

**STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE REMOVAL OF ENGLISH AS A  
MANDATORY PASSING SUBJECT AT GRADE NINE IN ZAMBIA**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I, Pamela Muma MUSONDA, do hereby declare that this study entitled, *“Stakeholder’s Perspectives on the Removal of English as a Mandatory Passing Subject at Grade Nine in Zambia”* is my own piece of work, that all resources used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references and that neither I nor anyone at this University nor any other Educational Institution submitted this study for degree purposes.

Signature of author: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## APPROVAL

The University of Zambia approved the dissertation by Pamela Muma MUSONDA as a fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Applied Linguistics.

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## ABSTRACT

In Zambia, English is the official language and a language of instruction from Grade 5 going upwards. It had been a determining subject for any pupil to proceed to Grade 10. However, a policy was developed to remove English as a qualifying subject for Grade 9 examinations. The purpose of this study was to establish various stakeholders' perspectives on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level. The objectives of the study were to: establish reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level; analyse attitudes of teachers of English and pupils towards government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9; explore views of standards officers, school managers, teachers of English, parents and pupils on the English waiver at Grade 9 level.

The study used a qualitative design and employed a case study strategy of inquiry. The data collection techniques used in the study were interviews and focus group discussions. Purposive sampling technique was used to come up with a total of 72 respondents of which 4 were standards officers, 3 school managers from 3 schools, 9 teachers and 48 pupils from the same schools. Respondents included 4 former pupils and 4 parents. Data were analysed using the inductive thematic analysis. The theoretical frameworks constituting the study were the Expectancy Theory by Victor vroom (1964) and the Critical Discourse Analysis by Roger Fowler and others (1970s).

The findings of the study established that the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 was because of pupils' low literacy levels and low proficiency levels in English. The other reason was that government wanted to grant Grade 9 pupils' access to senior secondary education. The findings showed that after English was removed as a mandatory passing subject, most of the teachers of English and pupils held negative attitudes towards teaching/learning English while a few others held positive ones. The study recorded 3 participants who were in support of removing English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine while 62 were not. The study also established that motivation played a major role in the teaching and learning of English.

The study's recommendations were that government should devise measures of scaffolding pupils who failed English at Grade 9 so that they perform better by the time they reach Grade 12. For the sake of consistency, English should be made a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 because it is mandatory at Grade 12 and a prerequisite to tertiary education. Government, through the Ministry of Education, should involve policy implementers in the policy formulation processes.

**Key words:** *Stakeholders, English, Mandatory, Motivation*

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved children Mwewa, Mumba, Musonda, Muma and Mwai Netta for bearing the pain of staying without their mother for several months. It was not easy for you just as it wasn't for me. Thank you for your patience. I hope my achievement means something valuable to you. May God abundantly bless you.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>COPYRIGHT .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>APPROVAL .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>AKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Overview .....	1
1.2 Background .....	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem .....	3
1.4 Purpose of the Study .....	3
1.5 Research Objectives .....	3
1.6 Research Questions .....	4
1.7 Significance of the Study .....	4
1.8 Delimitation of the Study .....	4
1.9 Limitation of the Study .....	4
1.10 Summary of the Chapter .....	5
1.11 Organisation of the Dissertation.....	5
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Overview .....	6
2.2 The role and status of English.....	6
2.3 The removal of English as a mandatory passing subject .....	13
2.4 Teachers’ and pupils’ attitudes towards English subject .....	17
2.5 Summary of chapter two .....	34

<b>CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....</b>	<b>36</b>
3.1 Overview .....	36
3.2 The Expectancy Theory .....	36
3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis .....	38
3.4 Summary of chapter 3 .....	40
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>42</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	42
4.2 Research Design .....	42
4.3 Target Population .....	42
4.4 Study sample .....	43
4.5 Sampling Techniques .....	43
4.6 Research Instruments .....	44
4.7 Data Collection Procedure .....	45
4.8 Data Analysis .....	45
4.9 Ethical Consideration .....	45
4.10 Summary of Chapter 4 .....	46
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>47</b>
5.1 Overview .....	47
5.2 Reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 .....	47
5.2.1 Low literacy levels.....	48
5.2.2 Access to senior secondary education .....	48
5.2.3 Low pupil proficiency in English subject.....	49
5.3 Attitudes of teachers of English and pupils towards government’s removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 .....	50
5.3.1 Teachers’ attitudes towards English language teaching .....	50
5.3.2 Pupils’ attitudes towards English language learning .....	52
5.3.4 Pupils’ attitudes towards English subject according to standards officers, school managers and teachers of English .....	54
5.4 Views of standards officers, school managers, parents and former pupils on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level .....	55
5.5 Summary of chapter 5 .....	62

<b>CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>63</b>
6.1 Overview .....	63
6.2 Reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 .....	63
6.2.1 Low literacy levels.....	63
6.2.2 Access to senior secondary education .....	64
6.2.2.1 Political ideology .....	65
6.2.3 Low pupil proficiency in English .....	66
6.3 Attitudes of teachers and pupils towards government’s removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 .....	66
6.4 Views of standards officers, school managers, parents, and former pupils on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9.....	70
6.5 Summary of chapter 6 .....	73
<b>CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>74</b>
7.1 Overview .....	74
7.2 Reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 .....	74
7.3 Attitudes of teachers of English and pupils on government’s removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9.....	75
7.4 Views of standards officers, school managers, parents, and former pupils on the English waiver at Grade 9.....	75
7.5 Recommendations .....	76
7.6 Recommendations for future research.....	76
7.7 Summary .....	77
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>92</b>
Appendix A: Consent form from the Dean .....	92
Appendix B: Letter of Approval .....	93
Appendix C: Interview guide for Standards officers 1 and 2.....	96
Appendix D: Interview guide for Standards officer 3.....	97
Appendix E: Interview guide for Standards officer 4 .....	98
Appendix F: Interview guide for school managers .....	99
Appendix F: Interview Guide for Teachers of English.....	100

Appendix G: Interview guide for parents (for former Grade 9 pupils)..... 101  
Appendix H: Interview guide for parents (for recent Grade 9 pupils) ..... 102  
Appendix I: Focus group discussion guide for pupils..... 103  
Appendix J: Interview Guide for Former Pupils..... 104

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AD</b>	—	Administrators (School Managers)
<b>ASEAN</b>	—	Association of South East Asian Nations
<b>CDA</b>	—	Critical Discourse Analysis
<b>CLIL</b>	—	Content and Language Integrated Learning
<b>CP</b>	—	Current Pupil
<b>ECZ</b>	—	Examinations Council of Zambia
<b>EFL</b>	—	English as a Foreign Language
<b>EIL</b>	—	English as an International Language
<b>ELL</b>	—	English Language Learner
<b>ELT</b>	—	English Language Teaching
<b>EMI</b>	—	English as a Medium of Instruction
<b>FP</b>	—	Former Pupil
<b>FPC</b>	—	Former Pupil (Current)
<b>GCE</b>	—	General Certification of Education Examinations
<b>ICT</b>	—	Information and Communication Technology
<b>LoLT</b>	—	Language of Learning and Teaching
<b>MMD</b>	—	Movement for Multiparty Democracy
<b>MoE</b>	—	Ministry of Education
<b>MoGE</b>	—	Ministry of General Education
<b>P</b>	—	Parent

<b>PF</b>	—	Patriotic Front
<b>REMPS</b>	—	Removal of English as a Mandatory Passing Subject
<b>SIDA</b>	—	Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation
<b>S O</b>	—	Standards Officers
<b>TEFL</b>	—	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
<b>Tr</b>	—	Teacher
<b>WE</b>	—	World English

## **OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

**Abolition:** The complete removal of something (in this case, the policy)

**Government:** A team that directs a country

**Mandatory:** What must be followed or done without compromise

**Medium of instruction:** An official language that is chosen to be used in teaching and learning

**Stakeholder:** People with an interest in something

**Perspectives:** How different people look at the issue at hand

**Waiving:** Doing away completely with what was in existence.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Overview**

This chapter gives the background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, and research questions. It also states the significance of the study, delimitations, limitations of the study and operational definitions.

