwanga)

(Impindi yalikubutuka – Lamba)

(Kimye kibena kunyema – Kaonde)

(Nthawi ithamanga kwambiri – Ngoni)

(Nyengo yikwenda-Tumbuka)

4.2.1.2.2 The Verb 'to climb'

Whereas the verb **'climb'** in English means going up something, in local languages, it refers to going up as well as rising to higher levels, hence;

(Climb) Ukunina (Bemba)

10. 'She _climbed_ the car'instead of 'She got on the car'

(Alinina motoka- Bemba)

(Wakanjijile motoka – Kaonde)

(Alininshile motoka – Lamba)

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(Anakwela galimoto – Ngoni)

(Wakwela mootokala – Tonga)

(Waka kwela gali moto – Tumbuka)

11. 'The doctor said the temperature is _climbing_'instead of 'The doctor said the
    temperature is rising'.

(Badokota batile tempulica ilenina. - Bemba)

(Ba dokota baambi amba kukaba kwa mubiji ubena kukanjila – Kaonde)

 (Ba dokota bali labile ati ukukaba kwa mubili kuli Kunisa)

 (Dotolo anati tempeca yakwela - Ngoni)

 (Dokota wakaamba kuti tempulica yakwela-Tonga)

 (A dokota bakati – Tumbuka)

12. 'He _climbed_ the plane' instead of 'He boarded the plane'

(Alinina indeke - Bemba)

(Nkanjijile ndeke – Kaonde)

(Nali nishule indeke – Lamba)

(Anakwela ndeko – Ngoni)

(Wakatanta ndeke – Tonga)

(Wakakwela ndege – Tumbuka)

4.2.1.2.3 The Verb 'to jump'

In English, the verb *'jump'* refers to a quick movement off the ground or away from the surface.
This is not the case in local languages where this word also refers to *crossing* hence;

13. She *jumped* the road

(Alitoloka umusebo – Bemba)

(Watumbukile mukwakwa – Kaonde)

(Ali kilulike umusebo – Lamba)

(Anajumpa mujeo – Ngoni)

(Waka sotoka mugwagwa – Tonga)

(Waka jumpa museu – Tumbuka)

The lexical items above are a source of errors in L2 because of the transfer of meaning. In each case, there was transfer of meaning and reference of the word from the mother tongue to English (L2). While in local languages, the meaning of a word allows that word to be used in different contexts, it is not the case with English.

4.2.1.3 Wrong Word Usage

Some of these errors are apparently committed because when writing, learners think and plan their compositions in local languages. Some words are literally translated from the respective Zambian local languages (L1) directly to English (L2). In answering questions 1(a) and (b), the following errors were observed:

4.2.1.3.1 (Thorn) Umunga (Bemba/Namwanga/Mambwe)

In English, a sharp and pricking object is expressed differently depending on the type of object. However, in Zambian local languages, it is expressed using one word regardless of the object. For instance;

'The _thorn_ of the fish pricked my tongue' instead of 'The sharp bone of the fish pricked my tongue'. Whereas a thorn in English refers to a small sharp pointed part on the stem of some plants, in Zambian local languages the word refers to anything that is sharp and pricking hence:

    14. The _thorn_ of the fish pricked my tongue.
    (umunga we sabi walindasa palulimi - Bemba)
    (Mwiba wa fisabi wangashile palujimi – Kaonde)
    (Umunga wesabi walindashile palulimi – Lamba)
    (Munga wansomba wanilasa palulimi - Ngoni)
    (Bumvwa bwa nswi bwakandiyasa amulaka-Tonga)

    15. 'The snake had a lot of _thorns'_ instead of 'The snake had a lot of bones'.
    (insoka yalikwete imyunga ishingi)
    (Mulolo muji namiba yavula – Kaonde)
    (Insoka ili nemyunga ishingi – Lamba)
    (Njoka inali ndi myunga yambiri – Ngoni)

(Inzoka yakali a mamwva manji - Tonga)

4.2.1.3.2 The word *'cry'*

The concept of sound is expressed differently in English using different words for different objects. For example, the word *'cry'* in English refers to producing tears from one's eyes because one is unhappy or hurt. However, in Zambian local languages the word refers to making any sound hence; (Crying) Ukulila (Bemba/Lamba)

16. 'The phone is *crying'* instead of 'The phone is ringing'.
The phone is *crying*.
 (Foni ilelila - Bemba)
(Foni ubena kujila kujila – Kaonde)
(Foni ikulila – Lamba)
(Foni ilila – Ngoni)
(Fooni ilalile-Tonga)
(Foni yikulila – Tumbuka)

17. 'The church gong *cries* every Sunday' instead of 'The church gong sounds every
    Sunday'.
(inyengele yaku chalici ilalila cila mulungu - Bemba)
(ngengela ya kipwito ijila jonse pa sande - Kaonde)
(Ingele ya kipwilo ilalila lyonse pa sande – Lamba)
(Cingelele (belu) ilila pamulungu ulionse – Ngoni)
(Mulangu waku cikombelo ulalila nsondo ansondo - Tonga)
(Belu ya chalichi yikulila sabata yose – Tumbuka)

18. 'The cats *cried* a lot at night' instead of 'The cats mewed a lot at night'.
(Ba pushi bacilila sana ubushuku - Bemba)
(Bapushi bajikila kyakine kine butuku – Kaonde)
(Ba pushi bakilila ukwakuchi ubushiku – Lamba)
(Ba pusi benzeli ngako usiku – Ngoni)

(Bakaaze bakalila kapati masiku - Tonga)

(Bacona bangulila comene usiku – Tumbuka)

19. 'The car engine is _crying_' instead of 'The car engine is running'

(injini ya motoka ilelila - Bemba)

(injini wa motoka ubena kujila – Kaonde)

(injini ya motoka ilikulila – Lamba)

(injini yamotoka ilila – Ngoni)

(Injini yamootokala ilalila - Tonga)

(Injini ya galimoto yikulila – Tumbuka)

In Zambian local languages, the words **'thorn'** and **'cry'** refer to different objects. 'Thorn' in English refers to a small sharp pointed part on the stem of some plants, while in Zambian local languages it refers to anything sharp and pricking. 'Cry' in English refers to producing tears from one's eyes as opposed to the way it is used in Zambian local languages where the word refers to making any sound.

4.2.1.3.3 The pronoun **'they'**

The pronoun **'they'** in English denotes plural, that is, referring to more than one person or thing. This is not the case in Zambian local languages where the word 'they' (Ba) also denotes respect in addition to plural. Due to this, candidates who attempted question 3 *'Describe an occasion when you disagreed with someone very close to you by clearly stating what caused the disagreement and how you resolved it'*, ended up writing the following sentences;

20. *'They* sent me to town' instead of 'He sent me to town'
21. *'They* are calling you' instead of 'He is calling you' and
22. 'My uncle, *they* entered'instead of 'My uncle, he entered'

Bayama baliyingila (Bemba)

Ba mwinsho ba twelele (Kaonde)

Bamwinsho balingile (Lamba)

Bamalume beloba (Ngoni)

Ba acisya bakanjila (Tonga)

A Sibweni banguijila (Tumbuka)

The error in (20), (21), and (22) is due to lack of concordance between the subject pronoun and its referent. Much as there is subject–verb agreement, there is no concordance in terms of number between the pronoun 'they' (subject) and its referent 'he' or 'uncle'. In English, the concept of plural always denotes number. Plural here refers to the form of a noun or a verb which refers to more than one person or thing. In Zambian local languages, it culturally, denotes respect for elders as well as number. Writing under examination conditions, the Grade Twelve pupils are under so much pressure that they unconsciously use systematic resources from their mother tongue in order to achieve meaning. This results in errors such as the one in (20), (21), and (22) above.

4.2.1.3.4 The word *'fall'*

In English, the word *'fall'* means dropping down from a higher level to a lower level. In local languages, the word refers to both *falling* and *failing* hence;

23. 'He *fell* the examination' instead of 'He *failed* the examination'

Alipona amashindano (Bemba)

Waponene ekizamuneshoni (Kaonde)

Aliponene ekizamineshoni (Lamba)

Anapona mayeso (Ngoni)

Waka ufweela musonko (Tonga)

Wakafeluka vilingwa (Tumbuka)

4.2.1.3.5 The words **'clever'** and **'intelligent'**

In English, the words 'clever' and 'intelligent' do not mean the same. The word 'clever' usually refers to being cunning, that is to get what someone wants by using tricks or cheating, whereas 'intelligent' refers to being good at learning and understanding things in a logical way. The words are not interchangeable. However, in Zambian local languages, the same word *'clever'* is used to refer to either being intelligent or being clever hence

24. 'He is very clever' instead of 'He is very *intelligent'* when referring to a fast learner.

Alicenjela sana (Bemba)

Wajimuka kyakine kine (Kaonde)

Alikengele ukwachi (Lamba)

Niwochenjele ngako (Ngoni)

Uli cenjede kapati (Tonga)

Ngwa zelu (Tumbuka)

4.2.1.3.6 The words **'borrow'** and **'lend'**

As in item 4.2.3.5 above, in Zambian local languages, there is only one word to mean either borrow or lend hence;

25. 'He *borrowed* me some money' instead of 'He lent me some money'.