### **1.2 Background**

English is the official language, widely used in government, in broadcasting and in education. In Zambia, the national official language is undoubtedly English (Ohannessian and Kashoki 1978). Zambia is one of the countries that were colonized by Britain. English was declared an official language in the Zambian parliament in the year 1966. Zambia has a rich linguistic heritage with over 70 local languages and dialects, among which seven have regional official status: Bemba, Nyanja, Lozi, Tonga, Kaonde, Luvale and Lunda. The history of English in Zambia as propounded by Simwinga (2007) who stated that between 1964 to 2004 English was regarded as the sole official language at national level on the assumption that as a neutral language its use would not trigger ethnic emotions which would work against national unity and national development. Later, in the 1970's, it was acknowledged that the use of English as a sole language of classroom instruction was proving a disadvantage to most of the children whose only contact with the language was inside the classroom. Hence, in the 1990s, use of community languages as medium of instruction from Grades One to Four was recommended. Zambia now uses English language as a medium of instruction from Grade 5 to tertiary education.

Elsleden (2017) stated that English is the international language used for wider communication to an extent that no other language can be compared. Elsliden also stated that in many areas, English is the tool of communication between people from different countries as well as between individuals from the same country. Nishanthi (2018) emphasized the importance of learning English, that it is the international common tongue. It is used in education. Nishanthi also stated that knowing how to read English allows access to billions of pages of information which may not be otherwise available. The paper brought in the reason of travel and business, stating that one can travel around the globe if they have a good understanding and communication in English. It was also mentioned that English is easy to learn.

English has had a higher status in the Zambia's education system (Mwanza, 2020a). Banda (2012) explained in his paper that today, English is the most important language as far as social mobility is concerned. It enjoys unchallenged social prestige, has high practical values and it alone holds the key to jobs in the formal sector of the economy. English was a mandatory passing subject for a Grade 9 pupil to qualify to Grade 10 but with the coming of the new policy in 2009, it had been waived off and any pupil who passes in any six subjects will have made it to Grade 10. Government reviewed the policy of having English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 in 2009 when it abolished cut off point system which had English as a requirement among the passing subjects. A pupil only needed to obtain a full school certificate regardless of which subjects they passed in, as long as they passed six subjects. Banda and Mwanza (2017) point out that while previously, English was a mandatory passing subject for one to qualify to Grade 10, the new 'policy' has made English as an equal subject to any other subject and is no longer a mandatory passing subject. Banda and Mwanza further stated that for the first time, the unchallenged position of English at secondary school had not only been challenged but questioned. The Basic Education Sector Analysis Report of 2012 disclosed the use of English as the official medium of instruction beginning at Grade 5 up to tertiary. Janneke (2007) gave out the allocation of subjects per week of which English was allocated 7 to 9 periods. This shows how much attention English had received in Zambian schools.

On 11th February, 2009, the policy of cut-off point abolition was passed. This was the policy which in turn waived English as a mandatory passing subject.

This policy was passed on 11th February 2009. The former Minister of Education, Honorable Geoffrey Lungwangwa announced this in a ministerial statement to parliament on 11th February 2009:

*Government has abolished the cut off-point system to select grade nine pupils to grade ten and replaced it with a full school certification as a criterion to qualify to grade ten. A total of 110,798 pupils obtained full grade certificates in last year's examinations and have consequently qualified to grade ten.*

All the candidates who obtained full certificates during their Grade 9 examinations in 2008 had since qualified to Grade 10. This decision of selecting candidates based on their full certificate was aimed at allowing more pupils proceed to Grade 10 (Ministerial Statement to Parliament,

2009) This meant that any pupil who fulfilled the requirements for a full certificate at Grade 9 level, despite the grades and marks they obtained and regardless of which subject they passed in, were allowed to proceed to Grade 10. This system, therefore, enabled a lot of pupils to enter Grade 10 regardless of the marks attained in the English language. The candidates, however, would be required to pass the English language at Grade 12 in order to obtain full certificates.

The study investigated various stakeholders' perspectives and attitudes towards the English waiver at Grade 9 level. It analysed reasons why English was waived as a mandatory passing subject. This study also found out various stakeholders' perspectives on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

In Zambia, English is the official language and a language of instruction from Grade 5 going upwards (The Basic Education Sector Analysis Report of 2012). English had been a determining subject for a Grade 9 pupil to proceed to Grade 10. However, it was removed as a qualifying subject for Grade 9 examinations in 2009. Nevertheless, English is a mandatory passing subject at Grade 12 and a prerequisite to tertiary education. The removal of English as a mandatory passing subject for a Grade 9 pupil to proceed to Grade 10 had therefore prompted the researcher to take up this study which sought to explore various stakeholders' perspectives on the subject matter. In question form: What were the stakeholders' perspectives on government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine in Zambia?

### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

To explore various stakeholders' perspectives on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine in Zambia.

### **1.5 Research Objectives**

This study's research objectives were to;

1. establish reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9
2. investigate the attitudes of teachers of English and pupils towards government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9

3. explore the views of standards officers, school managers, teachers of English, parents and former Grade 9 pupils on the waiving of English at Grade 9.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

The following were the research questions;

1. Why was English removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9?
2. What were the attitudes of teachers of English and pupils towards government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9?
3. What were the views of standards officers, school managers, parents and former pupils on the English waiver at Grade 9?

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The importance of this study was to establish if there were any weaknesses or strengths to the policy of removal of English as a mandatory passing subject and provided the insight on the way forward. The outcomes of this study helped explore how standards officers, school managers, teachers, parents and former Grade 9 pupils perceived the policy in question. This study availed stakeholders with the information of how the policy had impacted the education sector on the standards of education. The study provided suggestions on how teachers may be incorporated in educational policy formulation to prepare them implement policies correctly and positively. The study may contribute to the existing literature on policies that deal with compulsory subjects in Zambia and the world at large.

## **1.8 Delimitation of the Study**

This study was restricted to Kasama District in the Northern Province. It targeted standards officers, school managers, teachers of English, pupils, as well as parents. Respondents came from rural, peri urban, and urban secondary schools of Kasama District.

## **1.9 Limitation of the Study**

Some respondents refused to be audio recorded, therefore, the researcher only audio recorded data from respondents who consented to it. Findings from participants who were not audio recorded were written down in a notebook. Therefore, the study was not affected in the collection of data in any way.

## **1.10 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter provided the background to the study which put the problem of the study into context. It also covered the purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study, and the operational definitions of terms. The next chapter will focus on the review of the studies that are related to the topic under study.

## **1.11 Organisation of the Dissertation**

This study is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one provides the background to the study. It also presents the statement of the problem the purpose of the study, the research objectives and questions, the significance of the study, the delimitations and limitations of the study, and the operational definitions that were used in the study. Chapter two presents a review of related literature to the study. Literature from both foreign and local studies. The third chapter provides the theoretical frameworks that underpinned the study. Chapter four presents the methodology employed in the study. It presents the research design, the research study area, the study population, the study sample, the sampling techniques, the instruments that were used for data collection, the procedure for data collection as well as the data analysis. Chapter five presents the findings of the study. It also presents verbatim reports obtained from one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions. In chapter six, discussions of findings are done using research objectives as themes as well as other emerging subthemes. The final chapter (seven) provides the conclusion of the study and the recommendations for future research that are based on the findings of the study. The pages that follow provide references and appendices.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Overview**

The previous chapter gave the introduction to this study. This chapter focuses on reviewing literature which relates to the study at hand. Borg and Gall (1979) state that literature review was designed to provide the reader with understanding of the previous studies conducted in the field they are studying so as to better their understanding of what they are researching on and be able to fit their findings into the overall context. Therefore, this chapter reviews literatures that have been generated from themes that relate to this study.

### **2.2 The role and status of English**

English has been used for different purposes in different countries. It has been used as a medium of instruction, an official language and as a native language.