Alingashimako indalama (Bemba)

Wankongwesesheko mali (Kaonde)

Alinkongweheka indalama (Lamba)

Ananibweleka ndalama (Ngoni)

Wakandi kweletesya mali (Tonga)

Wakanibweleka ndalama (Tumbuka)

The lexical items above are a source of errors in L2 because of the transfer of meaning. Learners transfer the meaning and reference of the word in their mother tongue to English (L2). They make direct translations from their mother tongue. This is what Selinker (1972) refers to when talking about language transfer. Most of the errors above are due to the fact that one word in most local languages in Zambia can have multiple meanings and referents. For example in (1) above, the context in which the word 'hearing' is used determines the meaning. Similarly, the meaning in the other cases above is highly contextualized.

As observed in the items above, depending on the situation or context, a word in Zambian local languages can refer to more than one entity. This is manifested in the pupils' written narrative pieces of composition at G12 and is treated as a wrong word used. This is because when writing the compositions during examinations, there is a tendency by the pupils to over generalize the use of these lexical items.

4.2.2 Grammatical Errors

Stern (1983) observed that grammatical sensitivity is the ability to pay attention to the formal linguistic data. Most of the errors under grammatical were dominated in the Wrong Expression subcategory. This comprised sentences in which wrong expressions were used. The other subcategory was Concord/Agreement. Some candidates who attempted question 3 *'Describe an occasion when you disagreed with someone very close to you by clearly stating what caused the disagreement and how you resolved it'*, ended up committing the following errors which were confirmed by Interview 10 (Appendix 4):

4.2.2.1 The pronouns **'Me'** and **'I'**

26. 'Me I don't like this' instead of 'I don't like this'
 Ine nshifwaya ifi.(Bemba)
Amiwa kechi nkeba bibi ne (Kaonde)
Nebo nshifwayapo ifi (Lamba)
Inesimfuna ivi (Ngoni)
Mebo nseyandi (Tonga)
Ine nkhukhumba yai ivi (Tumbuka)

27. 'Me I am fine' instead of 'I am fine'
Ine ndi bwino (Bemba)
Amiwa njibulongo (Kaonde)
Nebo jilukoso bwino (Lamba)
Ine ndicabe bwino (Ngoni)
Mebo ndili kabotu (Tonga)
Ine nili makola (Tumbuka)

28. 'Me I didn't know' instead of 'I didn't know'
Ine nshaishibe (Bemba)
Amiwa kechi nayukile ne (Kaonde)
Nebo nshaishibilepo yowo (Lamba)
Ine siniziwe (Ngoni)

Mebo nsezi (Tonga)

Ine nkhumanya yai (Tumbuka)

29. 'Me I was there' instead of 'I was there'

Ine eko nali (Bemba)

Amiwa najingako (Kaonde)

Nebo ekonali (Lamba)

Ine ninaliko (Ngoni)

Mebo ndakaliko (Tonga)

30. 'Me and John went to Kitwe' instead of 'John and I went to Kitwe.'

Ine na John twaciya ku Kitwe. (Bemba)

Amiwa ne Joni twaji kuya ku Kitwe (Kaonde)

Nebo na Joni twakiya ku Kitwe (Lamba)

Inena John tenze tayenda ku Kitwe (Ngoni)

Mebo a joni twakaunka ku Kitwe (Tonga)

Ine na John tanguluta ku Kitwe (Tumbuka)

31. 'Me and John we have already eaten' instead of 'John and I have already eaten.'

Ine na John natulya kale. (Bemba)

Amiwa ne Joni twaja kale (Kaonde)

Nebo na Joni twalya kale (Lamba)

Ine na John tadya kale (Ngoni)

Swebo a joni twalya kale (Tonga)

Ine na John talya kale (Tumbuka)

In (26) to (29) and (30) to (31) the writers combined the subject and object pronouns in the subject position. Pronouns are words that substitute nouns in order to avoid repetition. In English, the subject of a sentence usually comes before the main verb at the beginning of a sentence. With regards to pronouns, the subject can only be replaced by a subject pronoun (I, he, she, they, it, and we). The object usually appears after the main verb in a

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sentence. The object can only be replaced by an object pronoun (me, us, her, him, them, it, and you). These can only replace a noun as an object in a sentence. This is not the case with the Zambian local languages, hence the sentence constructions in items (26) to (31) above. In local languages, only one first person pronoun is used to refer to the speaker for both the subject and the object resulting in the repetition for emphasis sake. In order to emphasise a point, both the subjective and objective pronouns are used concurrently. This is not the case with English where emphasis is realized by the use of emphatic words such as certainly, definitely, absolutely and completely. Whereas in local languages it is acceptable to repeat the personal pronouns as in *'Me and John we have already eaten'- Ine na John __na__ tulya kale*. (Bemba), it would be considered as repetition, which is wrong, in English. In cases such as (26) and (30) the writers of these sentences transferred the writing and speaking conventions of their mother tongue into English, resulting in a grammatical error.

4.2.2.2 Repetition of the **subject referent**

32. (Do like this)… instead of 'Do this'.
Cita nge ifi, (Bemba)
Uba bibye (Kaonde)
 Kita ifi (Lamba)
Cita ici (Ngoni)
Cita boubu (Tonga)
Cita nthe (Tumbuka)

33. (Repeat again)… instead of 'Repeat'
Bwekeshapo nakabili (Bemba)
Bwejapo nejijwabo (Kaonde)
Bweseshapo nalimbi (Lamba)
Bwezepa nasoti (Ngoni)
Indulula alimwi (Tonga)
Wazeya poso (Tumbuka)

34. (Us that's how we grew)… instead of 'That's how we grew'.

Ifwe efyo twakula (Bemba)

Atweba byobyo twakomene (Kaonde)

Fwebo efyo twakulile (Lamba)

Umu mumene tinakulile (Ngoni)

Iswe/Swebo mutwakakomena (Tonga)

Ise ndimo tilikulila (Tumbuka)

35. (You also you)… instead of 'You also'.

Iwe naiwe (Bemba/Lamba)

Obewa ne obewa (Kaonde)

Webo na webo (Lamba)

Nawewo (Ngoni)

Iwe ayebo (Tonga)

Iwe nawe (Tumbuka)

36. (Once at one time)… instead of 'Once upon a time'.

Panshita imo (Bemba)

Pakimye kimo (Kaonde)

Panthawi imodzi (Ngoni)

Cimwi ciindi (Tonga)

Kale kale (Tumbuka)

37. (Things they are hard)… instead of 'Things are hard'.

Ifintu nafikosa (Bemba)

Bintu byakosa (Kaonde)

Ifintu fyakosa (Lamba)

Vinthu vabvuta (Ngoni)

Zintu nziyumu (Tonga)

Vinthu vasuzga (Tumbuka)

38. (Stand up your hand)… instead of 'Raise your hand'.

Imya ukuboko (Bemba/Lamba)

Imanya kuboko (Kaonde)

Imya ukuboko (Ngoni)

Konyamuna kuboko (Tonga)

Nyamula woko (Tumbuka)

39. (The results have come out)… instead of 'The results are out'.

Ama lizauti naya fuma (Bemba)

Malizauti alupuka (Kaonde)

Amalizauti afuma (Lamba)

Malizati ya fuma (Ngoni)

Ma lizautu azwa (Tonga)

Ma lizati ghafuma (Tumbuka).

The grammatical errors indicated above occur because of the transfer of meaning as well as the transfer of the L1 writing conventions into L2. While in most of the Zambian local languages it is acceptable to repeat the subject referent directly or covertly, it is not the case with English. For example, while (34) above *(Us that's how we grew)* would conceptually appear as repetition of the first person pronouns and would be considered wrong sentence construction in English, it is not so in Zambian local languages. This is because English uses two first person pronouns ('I' and 'we') to refer to the speaker where as local languages use only one.

4.3 Summary

This chapter has presented the research findings under research objectives and questions that guided the study. It has presented the findings on the lexical and grammatical errors that were extracted from the Grade Twelve scripts of the 2015 Examinations Council of Zambia English Language examination. It has given a description and in some cases an explanation of the L1 interference lexical and grammatical errors. The next chapter presents a discussion of these findings, draws conclusions to the study and proposes recommendations for future developments

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings based on the objectives of the study. The chapter discusses the findings on the identified lexical and grammatical errors committed by Grade Twelve pupils in narrative pieces of composition. It also presents a discussion of findings on the classification of the identified errors into specific types. The chapter further discusses the findings by way of relating the identified errors to specific aspects of the first language (L1) as well as showing the extent to which the identified errors hamper discourse coherence or comprehensibility. The aim of the study was to provide a description of some of the specific instances of first language interference lexical and grammatical errors in compositions produced by Grade Twelve pupils in their final examinations. The chapter also presents the conclusion and the recommendations drawn from this study for possible curriculum development and further research. Finally, the study discusses the implications of the findings.

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 Identification of Errors

In response to the first objective of the research, analysis of the data collected showed that most of the errors made by Grade Twelve pupils fell under lexical and grammatical groupings. With regard to lexical errors, when expressing concepts, pupils use wrong words. This is because unlike English, in many cases Zambian local languages use one and the same word to refer to different concepts. When such words are used in English, they hamper discourse coherence or comprehensibility which looks odd to native speakers of English. This requires that Grade Twelve pupils make a distinction in their choice of words to use in their written pieces of discourse.