In a study conducted by Nishanthi (2018), it was stated that English was initially the language of England, but over the historical efforts of the British Empire, it has developed to be the primary and secondary language of numerous former British colonies. The paper further stated that English is the primary language of not only countries actively touched by British imperialism, but also many business and cultural spheres dominated by those countries. The researcher stated that it is a useful and even necessary language to know. The researcher continued to state that an estimated 1 billion people worldwide speak English. Additionally, 67 countries use English as their official language while 27 countries use English as their secondary official language. The paper further stated that knowledge of English is necessary if one wants to succeed in life. It is the major window of the modern world. It further disclosed that advanced countries have opened their doors to recruiting technically qualified persons who have the command of the English language. In Zambia, English is not just an official language but also a language of instruction. It had also been a mandator passing subject at Grade nine until 2009. The current study looked at the perspectives of various stakeholders on the current language policy.

Lee and Heinz (2016) carried out a study in which they stated that English had become the preferred language of choice for international communication in a variety of domains, thus gaining the status of lingua franca. As such, English language skills have been recognized even

in Asian countries like Korea as an essential language to learn in order to be successful in the globalised society. Thus, English is the core element of the secondary school curriculum, and college students study English to find good jobs after graduation. The current study looked at how various stakeholders perceived the policy of removing English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine while at Grade twelve is it still mandatory. Considering that it is also a prerequisite to tertiary education in Zambia.

Shaw in 1981 stated that at that point in world history, English was the pre-eminent language of wider communication. In addition to over 275 million native speakers there were millions more who spoke it as a second or foreign language. It was used as a library language, as a medium of science, technology, and international trade, and as a contact language between nations and parts of nations. It was also seen as a vestige of British colonialism and as an arm of American cultural imperialism. English was all of these things and more. In Zambia, it is used in broadcasting, education and government. It is for this reason that the current study looked at how various stakeholders perceived the policy in question.

Adopting a foreign language like English and making it mandatory for the benefit of global growth through effective communication is cardinal. Reisberg (2017) conducted a study in United States which focused on making a foreign language mandatory. The study revealed that studying another language increases the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication, not only in knowing words, but in developing a deeper understanding of a culture. Reisberg stated that the Princeton University's latest general education proposal would require all students to study a foreign language, including students who were already proficient in another language. Thus, the proposal acknowledged the importance of the language. As such, other universities had allowed students to study English by venturing into culture and communication. It was also stated that some foreign students are now allowed to take classes in English, rather than the language of the host country since English is a lingua franca. The study disclosed that today, most, if not all, university graduates will need to be able to communicate across cultures, but there will have been very little (if anything) included in their undergraduate program to help them to develop skills that allow them to communicate across cultures. Studying another language (or two or three) increases the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication, not only in knowing words, but in developing a deeper understanding of a language and its relationship to culture. Reisberg

acknowledged the need of exposure to a foreign language for one to develop any understanding or insight about the cultural dimension of any society.

The study also disclosed that there was a growing importance of foreign language skills in the United States job market. Findings indicated that over the past five years, demand for bilingual workers in the United States more than doubled. In 2010, there were roughly 240,000 job postings aimed at bilingual workers; by 2015, that figure had more than doubled to approximately 630,000. Employers sought bilingual workers for both low- and high-skilled positions. In 2015, 60 percent of the jobs with the highest demand for bilingual workers were open to individuals with less than a bachelor's degree. Meanwhile, the fastest growth in bilingual listings from 2010 to 2015 was for so-called "high prestige" jobs, a category including financial managers, editors, and industrial engineers. The researcher concluded that the underlying principle of a liberal arts education is to equip students with a range of skills and tools that would facilitate their insertion into complicated social and economic environments. The potential learning from foreign language study should be a key part of that liberal education. The current study was interested in pupils who were still in secondary school. It also got perspectives of the pupils' parents and teachers on the policy of removing English as a mandatory passing subject.

Meganathan (2011) stated that throughout India, there was an extraordinary belief, among almost all castes and classes, in both rural and urban areas, in the transformative power of English. English was seen not just as a useful skill in terms of listening, speaking, reading and writing, but as a symbol of a better life, a pathway out of poverty and oppression. Aspiration of such magnitude was challenge faced by people of any language, as well as for those who had responsibility for teaching it. Meganathan quoted Graddol (2010:120) who stated that the challenges of providing universal access to English were significant, and many were bound to feel frustrated at the speed of progress. But we cannot ignore the way that the English language has emerged as a powerful agent for change in India. Meganathan also mentioned the role and place of English. The researcher stated that English was perceived as a library language during the formative years of India's independence; indeed, at one point there was a proposal that Hindi should be given fully fledged official language status and that English should be abolished from public use. However, having been granted 'associate official language' status, English continued to dominate higher education. Increasingly, it had been spreading its wings and moved into

school education. Therefore, the current study looked at how various stakeholders perceived the current language policy in Zambia.

Chang (2008) gave out the functions of English. In Korea, English was used in various domains of the society such as education, business, media, and government. In secondary schools, English had been taught as a compulsory subject according to the national curriculum over the last 60 years. It was introduced in primary school in 1997. The researcher disclosed that at most universities a variety of English courses were provided to help their students to be better prepared for their career. The importance of English subject in schools had caused a social problem. Rich parents wanted their children to do better in English and have a better chance in the future. This had brought about a gap among children from different family backgrounds. English was also used in the business domain in Korea. In Zambia, it had been a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine until 2009. The current study, therefore, looked at the views of various stakeholders on the same.

The importance of English as a subject was emphasized by Hsu (2009), who discovered that standards of English had gone down so much that some college students failed to construct simple sentences yet a primary school drop out some 40 years ago would speak good English. The researcher stated that English is important if we want to communicate with the outside world, do business and learn new knowledge. English is an essential language to learn for upward mobility in life. The researcher advised that to learn a language well takes time and it cannot be done overnight. Hsu also mentioned that there would definitely be initial pain but this pain was worth the sufferings if we looked ahead. He stated in his paper that learning English well did not undermine the Malaysian patriotism. In fact, by mastering more skills and knowledge, Malaysians would be better equipped to help the country to move forward and compete in the increasing globalised world. The researcher further mentioned that most, if not all, of the teachers of English were not up to the mark to teach good English. The researcher was horrified to learn that English grammar was no longer taught in school. The writer, who was also a lecturer, expressed fears that the teachers that were being trained without knowing the English grammar, may become the proverbial ‘blind leading the blind’. The lecturer appealed that there was need to have strong wills, which would not easily be swayed by political pressure. The writer compared Malaysia to China which was said to have many good English-speaking

residents, even though they still represented a small proportion of the whole population. The paper stated that China would become the core of a new generation of good English speakers, as time went on. Hsu also stated that a generation of good and dedicated teachers of English had been lost. To overcome this, the writer suggested that there was need to train a new generation of teachers overseas at institutions like Kirby College in the United Kingdom, to learn English language and the correct ways to teach English. The researcher further suggested that foreign teachers of English could be engaged to teach English in Malaysian schools. More time could be dedicated to the teaching of English and making English a compulsory pass subject could be considered. The current study looked at various stakeholders' perspectives on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine level in Zambia.

Cantoni (2007) conducted a study that stated that Namibia's official language had been English since independence in 1990. There are different national languages in the country and a majority of the people do not use English as a mother tongue. Nevertheless, the language of instruction from fourth grade and onwards is indeed English. Consequently, for the majority of the population the use of English in education as their second language. The study explored the role English as a second language had as a medium of instruction and the implications it might have. The researcher carried out a minor field study sponsored by the Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation (SIDA). The study took place in a school in Northern Namibia, between April 2007 and May 2007. The study which was qualitative in nature, explored the use of English among teachers and students as well as the transition from mother tongue instruction to English instruction and the implications that this could have on the quality of education. The reality of the Namibian students that had to study and perform well in a second language was questioned and discussed from pedagogical and linguistical points of view. The results showed that most pupils did not speak English before starting fourth grade. Furthermore, the sudden transition from mother tongue to English instruction created some descent in the participation of the pupils and possibly in the learning, not only of the new language but also of the content subjects. As far as the teachers were concerned, there were positive but ambiguous opinions among them concerning the use of English as a medium of instruction. However, the current study looked at a specific language policy of removing English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine level.