This explains why the use of words in items (1) to (25) in the previous chapter is unacceptable in English but acceptable and are correctly used when translated to Zambian local languages. For example, in the case of item (14) in the previous chapter, while an object that is sharp and pricking is expressed differently in English, in local languages, it is expressed using one word

regardless of the object hence sentences such as 'the _thorn_ of the fish' and 'The snake had a lot of _thorns'_.

Errors that were identified under grammatical were mainly due to the inability by Grade Twelve pupils to construct correct sentences. They were attributed to L1 interference in all cases as there was transfer of L1 meaning into English. In his article entitled 'Analysing and Counteracting Interference Errors,' Lott (1983:256-261) observed that grammatical or morph-syntactic errors stress the need for grammatical accuracy in both speech and writing. Discourse and Lexis deal with the correct selection and use of words in a piece of writing or speech for the smooth flow of words and ideas. All the errors discussed in this document were obtained from the G12 pupils' school certificate written examination scripts obtained at the marking centre.

For example, while in most Zambian local languages (L1) it is acceptable to repeat the subject referent, English does not accommodate a sentence construction where the object pronoun 'me' is placed just before the subject pronoun 'I'. Similarly, as in (26 to 31) and (34) above, English does not allow the use of the object pronoun 'me' next to and in place of the subject pronoun 'I'. This transfer of the writing conventions of L1 in English results into errors in the written discourse of the Grade Twelve pupils in their final examinations.

5.1.2 Categorisation of Errors

These errors were classified as 'Wrong Expressions' and 'Concord/Agreement' errors. For example, unlike English, Zambian local languages allow the repetition of the personal pronouns for emphasis sake such as "me, me I beat." The interference leads to Grade Twelve pupils writing sentences such as is the case in (26), (27), and (28) These errors were identified and categorised as wrong expressions because in English, the first person pronouns 'I' and 'Me' are subject and object pronouns respectively. The pronoun 'I' can only replace the nouns that are functioning as subjects while the pronoun 'Me' can only replace the ones that are functioning as objects. The two cannot be used concurrently in a sentence and in the same position. Whereas this is applicable in local languages, when applied to English, the expression or sentence becomes erroneous and is treated and classified as 'wrong expression'.

The identification and categorization of errors in this study is similar to that of Hasyim (2002) who identified six causes of the pupils' errors as: (i) Wrong use of adjectives (ii) Wrong

presentation of subject and incorrect agreement (iii) Wrong use of question word 'how far' (iv) Wrong use of prepositions (v) Error in using passive voice, and (vi) Mother tongue interference. The study revealed that generalization was very common in the pupil's sentences. Similarly, Hamjah (2012) in his study showed three categories of errors made by students of Bima. Two of the three were lexical level which contains verbs, articles, pronouns, adverbs, nouns and conjunctions, and the syntactical level include the tenses and the 'to be' verb. The outcome of this finding is also similar to the study by Nesreen (2014) who studied Arabian students that use English as a foreign language. He identified transformation of the rules from first language to the foreign language as the most frequent source of errors in second language acquisition. The conclusion was that most of the errors were due to mother tongue interference.

5.1.3 Relation of the Errors to Specific Aspects of L1

After collecting the data, the researcher categorised the errors in order to do a more in-depth analysis of the errors made by Grade Twelve pupils. A number of examples of errors were recorded in chapter 4 and some indications given as to why the researcher thought these errors occurred. In this section the researcher attempts to demonstrate, based on the literature, some possible causes of the errors made by Grade Twelve pupils. This discussion is orgranised based on the main reasons for writing errors as described in the literature.

5.1.3.1 Interlingua Transfer

From the scripts that were analysed as well as Interview 10 (Appendix 4), some of the Interlingua errors took the form of vocabulary items such as proverbs. For example the Bemba proverb, ***"ubuchende bwa mwaume tabutoba ing'anda"*** (Bemba) (the promiscuity of a man does not break a marriage), was transcribed as "***the prostitute of a man does not break the house.***" In its cultural setting, this proverb means that when a married man is promiscuous or adulterous, his marriage would not necessarily break up. The wife would be advised by everyone not to divorce the promiscuous husband because that is 'how and what men are and are meant to be'. Otherwise, when it is a wife who is involved in promiscuity or adulterous behavior, that would warrant instant divorce. When directly translated into English, '*the prostitute of a man does not break the house*', this sentence becomes awkward. A sentence of this nature is not acceptable in English because it is meaningless. In such cases, the learner lacks linguistic

performance capacity which requires internalization of social cultural aspects of language use. This is because the use of proverbs is social cultural specific and therefore, a proverb as used in one language cannot be transferred to another language. The meaning cannot be conveyed by word for word translation. Proverbs are sensitive to social cultural factors or contexts. That is why in English, someone can say **'He kicked the bucket'** (He died). When translated word for word into any of Zambian local languages, the meaning would be completely distorted.

These findings are in agreement with the EA theoretical position that interlanguage is regarded as the kind of language that has aspects that are borrowed, transferred and generalised from the mother tongue. For example,

(34) 'us that's how we grew' instead of 'that's how we grew'

(35) 'you also you' instead of 'you also' and

(37) 'things they are hard' instead of 'things are hard'

One of the factors which cause the interlingua errors in the Grade Twelve written pieces of composition is learners' inadequate understanding of English grammar resulting in application of grammatical rules of their respective local languages when writing pieces of composition in English during their examinations.

This is similar to Subramanian (2009) study which analysed written essays which identified and classified errors into various categories. The results of the study revealed that the six most common errors committed by the participants were singular/plural form, verb tense, word choice, preposition, subject-verb agreement and word order. These aspects of writing in English posed the most difficult problems to participants. The study shed light on the manner in which students internalize the rules of the target language, which is English.

The implication is that the learners have not sufficiently mastered these issues which means that teachers would have to focus on teaching vocabulary acquisition, sentence structure as well as social cultural aspects of the target language.

These findings confirm the theoretical position that learners of L2 tend to transfer the meaning from their mother tongue to the target language. These findings seem to suggest that when

writing their English Language examinations, Grade Twelve pupils commit some errors which are attributed to L1 transfer. Similarly, these findings are in line with the theoretical position on Contrastive Analysis. Based on behaviorist and structural theories, the basic assumption for Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) was that "the principle barrier to second language acquisition is the interference of the first language with the second language system…" and "…that second language learning basically involved the overcoming of the differences between the two linguistic systems – the native and the target language" Brown (1980: 148). According to Richards (1971), they are items produced by the learner which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language. The learner, in this case, tries to "derive the rules behind the data to which he/she has been exposed, and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language" Richards, (1974:6). In other words, they produce deviant or incorrect sentences by erroneously applying their knowledge of L1 rules and structures to L2 situations.

As has been noted in studies such as those by Bennui (2008), Kittiporn (2013) and Silva (1993) and confirmed by the findings of this study, different structures between two languages cause the errors as the result of language interference. The differences between the English grammar and our local languages grammar would not create problems if the learners' understanding of English grammar is good. If the learners have a good understanding of the grammatical rules of English, they will not be influenced by their local languages grammar when they are writing their English narrative pieces of composition. However if their understanding of English grammar is not good, they will be influenced much by the grammar of their local languages.

Therefore, negative influence of L1 on L2 should not be underestimated. Swann (1992) emphasizes that younger children need experience of a wide range of reading and writing activities in order to perform well at a later stage in their school career. Here, the researcher is not against the use of L1 as a tool for L2 acquisition, but is also of the idea that learners need exposure of the L2 at an early stage to be able to learn it effectively. Otherwise, the learners will continue transferring the meaning from their mother tongue to English which evidently results into making similar errors in their written English pieces of narrative composition during their examinations.

The identified errors also seem to suggest that there is a serious lack of exposure to English especially with the schools from rural areas. It seems learners in rural areas are mostly exposed to their first language around the schools and communities. Learners are only forced to speak English in an event that their teacher cannot speak their first language or if there is a deliberate rule at school that compels everyone to speak English. Unfortunately, even with such a law, this only takes place during school hours.

The findings also confirm those from previous studies by other scholars such as Abdallah (2011), *Bennui, (2008) and Moonga (2012).* The aim of Abdallah's study was to identify the types of lexical errors made by in-service English Language teachers in Jordan. The results showed two main categories of errors; Interlingua and intralingua errors. It was concluded that Interlingua errors take the form of translation, assumed synonyinity, and wrong collocation which is motivated by LI. Intralingua errors were due to phonic and graphic resemblance and over generalization.

Further, the findings confirm those of Bennui's (2008). He observed that thinking in English when writing in English is very difficult for Thai students. Their Thai language structures and culture inevitably interfere with their written English. He further observed that the interference of the Thai linguistic elements in students' written English arises in three aspects: grammatical structures, vocabulary items and discourse'. The conclusion was that the three levels of L1 interference represent more negative transfer than positive transfer in the students' written English.

5.1.4 How the Errors Hamper Discourse Comprehensibility

The use of English in the manner as explained in 5.1.2 by the Grade Twelve pupils in their examination obscures coherence resulting in the examiner awarding low marks. From the scripts, direct translation was noted when pupils use proverbs in their written pieces of composition. They translate the proverb from their mother tongue, word for word, thereby distorting both the lexical and grammatical comprehensibility.