Zedilla (2016) conducted a study on the removal of English as a compulsory subject from primary schools on the 2013 Curriculum in Indonesia. The researcher stated that English existed as a dominant language in the educational system to help globalisation. It was stated that 70 countries in the world have given a status to English as an important international language which relates to 80% of the world's population using English as their primary or secondary language. In 2009, the charter of ASEAN made English as a working language of the association for all deliberations and documentation. Additionally, some ASEAN countries employ first language speakers of English. Nine out of ten-member states of ASEAN have made English as a compulsory subject in primary schools, Indonesia being the only ASEAN country that has not made English a compulsory subject in primary schools. But even in Indonesia, English is still the most common language taught in schools, other than Indonesian itself. In Zambia, it is not just taught but it is also a medium of instruction from Grade five to tertiary level. The current study looked at the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine level.

Marten and Kula (2007) mentioned that English plays an important role in education in Zambia. After independence, English became the dominant language at all levels of education, and was used as the medium of instruction throughout all learning circles, while national languages were taught as subjects. At secondary and tertiary levels of education, English is still being used almost exclusively. With regards to the media and education, English is the dominant language in government, administration and business. The majority of government publications as well as government and official websites, are in English, as is the language of parliament, and the Constitution states that any person wishing to stand for parliament has to be fluent in the official language, that is, English. The researcher further stated that the predominant use of English in the media, government, and education, in addition to the widespread use of English as the language of business and administration, means that knowledge of English is extremely important for finding employment, at least in the 'formal' sector, and English thus had a relatively high social status in Zambia. Therefore, this study sought to get views of various stakeholders on how they perceived the policy of removing English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine.

A study done by Kashina (2009) started by highlighting the privileged position of English in Zambia. It then went on to argue that from the pedagogical point of view, the use of English as

the medium of instruction in the Zambian educational system was counter-productive. The continued insistence on the teaching of 'standard' English in Zambia was questioned, not only because it was not practicable, but also because of its sociocultural implications. This study therefore, sought to get views from various stakeholders on what they think about the current language policy.

Chishiba and Manchishi (2016) disclosed in their paper that language policies within the Zambian education system had shifted in focus over the years. Two main schools of thought had dominated the debate regarding the language of instruction for Zambian schools. One school of thought favoured the use of English as the language of instruction while the other camp supported the use of local languages for instruction of core subjects. This paper reviewed language policies and language policy documents for Zambia dating from the pre-colonial era to the present-day democratic. On the issue of languages, the Phelps-Stokes Commission recommended that English be given the status of official language for both education and government day to day business. However, English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine. This, therefore, prompted the current study so as to get the various stakeholders' perspectives on the current language policy.

Simwinga (2007) conducted a study on the Zambian language shift. He stated that during the period 1964 to 2004 Zambia had seen significant shift in language policy with regard to language in education or language of classroom instruction. The period began with the perspective or philosophy which viewed linguistic diversity as a problem and a barrier to national unity, national integration and national development. This perception resulted in the selection of English, the language of the former colonial masters, as sole official language at national level on the assumption that as a neutral language its use would not trigger ethnic emotions which would work against national unity and national development. Later, in the 1970's, it was acknowledged that the use of English as sole language of classroom instruction was proving a disadvantage to the majority of the children whose only contact with the language was inside the classroom. Outside the classroom they used the community language while at home they used the home language where this was not the same as the community language. It was recognised that in order to get around the disadvantage, teachers were explaining some of the difficult concepts in the community languages although this was being done contrary to the policy which

stipulated the use of English. The language in education policy recommendations of the 1970's responded to the teacher's dilemma by making provision for the use of one of the seven official local languages to explain difficult concepts. Simwinga explained that in the 1990s also acknowledged the pedagogical limitations of using English as sole language of classroom instruction. In addition, they acknowledged the fact that though the 1970s had made provision for the use of one of the seven official local languages, in a number of cases the majority of the pupils were more familiar with the community languages in their localities than they were with the official local languages. In this regard, the 1990s recommended the use of community languages as media of instruction from Grades One to Four. It is in this line that the current study looked at the perspectives of various stakeholders on the current English policy.

Zambia is among the countries that were colonised by Britain. It therefore uses English as its official language and also as its medium of instruction from Grade 5 to tertiary education. The government of Zambia considers those who passed in English at Grade 12 to be enrolled into tertiary education. Various studies have shown the status of English and its roles in different sectors of different countries. English has been used as an official language in different countries, Zambia inclusive, as well as a medium of instruction. Studies have shown that a few countries would want to embrace their native languages more than English. Some countries would like to have both their native language and English while others give an important status to English where they would like to use it more than their native languages. The status of English in Zambian education is that it is a medium of instruction from Grade 5 up to tertiary level (Mkandawire, 2017). It is also a mandatory passing subject at Grade 12. English in Zambia is used as an official language. Banda and Mwanza (2017) argued that even literacy in early grades done in local languages is meant to develop fluency in English. Therefore, this is what this study sought to look at: the status of English in Zambia and the attitudes of different stakeholders on its removal as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level.

### **2.3 The removal of English as a mandatory passing subject**

This section focuses on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject. Different researchers have talked about English being removed as a compulsory subject. In the different literature reviewed, it was evidenced that different countries looked at English being a mandatory subject differently. Some governments are adding English into their curriculum as a mandatory

passing subject while other governments are removing it. The current study sought to find out what other researchers have said about the issue of removing English as a mandatory passing subject.

Arif (2015) conducted a study which was about the removing of English as a compulsory subject in the primary school level in Indonesia. This was as per the 2013 curriculum of the Indonesian government. This brought out contradictions among many parties such as teachers, parents' group and education observers. The study was undertaken to find out teachers' opinion about removing English as a compulsory subject in the primary school level. Results showed that majority of teachers did not agree to government's removal of English as a compulsory subject in the primary school level. Most of the teachers complained about the new curriculum saying that most of them were still confused about the previous one. Arif looked at teachers' opinions about the removal of English as a compulsory subject in primary school level. However, this study was looking at the views of various stakeholders such as standards officers, school managers, teachers, pupils and parents on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject in junior secondary school. It also, like Arif's study, looked at the views held by those affected by the policy and their attitudes towards it. Besides, Arif's study looked at the removal of English language at primary level. The current study looked at the junior secondary school level, Grade 9 in particular.

In a study done by Acharya (1982) on the abolition of English at primary level, it was stated that the agitation over the West Bengal government's move to withdraw a prescribed text for classes I and II was followed by another agitation over the Left Front government's move to abolish the teaching of English at the primary level of education. The paper examined the issues involved and the character of the forces which were mobilised in opposition to the government's move. It was found out that the opposition to abolish English at the primary level was reminiscent of the opposition to the moves by the imperial government to create E-grade in the nineteenth century and, more generally, to the policy of mass education. This study looked at the complete removal of English which was done at primary school level. The current study looked at the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject which still remained as a subject. It looked at the junior secondary school.

Ukhti (2018) also conducted a study about the Indonesian government's removal of English subject at elementary schools. The researcher stated that the Indonesian government had recently started implementing the new 2013 Curriculum. There were some aspects revised in the curriculum. One of them was removing English subject as compulsory subject in the Elementary school level. The aim of this study was to discover the English teachers' perception on removing English subject at Elementary Schools. Therefore, a qualitative research method was applied. The data were collected through interview, by semi-structure interview. The focus on this research were six teachers who taught English subject at first grade of Junior high school at Banda Aceh in collecting data. From the data analysis, it could be concluded that all teachers regretted about the removal of English subject at Elementary school. Removing of English subject in elementary schools did not only adversely affect teachers but students as well. This paper tried to present Teachers' Opinion about removing English as a compulsory subject in the elementary school level. The current paper looked at the junior secondary school and sought to find out the attitudes of teachers of English and their learners on the same.

Eun-ju and Si-soo (2017) stated in their paper that English had been a "fixture" of the curriculum at primary and secondary schools for many years. Students had to learn English as a mandatory subject to graduate and nobody had challenged the policy amid globalisation in which English was increasingly considered another primary language. A provincial education office recently challenged the policy, arguing that studying English should be optional, at least in rural areas where more students were in multiracial families. The Daegu Office of Education suggested that the Ministry of Education remove English from the list of mandatory subjects. The office said that the removal, if implemented, will make it easier for students, especially from multiracial families, to learn other languages at school, which will help bolster the nation's linguistic diversity and international competitiveness. They concluded in the end that English was an important part of the curriculum. This study did not look at the students' attitudes towards their learning English language.