5.1.4.1 Lexical Errors

L1 Lexical errors are mainly due to the limited English vocabulary the Grade Twelve learners possess, especially with lexical verbs and nouns. This is because, unlike English, one lexical verb in Zambian local languages can be used in different contexts. In English, different contexts use different words. Most of the errors under the lexical category involved either use of Wrong Words or use of Wrong Expressions. The category was dominated by words that are used wrongly in the target language. For example, in item (3) above, most pupils use the word **'walk'** or **'run'** to mean **'move'** in relation to vehicles, which becomes an error influenced by L1 because in the Zambian local languages, the words **'walk'** and **'run'** refer to mobility. In English, vehicles do not *walk* or *run* instead they *accelerate, drive*, or simply *speed up or pick up speed*. This shows that learners have not mastered the vocabulary of mobility. When the word **'walk'** or **'run'** is used in English to refer to mobility, one would wonder how a vehicle which is not human can actually walk or run. The implication is that such a learner has not understood the use of verbs of motion in English. Such a learner needs remedial teaching of vocabulary.

 Some other examples encountered are:

I **heard** something smelling. In local languages, for instance Bemba, the equivalence for the word **'hear'** is **'umfwa'**. While **'umfwa'** in these languages, depending on context, could refer to either **hearing**, **smelling**, **feeling** or **tasting,** it is not the case in English. In this case, the sentence 'I **heard** something smelling' is a direct translation of ***Naliumfwa fimo filenunka***. In English, it is only the ears that can hear. The nose does not hear but smells.

Similarly, 'I **hear** the kidneys paining' is direct translation of **Ni ngumfwa infyo shilekalipa- Bemba.** 'The bus was *running* very fast' is direct translation of **Sacha yacilabutuka sana – Bemba.** 'He **ate** the church money' instead of 'he squandered the church money' is direct translation of **Alilya indalama sha chalici** (Bemba). The denotative word for 'eat' in most local languages in Zambia is **'kudya'.** However, this word is also commonly used in local languages as a euphemism to mean squandering, theft, or fraud, which is not the case in English. While it would be acceptable in the local languages to say ***'he ate the church money'*** (**Alilya indalama sha chalici)** (Bemba), it would not be acceptable in English because it would hamper discourse comprehensibility.

Where as in English, concepts as well as situations are expressed differently using a variety of vocabulary and sentence structures, in Zambian local languages one word is used to refer to different concepts. When such words are used in English, they are considered as wrong words because they hamper discourse coherence or comprehensibility as is the case in the example above. Where in English, a distinction is made between house and home, local languages use one word **"ing'anda"** (Bemba).

For instance, in responding to question 2 and 3 of the 2015 School Certificate English Language examination, the Grade Twelve pupils committed the following lexical errors as revealed through some written scripts that were examined and as stated in chapter 4 of this study;

i. 'send me **climbing** money' instead of **'fare'**

ii. 'I will **climb** Power Tools Bus because it **walks** very quickly' instead of **'board'** and **'moves'**

iii. "the bus **died** on the road and it **slept** there for three days" instead of **'broke down'** and **'remained'**

iv. 'The bus **cried** after three days' instead of **'started'**

v. 'Mathematics was very **strong** but History was **soft** and I **ate** 93%. I **broke** only 7% instead of **'hard'** or **'difficult'**, **'easy'**, **'scored'** and **'failed by'**.

vi. 'Please **sit** well and greet my mother' instead of **'stay'** well.

The lexical items above are a source of errors in L2 because of the transfer of meaning. Learners transfer the meaning and reference of the word in their mother tongue to English (L2). In English, money paid in order for a person to be transported from one place to the other is called a fare, which is a noun. In local languages, this is not the case because such nouns are dependent on the intended use, situation, or action that is being performed. For instance, in local languages, an action such as climbing (ukunina - Bemba) would suffice for 'boarding'. Where in English, words such as 'boarding' in the case of buses are used, local languages use action words such as climbing, thereby naming the bus fare **'climbing money'**.

Similarly, in Zambian local languages verbs such as **walk, sleep, cry** and **die** are used with reference to animate entities such as people, animals and birds with which people interacted before the advent of machines like vehicles, trains and bicycles. When these machines came their

way, the verbs were applied due to the equivalent modes of transport such as donkeys, horses and oxen which they were using. Because animals walk, sleep, cry and die, these verbs are as well applied to machines, hence the L1 interference in the lexical items above.

'Strong', **'soft'** and **'ate'** are direct lexical translations from local languages which make cross cutting errors. They hamper discourse coherence and comprehensibility because there are no alternatives for **'strong' (ukukosa - Bemba)** as is the case in English which uses synonyms such as 'difficult', 'hard' and 'tough'. This goes with other lexical items mentioned in this context. The word **'broke' (ukutoba - Bemba)** has no substitute in English, hence the only way out is direct translation of the lexical item into English, a subconscious act that leads to the writers committing the error. Moreover, in English, the term can be a phrasal verb – 'got wrong'. Another L1 interference lexical error is **'sit well'.** The word that came first to the writer's mind was the verb **'sit'** whose equivalent is **'ukwikala - Bemba'**, hence **'sit well' (mwikale bwino - Bemba)** instead of stay well.

Interlingua transfer, which is the transfer from the mother tongue, is a major strategy that learners of a language use when they are short of the required linguistic resources in the target language. In this instance, when writing their English Language examinations, the G12 learners think and plan their written pieces of composition in their mother tongue which results in these lexical errors. They transfer the meaning from their mother tongue to English thereby hampering discourse comprehensibility.

5.1.4.2 Grammatical Errors

Grammatical errors are mainly due to word for word translation of items from their mother tongue. For example the Bemba adage, *"Tailya uwatensha akanua"* (Bemba) (Hunger does not kill one who eats a bit of food), was transcribed as **"*Hunger does not eat the one who moves the mouth.*"** In its context, the adage means that no matter how little the food may be, a starving person who eats it would not die. It also teaches that no matter how little or small the resources one may have, it is important to be content or satisfied and happy with that little. However, when translated word for word, the sentence is distorted and meaningless. In its translated state, it would mean that as long as one moves or shakes the mouth, one would survive the hunger. In this way, the translation completely dilutes the statement and its purpose. Similarly, in the

Bemba sayings: *"Umwana ushumfwa, amenene umwefu kwikoshi"* (A naughty child who does not heed the elders' advice, would experience something unusual). This was transcribed as *"The child who does not hear grew a beard on the neck."* And *"Uwakalema takaleka"* (Bad habits die hard) was transcribed as *"the one who holds it does not leave it"*. As stated earlier in 5.2.1, when translated word for word into the target language, the meaning is completely distorted. This is an indication that the learners have not sufficiently mastered these issues, which means that teachers have to teach vocabulary acquisition, sentence structure as well as social cultural aspects of the target language.

This is confirmed by the reviewed literature by Silva (2008) who, out of the findings, concluded that Creole has a negative impact on the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. In terms of learning the structures, the mother tongue, in this case, Creole exerts a negative influence because the students transfer what they know in their mother tongue into English language. This is also confirmed by Mukuka's study. Mukuka (2010) suggested that both L1 and L2 interfere with the learning of L3 construction.

From the interviews with the examiners at the marking centre, it was evident that the sources of errors were to a large extent the pupils themselves. This was attributed to the fact that pupils use their mother language (L1) in most of their conversations. The examiners pointed out that both the teachers and learners rarely read books for pleasure in order to expose themselves to different writing styles as well as enrich themselves with the English vocabulary and grammar. They can only know how these words are used or written when they read widely.

In judging the Grade Twelve examination script, examiners consider the script among other things, with reference to the variety and quality of the sentence structures and the range of effectiveness of vocabulary and idiom usage. Errors of agreement, verb form, sentence structure and ambiguity are treated as gross errors. In view of this, the Grade Twelve pupils lose a lot of marks.

One of the major implications of these findings is that the occurrence of L1 interference errors is widespread, resulting in lack of discourse comprehensibility and incoherence, thereby contributing to poor scores in the English Language examination by the learners.

This chapter dealt with the discussion of the research findings. Particularly, it addressed the research questions which were raised in chapter one of this dissertation. Data were qualitatively coded and categorized according to the objectives.

5.2 Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that L1 lexical and grammatical errors are committed by Grade Twelve pupils in their final English language paper 1 (composition) examinations every year as explained by the paper 1 Examiners who were interviewed at the marking centre. The literature review showed that many studies on L1 interference have been conducted in different areas.

Arising from the findings and the discussion thereof, it is the case that there is prevalence of the existence of L1 lexical and grammatical errors in the scripts which were examined for the study. It is also the case that these errors hamper discourse comprehensibility resulting in low scores by learners. These findings have given a detailed description of the results of this research. In relation to the purpose of the current study, the findings seemed to suggest that most of L1 grammatical and lexical errors committed by Grade Twelve learners are as a result of the writers thinking and planning their written pieces of composition in their mother tongue. The errors that were identified from the scripts gave evidence to this assertion. It indicated that L1 plays a considerable role in causing learners to make errors when they write their pieces of composition as they translate words or phrases directly from their L1 into L2. This tended to hamper discourse comprehensibility, resulting in low scores by the Grade Twelve learners.

The major implication of the findings seems to be that the learners have not sufficiently mastered the use of these items for enhancement of discourse comprehensibility. Much as the findings appear to be basic, they are still a challenge among the Grade Twelve learners as evidenced in their written examination scripts.

5.5 Recommendations

Arising from the findings, the discussions and the conclusion, the study makes the following recommendations:

5.5.1 Recommendation at Policy Level

      (i)   Teacher trainers should redesign the English teachers' training curriculum to embed the influence of L1 interference of L2 learning.

      (ii)   Teacher trainers should strengthen both English content and English teaching methodology by making applied linguistics one of the core courses in the syllabus.

      (iii)   The Ministry of Education should run remedial teaching as one of the capacity building initiatives for teachers of English.

      (iv)   The extensive reading programme should be enhanced in schools by allocating ample time to both in and outside classroom activities.

5.5.2 Recommendations for Further Research

  (i)   Similar studies should be conducted on first language interference errors at the levels of phonology, morphology and pragmatics.

  (ii)   Other studies should be conducted on first language interference errors in the written pieces in other essay written subjects such as History, Religious Education, Geography and Biology.

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APPENDICIES

Appendix 1: Common errors from the scripts

GRAMMATICAL ERRORS

A. WRONG EXPRESSION
1. You also you
2. You can laugh (while laughing)
3. Once at one time
4. Fast fast
5. Repeat it again (for the second time)
6. Things, they are hard
7. Stand up your hands
8. The time has finished
9. Me and John…
10. As me and my friends…
11. Me and my sister I am going to church
12. The results have come out
13. If you put the humps, you will refuse the accident
14. Close/Open the water
15. The lights have gone
16. We are walking down
17. Mrs Kasapo is more helpful compared to Mr Kasapo
18. Daniel is lying for me
19. In my head, I was thinking why are Mondays so bad
20. Knowing in my head that he will come back
21. A voice in my head told me to...
22. He was leaving to go to Lusaka
23. He threw his evil powers at them
24. She eats good
25. I remember **one time** when we argued over a silly matter
26. The grass are drying up which is the big effect to animals
27. I have wrote this letter with the reason in the heading above
28. My lecturer quickly organized a abortion
29. I was **very** happy **that** I hugged my friend' instead of 'I was **so** happy **that** I hugged…
30. It takes two hours **to driving** to Ndola
31. **To eating nshima** with cutlery is not easy
32. The teacher speaks **more better** English
33. English is **mos**t wide spoken in England **than** in Zambia
34. My brother grew **more stronger** than my cousin

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35. Her closet always is nicely organized
36. She visited the doctor because had a terrible headache

B. AGREEMENT

1. To who?
2.   Me I don't like this
3. Me I am fine
4. Me I didn't know
5. Me I was there
6. Us that's how we grew
7. Do like this – instead of do this
8. He was like… - instead of – He was…
9. People has died on the spot
10. When girls sees development countries…
11. The grass have dried
12. She heard the news from other people who was in that car
13. She come to school everyday
14. The earth go round the sun
15. There was many people at the stadium
16. These photograph are mine
17. The people is poor
18. *These* type of beliefs *is* very common
19. He enjoys *reading*, *to swim*, and *visit* his friends
20. *A computer give* us access to important information

C. TENSE

1. We have went
2. We have start
3. I have *wrote* this letter…
4. I *go* to town yesterday' instead of 'I *went* to town yesterday
5. When my grandfather *start* teaching, there were very few teachers who were Zambian
6. The celebration *was hold* in May 2014
7. Mwanawasa stadium *was build* in 2010
8. She *get* pregnant when she was in high school
9. I **go** to town **yesterday**
10. Have you ever *imagine* today's society without computers?

LEXICAL ERRORS

A. WRONG WORD
1. I *heard* something smelling.
2. I *heard* the kidney paining
3. *They* sent me to town – instead of '*He* sent me to town' **(respect)**
4. The bus was *running* fast
5. I *climbed* the bus
6. The *thorns* of the Tiger fish pricked my tongue
7. I *ate* all the Mathematics questions
8. He *fell* the exam
9. *My* uncle, *they* entered (respect)
10. He is *intelligent* – for He is *clever*
11. Have you eaten? *No*, we have eaten.
12. *You*, you don't know what you are saying
13. He *borrowed* me his pen
14. He *jumped* the road – for He *crossed* the road
15. The phone is *crying* – for the phone is *ringing*
16. Throw your knowledge
17. She *shits* on the chair for *sits*
18. She *as* a big house for *has*
19. I *found* all the mathematics questions instead of *solved*
20. They drove *there* new car to Mbala last *weak*.
21. I *leave* in Choma for *live*
22. I *made* my homework' instead of 'I *did* my homework
23. When you hear the siren, run to the *whole*
24. The *Principle* ordered the students

B. SPELLING
1. He wrote a *buku,* for book
2. I want your *pikica,* for *picture*
3. She was *sitted* comfortably, for *seated*
4. The *palentisi* paid the fees, for *parents*
5. She *payed*, for *paid*
6. *Bikozi* for *because*

Appendix 2: 2015 Examination paper

EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA

Examination for School Certificate Ordinary Level

English Language 1121/1

PAPER 1

Friday   2 OCTOBER 2015

Additional materials:
Answer Booklet

Time: 1 hour 45 minutes   Marks: 40

Instructions to candidates

1   Write your name, centre number and candidate number in the spaces provided on the **Answer Booklet.**

2   There are **two** sections in this paper. Answer **both** sections.

3   Write your answers in the **Answer Booklet** provided.

4   If you use more than one Answer Booklet, **fasten the booklets together**

Information for candidates

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

You should first read through the whole paper.

You are advised to spend an equal amount of time on each section.

Cell phones are not allowed in the examination room.

ECZ/2015HO   This question paper consists of 3 printed pages.

SECTION 1 [20 Marks]

You are advised not to spend more than 50 minutes on this section.

Write on **one** of the following topics. You should write between **250** and **350** words.
Any words written beyond the word limit will not be considered as part of your composition.

1   Write a story with **one** of the following titles:

   Either

      (a)   There is No Smoke Without Fire.

   Or

      (b)   Still Waters Run Deep.

2   Give an account of an occasion when you felt it was too late to do anything.

3   Describe an occasion when you disagreed with someone very close to you by clearly stating what caused the disagreement and how you resolved it.

4   The more beautiful or handsome you are, the more problems you face. **Argue for** or **against** this statement.

5   Teachers deserve much more money than what they currently get. Discuss.

6   Give an explanation of how you managed to be what you are today.

SECTION 2 [20 Marks]

As the head boy or head girl of your school, you have been assigned to educate your fellow learners on road traffic accidents. You have obtained the table below from the Zambia Police Traffic Department to write an article for the school magazine.

FIRST QUARTER ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS IN ZAMBIA STATISTICS FROM 1ST JANUARY TO 31ST MARCH, 2009

Divisions	Accidents Reported Involving Deaths/Injuries	Persons Killed			Persons Seriously Injured			Persons Slightly Injured		
		Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Lusaka	2,795	56	16	72	118	29	147	373	39	412
Copperbelt	1,240	41	24	65	184	85	269	314	60	374
Central	318	9	27	36	45	51	96	32	11	43
Southern	300	15	8	23	29	29	58	41	20	61
Eastern	189	1	15	16	16	30	46	24	32	56
Northern	137	4	5	10	12	27	39	18	7	25
Luapula	54	3	9	12	12	16	28	2	3	5
North Western	249	3	10	13	17	17	34	54	15	69
Western	128	1	4	5	8	16	24	32	11	43
TOTAL	5,410	133	118	252	441	300	741	890	198	1,088

(Source: Zambia Police: Traffic Department)

Using the information from the table, write the article. The length of the article should be between **250** and **350** words. **Any words written beyond the word limit will not be considered as part of your composition.**

Appendix 3: Affirmation of secrecy

EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA

OATH /AFFIRMATION OF SECRECY

School:...

NRC No. .... TS/man no. ....

I...,
having been appointed...
do swear/solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that I will and truly serve the
Republic of Zambia and discharge the functions of the Examiner without fear and
favour, affection or ill will and that I will not directly or indirectly reveal to any
unauthorized person, except as may be required in the discharge of my duties as
such or with the authority of the Examinations Council of Zambia the contents of any
document, communication or information whatsoever which may come to my
knowledge in the course of my duties.

SO HELP ME GOD

Signature:...

Declared by the said..at ....

This .... day of .... 20.................

Before me,

....
COMMISSIONER FOR OATHS

Delete words if the person desires to make an affirmation in lieu of taking an oath.

Appendix 4: examiner's interviews

INTERVIEW 5

INTERVIEWER: Sir, for how long have you been teaching?

RESPONDENT : I have been teaching for the past eight years but in the last two years, I have been studying outside the country and if you add them, then you can say its been close to ten years.

INTERVIEWER: And for how long have you been marking under the Examinations Council of Zambia?

RESPONDENT: Under the Examinations Council of Zambia, I have been marking for the past five years. I started in 2011

INTERVIEWER: What are some of the recurring errors that you sight, more so that have manifested in this marking session?

RESPONDENT: Some of the errors that are most common among grade 12 candidates from what we have been marking, candidates have problems with prepositions. They are quite inadequate in that area, verb agreement.

INTERVIEWER: Would you give some examples, for example when you say prepositions. Give a few examples.

RESPONDENT: For example, instead of saying, 'I am going to the market', some of them would omit the preposition 'to', others would write, 'I am in Kapari' instead of saying, 'I am at Kapari' because they are referring to a particular place where they are at, so they will mix the two.

INTERVIEWER: And that is manifesting in the scripts that we are marking?

RESPONDENT: Yes, it is manifesting in the scripts we are marking.

INTERVIEWER: Any other errors?

RESPONDENT: When it comes to homophones, candidates are not doing so well. Instead of saying, 'There' as to show a place, they would say 'their', the pronoun. These are some of the errors that we are seeing.