In one of the strongest ever pitch for reforming educational standards in India, a government panel had suggested that English should be made compulsory in all schools, and every student from class 6th onwards should study English as a compulsory subject (Ghosh 2017). Besides, the panel had recommended that at least one English language school should exist in every block of

the country. There are 6612 blocks in the country, and this single step had the potential to revolutionise education in the country. The panel which had recommended these suggestions comprised of a group of Secretaries and was named as ‘Group on Education & Social Development’. They put major emphasis on education of English and Science, as they said that English should be made a compulsory subject in all schools from class 6th onwards and at least one English medium school (be set up) in every block along with Science education facility in a radius of 5 kilometers. In Zambia, English is a compulsory subject from Grade five going upwards. However, this study looked at its removal as a mandatory passing subject at Grade nine level.

In a study conducted by Banda and Mwanza (2017) it was stated that in Zambia, English is no longer a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9. If a pupil passes in any six subjects, they proceed to Grade 10 regardless of which subject they have passed in. This policy came about after the cut-off point system was abolished. The abolition of the Grade 9 cut-off point system which was at first imposed by the then Ministry of Education, Science, Vocation and Early Education in order to regulate the number of learners that can progress to grade 10 due to limited places at Grade 10, was a policy that aimed at ensuring that education, funding as well as resources reached the poor and vulnerable children especially in rural areas (Zambian Parliament, 2009).

*...before the removal of the grade-9 cut-off point, the national pass percentage was 37.15 per cent. However, after the removal of the cut-off point in 2008, the national pass percentage rose to 48.57 per cent giving a national progression rate of 11.42 per cent. It was envisaged that with the increased number of grade 10 places, numbers of drop-outs at grade 9 would significantly reduce... (Ministerial Statement to Parliament, 2009).*

Lusaka Times (11<sup>th</sup> February, 2009) reported the following:

*“Government has abolished the cut off-point system to select grade nine pupils to grade ten and replaced it with a full school certification as a criterion to qualify to grade ten.”*

A study done by Kanchele (2017), showed that there was a critical shortage of qualified teachers and disproportionate teacher- pupil ratios. There was also overcrowding in the classrooms and this had a myriad of implications on quality. However, this study specifically looked at how the abolition of cut-off-points which waived off English as a mandatory passing subject had affected

the teachers' and pupils' attitudes towards the English waiver at Grade 9 level. The current study looks at the English waiver and the attitudes of various stakeholders towards the same.

Studies on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject have shown that in some countries English had been removed as a mandatory subject at primary school level while in other countries it is removed at secondary school level. Different reasons were given in different studies on why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject. Results for the studies reviewed showed that English is just being introduced as a compulsory subject in some countries while in other countries it being abolished as a compulsory subject. Some government panels suggested that English should be made a compulsory subject in all schools. Majority of teachers, in some studies, have not agreed to government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject. Opposition towards abolishing English as a compulsory passing subject came from different stakeholders in the reviewed literature. While the former is happening in some countries, other countries are looking at English as an important and to be considered as part of the curriculum. The current study looked at their (learners') perspectives and attitudes in English subject even as they go to Grade 10 because full school certificates are given to all the pupils who pass in any six subjects: whether they have English or not. The concern was so because the same learners would be required to pass English at grade 12 where it is mandatory. The researcher's concern was on the teachers' and learners' attitude and their perspectives on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level after the abolition of cut-off points which led to the waiving of English as a mandatory passing subject. A learner, from then, would proceed to Grade 10 as long as they passed in any six subjects. The researcher sought to find out the reasons why this was done and what various stakeholders' perspectives were on the same.

#### **2.4 Teachers' and pupils' attitudes towards English subject**

There have been various studies done on teachers' and learners' attitudes towards English in Africa and outside. This section dealt with revealing literature on the attitudes of teachers and learners on government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject. It presents studies that have been done outside Africa and in Africa. The section also reviewed some local literature.

A study was conducted by Alaga (2016) on motivation and attitude towards English language learning. In this study, it was mentioned that motivation and positive attitude have been widely viewed by researchers as key factors that influence in the success of learning English language. This study aimed at determining the level of motivation and attitude towards learning English language. It also sought to determine the relationship between respondents' profile variates and their level of motivation and attitude. Notable results revealed that the respondents' level of motivation was moderately high and respondents had a positive attitude towards learning English language. This study, however, only looked at the attitudes of learners. The current study looked at the attitudes of both teachers and learners.

Ahmed (2015) conducted a study on undergraduate students' attitude towards English learning and causes that might have hindered their learning. In this paper, the researcher analysed the result of a survey on 238 undergraduate EFL students at a public university in Malaysia. The study's objectives were to investigate the attitudes of the learners towards the use of English in different areas, the causes that may have influenced the effect of English learning for students and the perspectives of English learning among non-major English learners in Malaysia. Results of the qualitative analysis showed that the attitude towards English language learning and using the language in various domains of usage was extremely positive. The data also revealed that most of the students had negative feelings or fear regarding classroom instructions in their learning experience. Students of different fields varied in attitudes towards English language learning in terms of domains of usage and focus of learning skills, which showed that a single curriculum or teaching methodology was not adequate. Several suggestions have been made regarding teaching methodology, curriculum, teaching materials, and the status of English in Malaysia from this point of view. The current study, however, sought to investigate secondary school pupils' attitudes towards government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject.

Viet (2017) did a study on the attitude that students had on learning English as their foreign language. The researcher established that learning a second language is influenced by many factors. Among those, attitude had been identified as an important one. Better understanding of students' attitude would help language teaching programmers, school managers and educators to develop strategies to improved student's learning outcomes. The drive of this study was to

explore students' attitude toward learning English. Data were collected through a questionnaire from a total of 694 students at Nong Lam University in Vietnam. The results of the study showed that the students had positive attitude toward learning English as a foreign language. Viet looked at the attitudes of students towards the learning of English as a foreign language. The current study looked at the attitudes of both teachers and learners towards English subject, following its removal as a mandatory subject which also incorporated their attitudes towards teaching and learning English in their classrooms.

A study was conducted by Gajalakshimi (2013) to attempt to investigate the IX-standard students' attitude towards learning English language. A standardised questionnaire was administered in the form of normative survey to 600 IX standard students (selected randomly from various high and higher secondary schools in Puducherry region) to collect their attitude towards learning English language. The results revealed that there is a significant difference based on the gender, locality of the school, type of school, type of management. Hence it was concluded that more classroom activities in the study of English enhance pupils' attitude to learning English. The researcher here focused on the difference in learning English language based on gender, locality of school and the type of management. The current study also looked at Grade 9 learners, it looked at the aspect of English as a subject regardless of the pupils' gender or their school locality or management. It looked at their attitudes together with those of their teachers towards English subject after its removal as a mandatory passing subject.

Qi (2016) examined China's primary school English language education policy and discussed the implications for the primary school curriculum. Adopting a qualitative research design, which included six focus group interviews with students, the study investigated the attitudes of students toward the learning of English in the primary schools. The study was conducted in three different government schools with varied socio-economic status. Findings showed positive attitudes of children toward English education and their support for the early introduction of English. However, some felt that English was not as important as Chinese and mathematics. After reporting and discussing the different perspectives of the students, this paper was concluded by considering the implications for English education in primary schools in China and other Asian countries. This study looked at the language policy at primary school level. The current study looked at the language policy at junior secondary school.

In the same year (2016), Qi conducted another study to explore the attitudes of learners toward different varieties of English. In China, however, only two pioneering studies had examined this issue. To address this gap, the study investigated the attitudes of Chinese college students toward English. By adopting the notion of World Englishes (WE) and English as an International Language (EIL) as the theoretical framework. The paper had explored the attitudes of Chinese college students toward English, different varieties of English, and China English. It had also investigated their attitudes toward the current English education policies and practices in China and their purposes for learning English. Furthermore, the attitudes of Chinese college students had been examined in relation to the factors that were likely to explain their attitudes, namely, gender, age, grade in college, major, starting age for learning English, years spent in English learning, experience with native English-speaking teachers and friends who were native English speakers, English knowledge of parents, and international experience. The study looked at the attitudes of learners towards the different varieties of English. It did not look at the English language learning in the classroom which the current study sought.