INTERVIEWER: Anymore?

RESPONDENT: Of course there are other errors such as the confusion of 'being' and 'been'. They seem to have confusion between the two.

INTERVIEWER: I would like you to drive us through the errors that are recurring and have been recurring over the years, as well as in this particular marking session.

RESPONDENT: Other errors come from the overall misunderstanding of how to respond to a particular question. I see those as errors as well because if they don't understand the question, then obviously they are going to answer that particular question wrongly.

INTERVIEWER: I think we are particularly concerned with the lexical and grammatical errors.

RESPONDENT: Okay, I can sight errors of construction. Candidates, most of them, do not show adequacy of constructing a full sentence that carries a meaning at the end of the day.

INTERVIEWER: So sentence structures are not well constructed?

RESPONDENT: Yes. The forms and vowels governing sentence construction are not coming out well in most of the candidates that we have marked. Run-on sentences are coming out. Candidates are writing paragraphs without punctuating, and punctuations play a very important role.

INTERVIEWER: So a paragraph will constitute just one sentence punctuated with the conjunctions and probably the commas?

RESPONDENT: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

RESPONDENT : Sometimes even without the commas, so it will just be going and for most of them, the easiest way to write a paragraph is using the conjunction 'and' then continue writing, then say 'because' and go on and on and at the end of the day you don't see the paragraph showing any particular meaning.

INTERVIEWER: Some of these errors that you have elaborated on, which seem to be recurring even here at the marking session, how would you link them **L1**? Are there any that you would say are the result of the mother tongue interference?

RESPONDENT: Particularly when learners want to say, for example, 'me and a colleague' as to show that they were with someone, or 'me I am', the use of double personal pronouns is as a result of transferring…

INTERVIEWER: So both using the subjective and the objective pronouns within the same sentence, because in vernacular it is correct, 'Ine nshifwaya ifi' meaning 'Me I don't like this?'

RESPONDENT: So, that particular error is a result of transferring the mother tongue…

INTERVIEWER: Do we have such errors in the script?

RESPONDENT: They were common, especially the one I have mentioned.

INTERVIEWER: What interventions would you suggest should be put in place to get these? Because they seem to be recurring, what should we do to avoid them?

RESPONDENT: I think the teacher here is the key stakeholder. He is in charge of making sure that the learner at the end of the day produces a very sophisticated type of text that at the end of the day will address particular audiences with varying…

INTERVIEWER: When you say the teacher is the major stakeholder, what is it that the teacher should do, that he is not doing?

3RESPONDENT : In this case, when you look at the errors and the overall structures of most of the compositions that learners are writing, show that probably teachers are not doing enough in exposing learners to particular types of texts so I think on the part of the teacher, it is important that we expose learners to particular types of texts so that they should be able to know, in case a question came requesting them to write about this, then the learners will have no problem to understand what they are required to do in that particular text, so that is the job of the teacher. That can happen overnight but I think probably what we teachers are not doing is scaffolding learners to a particular type of text that we would love them to be writing at the end of grade 12. Maybe we are also becoming comfortable at the oral or everyday language of the learners because most commonly that is what is manifesting in the writing, but that is everyday language so there should be a difference between everyday language and school knowledge because a teacher will tap from the everyday language which is going to shape that language into the type of discourse that these learners should be writing at G12 level, so that intervention requires total scaffolding. If you gave them an

exercise, try to look at what are some of the errors that learners are making. Overall, as in answering the question and also particular mistakes concerning verbs and pronouns in the sentence construction. Also try and show them, if it means reading aloud, show them what they wrote and other learners will be commenting on what is wrong. Even before you make learners start writing a composition, scaffolding will mean that you give them a particular type of text that you want them to produce and allow them to construct text with you, of course with their inputs, then at some point release heavy assistance that you are giving them and allow them to write their own texts and see if they can remember. Do not change the question so that it becomes very different from what you were doing together with them. So those are some of the lapses and also some of the things that we can actually do in order to make sure that learners are able to write the type of texts that are required to be written at G12 level.

INTERVIEWER: Anything more?

RESPONDENT: I'd say what is causing that is the teachers themselves, to some extent feel inadequate to teach certain topics and if we look in terms of certain situations, I think interventions should go to teachers themselves in order to equip teachers with skills especially…

INTERVIEWER: But they are trained teachers.

RESPONDENT: They may be trained teachers but teachers forget what to do. I have been HOD for 3 years and I have seen this. Some teachers are not exposed to the syllabus that they are doing and I have noticed, as HOD, that over the years teachers are not concerned to check what methods are prescribed in the English syllabus. It seems that at the moment, some teachers are teaching randomly and any kind of teaching that is random is misplaced and not backed by any theories.

INTERVIEWER: Your closing remarks?

INTERVIEW 6

INTERVIEWER: For how long have you been teaching?

RESPONDENT: For 30 years.

INTERVIEWER: How long have you been an examiner and marker of English paper 1 composition under the Examinations Council of Zambia?

RESPONDENT: For 4 years.

INTERVIEWER: Through your marking experience, both at the marking center and in the classroom, what are some of the errors that seem to be recurring?

RESPONDENT: We have errors arising from L1 mother tongue interference such as when a child writes, 'When I reached grade twelve …' meaning when I was in grade twelve. Sometimes the children would say, 'When the exam results come out.' Other examples could be…

 INTERVIEWER: Why would you say such errors are mother tongue? Is it correct in their L1?

RESPONDENT: Yes it is. For instance when a child says, 'When exam results come out,' in Bemba, it is translated as 'Ama result inga yafuma' which is correct.

INTERVIEWER: Are these errors coming out in the scripts, including the ones that we are marking?

RESPONDENT: Yes they are. Even in class we do come across such errors. Another example, when a child says, 'me I will do this,' it means 'ine nkachita ifi' in L1. Same as saying 'Us men', meaning 'ifwe fwebaume.' Another example is 'After the head boy and head girl write the information, you can fear the people dying, meaning in L1, 'After head boy na head girl ba pwisha ukulemba, kutiwatina abantu ukufwa.'

INTERVIEWER: What are the errors that keep recurring in the exams?

RESPONDENT: Some of them are words that are often confused, for instance the homophones. For example the words 'where' for place and 'were' as in the verb. Also the errors when it comes to tense.

INTERVIEWER: What interventions can be made or would you suggest that should be made to prevent these errors?

RESPONDENT: The first intervention would be exposing the children to English language at a tender age; when I say children, I mean the pupils, but here I am talking about their background. If the children are introduced to English language at a tender age, these errors can be avoided.

INTERVIEWER: You see children in the cities are introduced to English at a tender age, are you telling me they are not making these mistakes?

RESPONDENT: Not all of them, but the majority who are making these mistakes are from rural areas and those that come from rural areas but are in cities.

INTERVIEWER: That would be very difficult to prove because a school might be in a shanty compound but the people that go there don't live there. Anyway, any other interventions that can be made?

RESPONDENT: The other one is the teachers teaching the learners how to write compositions and look at the difficult areas and the common mistakes that are made. Also allowing the children to do a lot of reading under the supervision of the teacher.

INTERVIWER: When you say children, you are referring to pupils right?

RESPONDENT: Of course I am referring to pupils. Because you might ask them to read in their own time but they might not read. So the teachers must ensure that the pupils are there in class and have been given books to read so that they are exposed to as much vocabulary as possible.

INTERVIEWER: Anything you would like to say in your closing remarks?

RESPONDENT: I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to be part of your study.

INTERVIEW 10

Interviewer: How long have you been teaching?

Respondent: I've been teaching for nine years now.

Interviewer: How long have you been an examiner or marker of English Paper 1 composition under the Examinations Council of Zambia?

Respondent: Five years now.

Interviewer: Through your marking experience, both at the marking centre and classroom, what are some of the errors that seem to be recurring?

Respondent: Firstly we are facing a lot of challenges with spelling. Mostly the same word, the pupils will find it hard to write it. For instance, the word receive, instead of writing it as RECEIVE they'll interchange the E and the I. The same applies to the word privilege, instead of writing PRIVILAGE they'll actually include D between E and G. We also have spellings that are wrong because of how the words are spoken generally in society. For instance we have a word like integrate, the word is supposed to be pronounced as integrate and written as such because in society almost everyone pronounces it as integrate, the children will bring in the aspect of R between the E and G. Because it is a word that is often mispelt, where there is an R, they replace it with an O. Apart from that, we have errors of agreement. Learners in most cases fail to write the correct agreement between the subject and the verb. For instance they'll say, ''The people who died was one hundred.'' This is one of the errors found in this years' exams. Another one is, ''There is a lot of people.'' Instead of saying there are a lot of people, again there is no agreement there. ''They does not understand.'', instead of saying, ''They do not understand.'' Those are some of the errors we are facing. Apart from that, there are errors of repetition, ''Me I am.'' You are repeating the sense there. ''My parents they are.''

Interviewer: Is that not the direct manifestation of mother tongue?

Respondent: I want to first of all bring out the errors. From there I'll single out those related to direct translation. Also the frequent use of a word, for instance, in one sentence or two sentences they'd want to bring in the use of a word, for instance if it a noun instead of replacing that noun with a pronoun in some situations they'll continue to use the same noun. ''I went to the market and bought mangoes, the mangoes that I got were not good. When I brought the mangoes at home they were put in the fridge.'' And so on and so forth. This error is also recurring both at the exam centre as we are teaching and marking the composition. We also have an issue with wrong use of words. Under that I can mention something to do with confusion of similar sounding words. Instead of using quite to mean barely, someone would want to refer to the sound and vice versa. The same applies to words like there used as a preposition and their used as a possessive for instance there is that kind of misuse of similar sounding words where and were at times when they want to use there they would use their. ''Because'', they remove the B and say, ''Cause'' ,that actually is as a result of the way they use it in their spoken language. They would say, ''I came late cause I was given some work to do.'' Instead of saying because.

Interviewer: Which ones would you say of those that you've tabulated, are direct manifestation of mother tongue and how?

Respondent: From those that I've talked about, the error of repetition is ''Me I''. I think that is a direct manifestation of mother tongue interference, in that in local languages for instance in Bemba we say, ''Ine ndimukali'', ''ine ndoma'', if children adopt the same formula even when they are writing they'll say, ''me I beat''. Looking at the vast ethnic groupings we have here in Zambia were in this region they have their own weakness we have words that are affected by ethnicity which manifests under direct influence of mother tongue. Bembas for instance, they are

known not to have "H". So when they want to use a word with "H" the word will not come out as it should, instead of saying "how are you" they'll say "ow are you". Instead of saying "has" they'll say "as". When they want to write they will not include the "H" in front of the as, so that's another area affected by A1.The other one I saw is the direct translation that occurs when they are saying a proverb, they'd want to get the literal meaning of the saying. One funny one I came across is, "Ubu chende bwa mwaume tabutoba inganda". A child translated this as" the prostitute of the man does not break the house." I saw this as a direct translation from the mother tongue.

Interviewer: What intervention would you suggest to be made to counter these, since they are recurring?

Respondent: The major one is reading….

Interviewer: Teachers or pupils, or both?

Respondent: Either way, both the teacher and the child, because if the teacher does not know how to spell certain words because of lack of extensive reading that is what he or she is going to include in the learner. So it starts with the teacher, the teacher should read widely so that if the learner makes a mistake, the teacher should stand to know this as a mistake that has been made by the child. In certain circumstances, even as the teacher is marking the exercises for the child or the exam if the teacher does not know the word, they'll end up indicating the words as an error, when in fact it is correctly written. The teacher should also read widely because just by speaking, they understand what you are saying but they do not know how to write certain words. They can only know how these words are used correctly or written correctly when they read. This kind of reading should be done extensively as a programme in school, were you give them ample time to read. There they'll get how certain words are written. Outside class give them an assignment to find out how certain words are written. For instance we have grown up knowing that the correct word for stockings is stockens even when writing children say we are going t buy stokens, or at our school we use white stokens. Tell them to research and find out the correct meaning of this word. They'll go and find materials were they can find the correct spelling of that word. By so doing they'll also come across other words that might be interesting to them.

Interviewer: You are very right because I've had quarrels with people saying wallfence. I keep telling people that that word does not exist and they'll argue to say "No that thing is a wallfence". And I'll say "No that thing is a wall not a wallfence, its either a wall or a fence, the two mean the same thing.

Respondent: There are so many words that we've grown up knowing are correct but when we give them assignments like that, the children go out there, they'll read.

Interviewer: So emphasis should be on teaching?

Respondent: And mostly reading, they child and the teacher.

INTERVIEWER: How long are have you been teaching?

RESPONDENT: I have been teaching for the past twenty-seven years.

INTERVIEWER: Twenty-seven years! That's remarkable. How long have you been an examiner or marker under the Examinations Council of Zambia?

RESPONDENT: I think this is my eleventh year.

INTERVIEWER: Oh no wonder you are a team leader. Sir, with your experience, through your experience both at the marking center as well as the classroom, what are the errors that seem to be recurring?

RESPONDENT: There are some errors that re-occur in most cases. I'll give you four typical examples. One of them is the use of the two words 'Me, Myself.' Then the other one is 'yes and no.' Now the word 'yes' in English, 'yes' will always remain 'yes' and 'no', 'no'.

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean sir?

RESPONDENT: What I mean is, I'll give you a typical example. If I say, 'He asked you if you eat dog meat', you will say no. Then for emphasis I ask you, 'So you are saying you don't eat dog meat?' your answer is going to be no. But when you talk of the Zambian language, let's say in my mother tongue, 'Hena ula lya mubwa' I'm going to say 'Pepe' which is 'no'. But now for emphasis purposes if I ask, 'Hena toli mubwa?' I'll say, 'Iyi nili mubwa' which means 'Yes I don't eat dog meat.'

INTERVIEWER: But do we have such errors with regards to the work we are doing here? In the scripts, such errors are there?

RESPONDENT: Yes they are quite typical and quite serious. Most children when they are writing their compositions, especially when using question tags, somebody say 'yes', in other instances, they say 'no' when the particular person means 'yes'. Then the other one are the two words, when you say, 'I have a sick patient.'

INTERVIEWER: Okay, that one is very typical in the scripts we are marking?

RESPONDENT: Yes, this one emulates from mother tongue interference.

INTERVIEWER: Mmmh, okay and how?

RESPONDENT: 'Ninkwata umulwele, ushile umfwa bwino.'

INTERVIEWER: Oh I see, 'Ninkwata umulwele ushile umfwa bwino,uwa lwala sana.'

RESPONDENT: Yes, now when they write, they'll write the same. Then the other one is a common one, even educated people make that mistake. Doctors, Professors, Teachers use it so often.

INTERVIEWER: It's coming out in these scripts we are marking?

RESPONDENT: Yes it is, and this is 'Repeat again'. So you'll find this one, if it is in Tonga, 'Buindula alimi.' Yes 'Repeat again', when the two words mean the same.

INTERVIEWER: Bemba it is, 'Bwekeshapo nakabili' instead of simply 'Bwekeshapo' or 'Nakabili.'

RESPONDENT: Yes, so these are the issues.

INTERVIEWER: And these are coming out in the compositions we are marking?

RESPONDENT: Very strongly, otherwise these are the four major points that I've seen from the scripts I've been marking, even through conversations with people.

INTERVIEWER: And through the years that we've been marking. So what interventions do you think should be made?

RESPONDENT: I think we need to change the mid set, which is at foundation level, when they are starting school, right from the word 'Go'. Some of these words, the children only meet them when they get to secondary school. So it is better maybe right in grade 2, now teachers start tackling these problems.

INTERVIEW 12

INTERVIEWER: How long have you been teaching?

Well I taught for 29 years before I retired

How long have you been an examiner or rather a marker of English composition under the examination council of Zambia?

I have been a marker at Grade 12 level starting from 2009

That's remarkable, that's quite a while, and now through your marking experience both at the marking centre and as a teacher in your days, what are some of the errors that seem to be recurring?

Well, there are quite a number of errors that seem to appear year in year out, despite the reports that ECZ produces which get schools. I remember at the time when I was head of department, languages, i discovered some of the reports ECZ produces never reach the teachers of language. They end up in head teachers' offices on shelves. No wander we have a situation where the same errors appear almost every year.

What are some of these errors?

RESPONDENT: First of all, our candidates use wrong spellings as a result of wrong pronunciation influenced by the mother tongue or first language interference. For example, many people do not write the word definitely correctly. The reason is influence of the mother tongue where they pronounce it as "definately" instead of putting an "I" after "n"they end up putting an "a". For example they would write "definately she was ready to go". Now the word definitely in that case is actually spelt. The major issue is the influence of the mother tongue. The second one i would like to site is the use of wrong words used as a result of the wrong pronunciation again. For example it is common for a candidate to write "were where you going?"Instead of "where were you going?"

INTERVIEWER: So they may end up replicating the same spelling

RESPONDENT: Yes, and now that becomes a problem

INTERVIEWER: Do we have these manifesting even in the scripts we are marking?

RESPONDENT: Yes, we have them, they have appeared quite a number of them and sometimes as examiners we begin to wonder as to why they continue to appear year in and year out.

I think it's what you said at the beginning

So the third one I've identified is the wrong use or confusion in the use of subject and objective pronouns. An example is where you say "me and my father are ready to go." The 'me' is supposed to be an objective pronoun. Now the candidates are not able to remember that they are supposed to use the pronoun 'I'. And in fact even if they put an 'I' in the place of 'me' it will still be wrong because of the word order. Normally, you don't start with yourself. So you're supposed to say;'' My father and I are ready to go.'' That's another are where there is a problem. Then there is also the direct translation from mother tongue. An example can give here is;" when she reached Kitwe, she climbed a wrong bus". According to the candidate, climbed is the correct word to replace the one used in the mother tongue. We also have confusions sometimes of words that are for time, for example, tomorrow and yesterday, in mother tongue or language they'll use the same word 'mailo'

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for example which can mean yesterday or tomorrow. It is quite common to find a candidate at grade twelve level writing she will come yesterday and they feel that is correct.

INTERVIEWER: Or she came tomorrow

RESPONDENT: yes those are common; the sixth one is wrong subject verb agreement, influenced by the mother tongue again. For instance, a candidate can write; "my father has gone". Now this stems out of the fact that in the mother tongue there is need to show respect because your father is older than you. So according to the candidate if he or she writes "my father has gone" it would not show any respect. So they think because of the respect shown in the mother tongue, they would want to show it again, use it in the English language. Associated with plural and respect.