Sabokrouh (2014) stated that researchers in education have documented that teachers' sense of efficacy had strong impacts on various aspects of teaching and learning. Yet, in the field of TESOL, inquiry into teachers' sense of efficacy is extremely scarce. The present study, by adopting the notion of teachers' sense of efficacy as the theoretical framework, had explored Iranian English Institute teachers' confidence in teaching English. The study had also examined teachers' attitudes toward the English language and teachers' English language proficiency, respectively. An exploratory survey methods design was employed in the study and data were collected in the quantitative format, by which 68 English institute teachers working in Mazandaran responded to the survey. The results indicated that teachers' current level of English proficiency and EIL (English as an International Language) attitude toward the English language were the significant predictors for teachers' English teaching-specific efficacy beliefs or confidence. Also, efficacy for oral English language use was found as an additional dimension of teacher efficacy in teaching English, indicating that in a foreign language context, oral target language use would be a significant dimension to be considered in examining teachers' self-efficacy in teaching the target language. This study focused only on teachers. The current study incorporated pupils.

Dixon (2016) revealed that there was rapid increase in the enrollment of English language learners (ELLs) in United States schools than general enrollment, resulting in an urgent need for teachers to be prepared and to meet the needs of ELLs in their classrooms. This study examined the language learning beliefs and attitudes toward ELLs among 286 pre-service teachers in a large public university. Results showed that pre-service teachers demonstrated neutral attitudes toward ELLs. Participants' language learning beliefs exhibited four components: difficulty of learning, ease of learning, motivation and traditional view of language learning. Controlling for language learning status, pre-service teachers tended to demonstrate less supportive attitudes toward ELLs when they held traditional views of language learning and when they viewed language learning (in general and English in particular) as relatively easy or not difficult. This study did not find out the attitudes of learners. Besides, it only looked at pre-service teachers' attitudes towards English language.

Smadi (2013) conducted a study which aimed at exploring Jordanian public-school teachers' attitudes toward teaching English as a foreign language and the factors that may influence these attitudes. It also aimed at investigating the relationship between their attitudes toward the English language and their classroom practices. The participants of the study were twenty female teachers of the English language. They were purposefully chosen from the schools in Ajloun Directorate of Education in the second semester of the academic year 2012/2013. To answer the questions of the study, the researcher designed a questionnaire, and adopted an observation checklist. Proper statistical analyses were used to analyse the results. The results of the study showed that the EFL teachers' attitudes toward teaching English as a foreign language were moderate. The results also showed that teachers' actual pedagogical competences were moderate with a mean of 2.736. The correlation coefficient between the teachers' attitudes and their actual pedagogical competences was negative and low. This study looked at English as a foreign language and involved teachers only. The current study involved various stakeholders and looked at English as a subject.

Haddad (2017) conducted a study which aimed at exploring teachers' attitudes toward teaching English as a foreign language in the first four grades of the primary stage in Jordan. The participants of the study were 89 teachers of the English language (58 females and 31 males). They were randomly chosen from the primary schools in Irbid Second Directorate of Education

in the second semester of the academic year 2009/ 2010. To answer the questions of the study, the researcher designed a questionnaire. Proper statistical analysis was used to analyse the results. The results of the study indicated that teachers' attitudes toward Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) were positive with a mean of 3.85. It also showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the EFL teachers' attitudes toward teaching English due to: educational level, gender, experience, and marital status. The study did not look at the attitudes of learners towards English.

Andersson (2019) stated that teachers played an important role in teaching English as a second language. This study aimed to examine teachers' attitudes towards methods of teaching English as a foreign language. The main focus of the study was on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). The definition and effects of CLIL were presented and discussed as well as pedagogical implications about teaching English as a foreign language. Via an online survey questionnaire, this study examined the attitude towards CLIL of ninety-seven teachers in the Swedish primary school's preschool class to grade three. Findings of this study implicated that teachers in general had a positive attitude towards a content integrated approach to teaching English as a foreign language. It did not look at learners' attitudes or other stakeholders.

Khatri (2019) conducted a study on English as Medium of Instruction (EMI) which had been a genuine issue of discussion in that time's pedagogical field among the concerned stakeholders including teachers. In this concern, a mixed method study entitled 'Attitudes of teachers towards using English as Medium of Instruction (EMI) in Public Secondary Schools of Ilam was attempted to explore the teachers' attitude towards using EMI in the public schools and the challenges they faced in the course of adopting EMI. For this, twenty secondary level English teachers were accessed purposively and data were collected using questionnaire consisting of both close ended and open-ended questions. The results of the study revealed that teachers of public schools were found aware of the basic concept of the notion of English as a medium of instruction. They were found positive in implementing EMI in conducting their daily teaching and learning activities. The study also showed that teachers of secondary level had been facing different challenges in adopting EMI in the classroom like students' weak exposure to English, mother tongue interference, resourceful schools and linguistic diversity in the class. This study

did not look at English as a subject taught in the classroom. It looked at English only as a medium of instruction.

The study done by Al-Mamun and Al-Magid (2006) was an attempt to determine the impact of teachers' attitudes on their classroom behaviour and therefore on their implementation of the Communicative Approach. A descriptive case study was conducted at six secondary schools in Harare, Zimbabwe (as ESL environment) to determine the effect of 38 O-level English teachers' attitudes on their classroom practice. Quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, including a questionnaire, an observation instrument and a semi structured interview were used to gauge teachers' attitudes, assessing the extent to which attitudes were reflected in their classroom behaviour, and eliciting teachers' verbalisation of how they conceive of their professional task. The findings showed that the effective implementation of the Communicative Approach was critically dependent on teachers' positive attitudes towards this approach in the five categories covered by this study. This study only looked at one aspect of the English subject which was the Communicative Approach.

Shehadeh (2015) investigated the attitudes that some teachers of English and pupils in 9th grade in Palestine had towards oral communication in the teaching of English. The researcher wanted to find out why oral communication was an important part of the teaching of English, what factors teachers and pupils believed contributed to orally active pupils in the English foreign language classroom and what English teachers thought of the assessment of pupils' ability to express themselves orally in English. The researcher interviewed three English teachers, and 79 pupils in 9th grade answered a questionnaire. The results showed that the teachers and a majority of the pupils thought that oral communication was an important part of the teaching of English, mainly because of the fact that being able to express themselves orally in English that time was of great importance and because through that the pupils got to use the English language a lot themselves. Factors that contributed to verbally active pupils in the English classroom were a safe classroom atmosphere, pupils' self-esteem, small groups, meaningful assignments, enthusiastic and encouraging teachers and motivated pupils. The results also showed that the teachers believed that the assessment of pupils' oral ability was hard because it was not as concrete as other skills that they assessed in the English foreign language classroom. Other reasons why the assessment was hard were the problem of getting shy or unmotivated pupils to

participate orally and lack of time. This study looked at Grade 9 as well but it only tackled their attitudes towards oral communication in English.

Reeves (2006) conducted a study where it was stated that researchers had given limited attention to teacher attitudes toward inclusion of English-language learners (ELLs) in mainstream classrooms. The author explored four categories within secondary teacher attitudes toward ELL inclusion: (a) ELL inclusion, (b) coursework modification for ELLs, (c) professional development for working with ELLs, and (d) perceptions of language and language learning. Findings from a survey of 279 subject-area high school teachers indicated a neutral to slightly positive attitude toward ELL inclusion, a somewhat positive attitude toward coursework modification, a neutral attitude toward professional development for working with ELLs, and educator misconceptions regarding how second languages are learned. The current study did not just get the perspectives of teachers but also those of standards officers, school administrators, parents, and former pupils.