INTERVIEWER: These have really helped, and you have elaborated them very well. I would like to believe these have manifested from the scripts we are marking at this marking centre this year.

RESPONDENT: Yes they have.

INTERVIEWER: So we have the concrete examples from the scripts?

RESPONDENT: We were not recording them so they are not, however the idea is from the scripts.

INTERVIEWER: So what interventions, Reverand can we make to correct these errors?

RESPONDENT: There is need to put in interventions to arrest the situation. First and foremost there is need to bring in the correct pronunciation of words right from grade eight, because you will discover that if a child has wrong pronunciation even from grade one, they will grow with it, even when they reach grade twelve, they will not know that it's wrong. So if there can be a deliberate effort made in the classroom to come up with words and pronounce them correctly, and also insist that pupils do it, that would help us in a way.

INTERVIEWER: I would like to agree with you, I remember I think when I was a child in school the thing I don't see in the syllabus nowadays is syllable stress. That is no longer there, it could be a factor is suppose.

RESPONDENT: You are right, infact when you change a Syllabus, it's not everything you change. There are certain things that are so cardinal, that getting rid of them will mean something else. Of course a teacher must use his or her own initiative, when they realise the children are not pronouncing words correctly they must have the ability to come up with something to correct these words. Teachers must not let wrong pronunciations go, if a child says ''were were you'' and a teacher let's that go, that will reappear in the final exams even at Grade 12. However there are certain words that have the same spellings but different pronunciation. For instance the word read in present tense will read, but in the past tense will be read.

INTERVIEWER: In fact I've always used this example, the word present can be present as in I'm around, present as a gift, and pronounced differently as present where you present something to someone.

RESPONDENT: Just like we have minute and minute, same spellings but different pronunciation. So if our children can be helped to differentiate these, then it would be so much help, because when you look at composition writing, most of the candidates do very badly as a result of these items we have mentioned.

INTERVIEWER: Talking about pronunciation, some languages I know or Bemba, I don't know if you come across scripts to say write the words as they are pronounced. For example in Bemba, they don't have H, has will be written as as, his as is, do we have such in grade 12.

RESPONDENT: Yes, in most of the compositions we've been marking we have seen those problems, instead of has, they write has, even when they are not Bemba, but we know in the Bemba alphabet they don't have Z. But sometimes they are going to use them because of the way they are pronounced. The other intervention in my view the rhyming words issue should be brought back into the syllabus because it used to help so much. You will remember when you and I were in school our teachers would make us read words that where rhyming and so it helped us distinguish one word from another. Apart from that we had tables, sentences, we would read them through, I don't see this so much today in our schools. It's like people think that was old fashioned, for those days.

INTERVIEWER: No, we assume they do it at primary.

RESPONDENT: Yes, in fact they should be no break because they'll forget they'll think now that we are in grade ten, whatever they learnt at primary should be discarded.

INTERVIEWER: Any final remarks.

RESPONDENT: I just hope that the standard officers in the provinces especially dealing with secondary schools would put in more effort in arranging seminars for teachers. I remember when i was Head of Department myself we would have seminars where we would even produce teaching materials. We would share the best ways to change these things. Now when you look at what's happening in our schools today, these are very rare, if anything they are not even there. But if the Ministry of Education put in some money and came up with such seminars it would help a lot of teachers of English because sometimes we teachers contribute. The way we pronounce words, that's how the children will pronounce them as well, so these seminars would help the teachers of language especially in how to pronounce words, how to write words correctly and so on, even exercises that they would use in their classes.

INTERVIEW 13

INTERVIEWER: How long have you been teaching?

RESPONDENT: 23 years as a practising teacher.

INTERVIEWER: 23 years as a practising teacher and now you're in administration, and you are now the chief examiner for English paper 1, which is composition.

RESPONDENT: For this particular session, am the chief examiner.

INTERVIEWER: You have been marking for how long under the Examinations Council of Zambia?

RESPONDENT: Since 1992, almost 23 or 24 years now.

INTERVIEWER: Through your marking experience, both at the marking centre and classroom during the time you had a classroom, what are the problems that keep occurring?

RESPONDENT: Errors of spelling, some candidates failed to spell words like 'dying' and 'accommodation'.

INTERVIEWER: How were they spelling 'dying'?

RESPONDENT: 'Dieying', that one example. Then we have homophones where they confine certain words there as an adverb, their possessive as an example, we have tense errors, especially use of past tense and past continuous that has been continuous in the current examination. We have errors of prepositions where candidates were writing in the Copperbelt. Then we have errors of construction, it was for example on Wednesday 'when' I met John, instead of 'that', and those have been occurring every year.

INTERVIEWER: Any more dramatical errors that you remember?

RESPONDENT : Yes, the use of 'cannot' is written is written as one word, but candidates would use the short form 'can't' or they would write 'can' then space and then write 'not', 'therefore' they would write 'there' and then 'for', we have come across such errors in the marking session.

INTERVIEWER : Any other errors that may site as recurring, including errors, being the chief you are you are tent to this that year in year out, these errors seem not to…

RESPONDENT: It's also failure to separate certain words, the word 'in fact', you write it as one word, when it should not be the case. 'In spite' those are two words normally written as one word. So we have such errors.

INTERVIEWER: I guess this is the result of the way they are spoken.

RESPONDENT: It could be.

INTERVIEWER: People usually write them with the way they speak them.

RESPONDENT: Like 'inspite' when speaking we don't pause, we don't say 'in spite'.

INTERVIEWER: So people will translate that and write it the way it is. Anything else of the errors that keep recurring?

RESPONDENT: I've already talked about the short forms, I don't know whether paragraphing can be classified as an error.

INTERVIEWER: Yes it is.

RESPONDENT: It is also a source of concern that some of our candidates don't paragraph their work, they don't actually know what paragraphing is, not everyone but the majority don't.

INTERVIEWER: Do we have cases of paragraphs even which are run on sentences.

RESPONDENT: We have a good number of run-on sentences, we have block form of paragraphing which we don't accept in English language. They are supposed to indent. That is what is acceptable according to the English language syllabus.

INTERVIEWER: now these errors that seem numerous and keep recurring every year, which ones would you pin down to L1,interferrence to mother tongue interference, which ones would you say well this is definitely because of mother tongue.

RESPONDENT: for example if a candidate writes my mother's phone was crying.

INTERVIEWER: Yes because in our languages ilelila phrase in Bemba, I don't know what it is in Tonga.

RESPONDENT: So that is the mother tongue interference, then we normally say heard what you have told me, that is wrong, that is also arising from mother tongue interference, instead of saying I have understood or understand what you are saying, or you say |I have heard which is mother tongue interference.

INTERVIEWER: What of the spelling are these some that you directly say well this is as a result of the mother tongue because they are writing the way it is spoken.

RESPONDENT: At the moment I can't really think of a concrete example, because I have a lot to link it to Tonga, Since am Tonga now I cannot really think of a concrete example because when you write the word sitting in English or the word writing it is giving them problems, I don't know whether this is arising from first language or mother tongue interference because most of the candidates write with double T.

INTERVIEWR: Do we have scripts were spelling errors such as tried is written in the mother tongue I think that when I mean, tried people will write trayed.

RESPONDENT: Tryed, we have such scripts, so we are saying that is arising from mother tongues,

INTERVIWER: Because they won't to write them because if it were example neighbor people would write neba because that's how they write it in their mother tongue

RESPONDENT: We have such causes at grade 12 level especially, let me not say government schools to say, most of our schools we have that challenge.

INTERVIWER: Madam what intentions do you think would be put in place to correct these errors because they seen to be rearing year in year cut. What should be done?

RESPONDENT: The reading culture among or candidates is not there, I think they concentrate more on modern technology because as you mark, you are able to read SMS language instead of writing 'because', they write 'cause', so we need to revamp our library so that our pupils are able to read, the pupils may not really be to blame. I don't know how often composition is taught in our schools. It is one thing to teach and another thing to mark. Do we have remedial exercises with these pupils that could be lacking in most of our schools, and most of our schools may not have teaching or learning material, that one we also need to look into. We may blame the pupils but on the other hand, it could be the teaching staff. So there are few things we need to put in place. They also need to strengthen this continuous CPD for the teachers, that one needs to be strengthened. They need to strengthen subject association that there able to share a lot of ideas, and in fact head teachers can initiate. At local levels, they invite experts, in certain

subjects they conduct workshops. That way there will be capacity building, they will be able to share knowledge with their teachers.

INTERVIEWER: Anything of your last remarks chief?

RESPONDENT: The last remark I would like to make is, let's continue helping our candidates. Much as I've mentioned, some of these errors that we come across, then they go with these errors where ever they are going. It could be tertiary education, some college or university. It is up to the lecturers also, to continue rectifying these errors. We know education does not end, it is a long process, so the sooner we do that, the better. For our candidates, be it at tertiary level or at school level, we just have to work as a team because we should not point fingers, "No, these have come from secondary sector, look at the way they are writing." They also have to put in the best tertiary, such a scenario.

INTERVIEWER: What of the new policy? There is now a new policy where from grade 1 to 4, people have to be taught in vernacular. Wont that impact negatively on the impact of teaching in the senior secondary section?

RESPONDENT: I would not really like to comment on the policy. I was almost in trouble one time when I commented on a government policy, but I think there is a reason of introducing that policy because most of the people are not able to read. So it is better they start reading as early as grade one, though I know it has been received with mixed feelings. The government means well, we just have to embrace it.