The study conducted by Getie (2020) aimed at investigating on factors affecting the attitudes of grade 10 students towards learning EFL in Debremarkos Comprehensive Secondary School in Debre Markos town, Ethiopia. The researcher randomly selected 103 sample students (10%) out of the total population (1030) for the study. In order to gather data, a questionnaire was carefully and systematically adapted and designed. Nine sample students were also selected purposely for focus group discussion, and Grade 10 English teachers were selected for the interview. Then, the data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings of the study mainly showed that the attitudes of grade 10 students towards learning EFL were positive. There were social factors (e.g., English native speakers, peer groups and learners' parents) affecting students' attitudes positively. On the other hand, educational context factors like English language teachers, the English language learning situations (e.g., the classrooms, arrangements of seats and the physical learning environment) had negative impacts on students' attitude. However, the findings showed that target language learners had positive attitudes towards the other educational context factor that was the English textbook of grade 10 which meant English as a foreign language teaching material in the study's context affected students' attitudes positively. This study looked at Grade 10 pupils and it looked at English as a foreign language.

Borja (2016) conducted a study whose objectives were to investigate (1) The attitude of students towards English; (2) The attitude of students towards teaching English; (3) The competence level of their English. The participants were asked to answer and complete the survey questionnaires that would reveal their positive and negative attitudes towards English. The findings revealed that the students are neutral towards learning English and favorable on how English was taught; their levels of attitude were influenced by their major and length of study but not by their age and gender; their basic competence in English was determined by their major but not by their age, gender and length of study; and their attitude towards English learning was not significantly related to their English competence. The researcher provided the recommendations for language teachers and the management group to develop a program that would encourage and motivate students to improve in their studies. This study did not talk about the attitudes of pupils in secondary school.

Dadi (2018) conducted a study which aimed at exploring English major Students' attitude and motivation towards English language learning. The study was descriptive and aimed to describe the existing students' attitude and motivation towards English language learning. The participants of study were all 1st, 2nd & 3rd year English major students at Dire Dawa University. In order to get the intended data, 35 close ended attitude questions were developed and filled by 51 English major students. The reliability of developed questions to all variables were evaluated by using Cronbach's Alpha and the obtained result marks a good reliability consistence which was greater than 0.7. The administered questionnaire was a five-point Likert – scale attitude questions which was targeted to obtain English major students' attitude and motivation toward English language learning. The obtained data was analyzed quantitatively using SPSS that contained descriptive statistics such as mean scores and standard deviations. Based on respondents' response, the result of the study revealed that students had positive attitude towards English language in general and English language learning in particular. Moreover, the obtained result also depicted that respondents had positive outlook on English language teachers and the activities students were given to interact with in classroom. In addition, the subjects' responses revealed that they were instrumentally motivated to learn English language. The study did not incorporate the attitudes of teachers.

In a study done by Gomleksiz (2010), it was stated that age, socio-economic status, strategies, methods and techniques, teaching-learning environment and cultural dimension are some of the factors that affected English language learning. Attitudes towards language learning was also to be taken into consideration. The purpose of this study was to explore students' attitudes towards learning English in terms of gender, grade level and department variables. Data were collected through a Likert-type scale from a total of 1275 students enrolled at Frat University, Turkey. ANOVA and t-test were used to analyse the data. Statistically significant differences were observed in terms of gender, grade level and department variables. Some useful implications were discussed based on the research findings to help students develop positive attitude towards English language learning. This study considered specific aspects like gender. The current study considered English in general, as a subject.

Kesgin et al. (2015) examined the attitudes of high school students towards the English language, the differences in the attitudes regarding their gender, educational status of their parents, monthly revenue of the students' family, and the accommodation unit of the primary education school from which they graduated. A Likert-type scale was used to collect data. Purposive random sampling was used to select 250 students from 7 high schools. The findings revealed that foreign language intensive high schools are better at the English language than other high schools. It was established that there was a meaningful difference between the attitude of working group to English language and gender, educational status of parents, and monthly revenue of students' family, however, there was no meaningful difference in the accommodation unit from which they graduated. The current study, however, looked at the attitudes of junior secondary school pupils and their teachers towards teaching and learning English language.

Similarly, Abu-snoubar (2017) conducted a study on the attitudes of Al-Balqa Applied University students towards learning English as a foreign language. The study also investigated the effect of the learners' gender and field of study on the attitudes they held. The random sample of 176 students consisted of 68 (38.6%) males and 108 (61.4%) females. 67 (38.1%) of the respondents were majoring in the scientific faculties, and 109 (61.9%) were enrolled in the different faculties of humanities. The descriptive and inferential statistics revealed that the sample students held positive attitudes towards learning English. Gender was found to be an effective variable since females proved to be more positive in their attitudes. No differences were

assigned to the students' academic field of study. The above studies considered various aspects that could have determined the attitudes of learners towards English subject. The current study only looked at pupils and teachers on their attitudes towards learning English after its removal as a mandatory passing subject. The current study did not look at the effect that gender would bring onto the learning of English, it looked at all the respondent pupils regardless of their gender

In a study done by Estliden (2017), it was stated that motivation in language learning and teaching has a long history. The study investigated what attitudes students in upper secondary school had towards the English language and what motivated them to learn it. The study showed that the students had acknowledged the status of the English language in the world and its function as an international language as well as the function as a tool of communicative purposes. The conclusion of this paper was that pupils had positive attitudes in general towards the English language as well as learning English. The current study looked at the attitudes of teachers of English as well.

Abdelkader and Amine (2017) conducted a study which aimed at exploring the EFL university students' attitudes towards learning English. Results showed that participants believed on the integrative and instrumental orientations as the most influential reasons for which they learnt English, and that educational factors (teachers/lessons/curriculum) influenced the students' attitudes to learn English in Saida University. It was revealed that attitudes play a primordial role in language learning because they are very important, in that students with positive attitudes are able to limit the effect of any failure. This is because they do not generalise the negative evaluation to all their abilities and situations as well. Accordingly, the concept of attitude is a highly determinant actor in shaping the rate of language learning. They further stated that attitudes may play a very crucial role in language learning as they would appear to influence students' success or failure in their learning. Besides, the importance of attitudes lies in the way they influence behavior. Thus, negative attitudes may well hinder the students' learning process, thereby, influencing their future views, decisions, and activities. This study did not incorporate teachers.

Khalaf and Abu-Snoubar (2017) shed light on the attitudes of Al-Balqa Applied University students towards learning English as a foreign language. The study also investigated the effect of the learners' gender and field of study on the attitudes they held. The random sample of 176

students consisted of 68 (38.6%) males and 108 (61.4%) females. 67 (38.1%) of the respondents were majoring in the scientific faculties, and 109 (61.9%) were enrolled in the different faculties of humanities. The descriptive and inferential statistics revealed that the sample students held positive attitudes towards learning English. Gender was found to be an effective variable since females proved to be more positive in their attitudes. No differences were assigned to the students' academic field of study.

Yu (2010) explored the attitudes of Chinese college students toward English, different varieties of English, and China English. The study also investigated their attitudes toward the current English education policies and practices in China and their purposes for learning English. Furthermore, the attitudes of Chinese college students had been examined in relation to the factors that were likely to explain their attitudes, namely, gender, age, grade in college, major, starting age for learning English, years spent in English learning, experience with native English-speaking teachers and friends who are native English speakers, English knowledge of parents, and international experience. The study found that Chinese college students had positive attitudes toward the English language and China English. They were aware of different varieties of English and the majority of them considered nativisation of English in China as a manifestation of Chinese culture. Regarding the English education policies and practices in China, attitudes of participants were complex. On the one hand, the students acknowledged that the Chinese government had attached much importance to English education; while on the other hand, they revealed concerns about this utilitarian type of education, since most of the students focused solely on obtaining high scores on English exams. In addition, they expressed dissatisfaction with the current college English instruction and stated that developing and maintaining students' interests in English and building up strong communication skills should be the main goals of English education in China. Results also showed that the longer students had studied English, the more likely they were to have positive attitudes toward English. Their experience with native English-speaking teachers and their majors also explained their positive attitudes toward English. The study did not look at the other stakeholders' attitudes towards English language.

Shaw (1981) stated that although English was taught in almost all Asian school systems, there was little information available on the attitudes of Asian students towards English. In order to gain some insights into the needs and feelings of these students and the position of English in

Asia that time, Shaw conducted a survey among final year Bachelor degree students in three locations; Singapore, India and Thailand. The students in each group were from the fields of English literature and teaching, engineering, and business/commerce. Over 825 students from twelve universities and colleges participated in the study. There were 170 students from Singapore, 342 from India, and 313 from Thailand. The English language had a prominent role in the educational systems of all three countries. In Singapore it was one of the four official languages. Singapore was pursuing a bilingual policy that required the learning of English plus one of the other three official languages. India had still continued a thirty-year-old debate on the status of English with a large segment of the population favoring the termination of its present position as an associate official language and the establishment of Hindi as the sole official language. This debate was primarily between the northern Hindi-speaking states and the southern Dravidian-Language speaking states that favor the retention of English. The study only aimed at finding out attitudes of university students' attitudes towards English language.

Al-Sobhi et al. (2018) conducted a study where they stated that learners' attitude was considered a key motivational component and an important nonlinguistic factor that influenced second-language learning. The primary aim of the current study was to explore Arab secondary school students' attitudes toward English spelling and writing. To collect the data, a 52-item attitude questionnaire was administered to 70 Arab students studying English as a second language (ESL) in the Saudi School in Malaysia. The questionnaire comprised two scales: (a) attitudes toward English spelling and (b) attitudes toward writing in English that included four writing purposes: (a) School Use, (b) Social Use, (c) Official Use, and (d) Creativity. The findings of the study revealed that the Arab ESL secondary school students had a high positive attitude toward English spelling and writing. The findings also indicated that the students' attitude toward the Social Use of English was the highest, whereas their Creativity in writing was the least mean among the four purposes. In addition, the study revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between the students' attitude toward spelling and writing. The findings suggested that English literature, that is, stories and literary activities, should be integrated in the curriculum to develop the students' creativity in ESL writing. The study also recommended that other studies might investigate Arab students' spelling error analysis as well as address other important aspects of writing such as brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing. This study

only touched one area of English subject: spellings and writing. The current study looked at all aspects of English as a subject, in general.

Primadi et al. (2015) investigated students' attitudes towards English language learning, and native speaker of English at second grade of senior high schools in Gisting subdistrict and factors that may have influenced students' attitudes. This research employed a mixed-method methodology where the quantitative phase preceded the qualitative phase. The data were collected from questionnaires and focus group interview. There were 120 students of 2014-2015 academic year from four senior high schools. The students showed positive attitudes as there was 3.6684 of total mean score gained by 120 students toward three variables presented. The interview findings revealed that the students' positive attitude may be caused by their motivation; instrumental and integrative. The teachers should respect and carefully investigate about students' feelings, beliefs, need, and behaviors before designing English courses to maintain the positive attitudes towards English and English language learning. The study did not look at the attitudes of teachers of English.

Kiziltan and Atli (2013) conducted a study in fourteen 4th graders' classrooms in Turkish curriculum laboratory elementary schools in seven cities of Turkey during the academic year 2006-2007. They sought to find out young language learners' attitudes towards English and English lessons in Turkish elementary schools. To determine young language learners' attitudes towards English language inside and outside the classroom, two questionnaires had been developed. The findings of the study revealed that the pupils seemed to have developed positive attitudes towards English language skills and sub skills, materials, the course book, and activities. It had been found out that the attitudes of the pupils changed significantly according to language skills and learning environment. There was not a significant difference in the attitudes of pupils towards English according to gender. This study looked at learners' attitudes towards English language according to their gender. The current study looked at learners' attitudes towards English language regardless of their gender.

The purpose of the study conducted by Kulkami (2016) was to know the IX standard students' attitude towards learning English language. A standardized scale was administered by the investigator in the form of normative survey to 100 students selected randomly from secondary schools in Dharwad city. The collected data was statistically analyzed by using 't' test technique.

The results revealed that there was a significant difference based on the gender, locality of the school, medium of instruction of the students. However, students studying in different types of schools and with high and low socio-economic status did not differ significantly in respect of their attitude towards English language. Finally, it revealed that most selected variables had better attitude towards English language. This study did not look at teachers' attitudes towards the teaching of English language.

The purpose of the study conducted by Al Darwish (2017) was to find out the teachers' attitude toward reaching effective teaching process as well as the key factors which influenced their attitude for selecting this profession. It was carried out during the fall semester 2016/ 2017. The participants were 42 males and 117 female English language teachers, a total of 159 English teachers. They were all randomly selected and were all teaching English as a foreign language in different stages in Kuwaiti public elementary schools. The data was collected through a questionnaire and an individual interview. The results mainly showed the teachers' attitude reflected on their passion to learn more about this language and its culture. Moreover, some teachers associated English language teaching with the language of the British Colonialization. Others saw English simply as a means of doing business and making money. This study did not find out about the pupils' attitudes which the current study has included.

Giisoy (2013) mentioned in this study that attitudes toward a foreign language and the motivation to learn a language have been of interest to many educators and researchers. The study aimed to investigate English Language Teaching (ELT) teacher trainees' attitudes toward the English language and their self-reported difficulties when using their foreign language skills in daily and academic language. Two hundred teacher trainees participated in the study. The study showed that trainees had mildly positive attitudes toward the English language, with females being more positive than males. The findings also suggested that trainees had stronger instrumental motivation than integrative motivation. Moreover, the results indicated that trainees did not differ significantly in terms of their difficulties in using daily language skills. However, there were some statistically significant differences in academic language, such as vocabulary and monologue speech. In addition, there were statistically significant differences between males and females in speaking and reading comprehension for daily language, as well as reading comprehension for academic language. This study looked at the English language trainee

teachers. It sought to find out their attitudes towards English Language and their difficulties in using their foreign language in their daily skills. The current study sought to get attitudes of teachers of English that are already in service and their pupils.

Walker et al. (2004) presented the findings of a triangulation mixed method study aimed at assessing prevailing ideological beliefs and attitudes mainstream teachers had regarding English language learners (ELLs) and the educational programs that served them. Survey data was collected from 422 K-12 teachers and interview data from six ELL teachers. The research explored three topics: (1) the extent and nature of mainstream teacher attitudes towards ELLs, (2) the factors that contribute to teacher attitude development, and (3) how teacher attitudes towards ELLs vary by community demographics, in particular low-incidence schools, rapid-influx schools, and schools serving migrant students. The paper concluded with a theory of teacher attitude development towards ELLs with implications for improving teacher attitudes through professional development programs. This study looked at the attitudes that teachers had on their English Language Learners. The current study sought to find out the attitudes of both teachers of English and pupils on the teaching and learning of English language.

Marungudzi (2009) conducted a study which analysed the perspectives of teachers on English as a language of learning and teaching in the context of government recommendations that Shona and Ndebele were supposed to be used alongside English as languages of learning and teaching in Zimbabwean secondary schools. Through a questionnaire survey, open interviews and classroom observation were done. It was found that the teachers regarded English as a language of learning and teaching in a positive way though they were aware of the difficulties associated with its use. It also emerged that government recommendations for the use of endoglossic languages as Languages of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) had not been complemented by concrete measures and that the subsequent efforts to change the language-in-education policy had so far seemed insincere. Pupils were not involved in this study.

Umo-Udofia and Andera (2018) whose main purpose of this study was to examine English language learners' attitude towards competence in English grammar in selected secondary schools of Kajiado County. The specific objective that guided the study was to establish the kind of attitude English language learners had towards learning English grammar in secondary schools in Kajiado County. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Six public secondary

schools were selected and the sample for the study was 120 students. For the purposes of the study, the schools and the students were stratified based on gender and category of school. Random sampling technique was used to identify the study sample. To elicit responses, the study used a questionnaire as a tool of data collection. The responses, gathered from the data collected was ordered, coded, and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study found that most students had a fairly positive attitude towards learning English grammar. The study recommended among other things that learners should be helped to understand that they have a responsibility towards developing positive English grammar learning attitudes. Hence the attitude they bring in to learning environment affects their learning outcome and so be encouraged to develop positive attitudes. The study specifically looked at the learners' attitude towards the English grammar. It sought to encourage pupils to develop a positive attitude towards the English grammar. The current study looked at the learners' attitudes towards all the parts involved in the English subject.

Nyamubi (2016) conducted a study which explored the role of attitudes in secondary school students' performance in the English language. It explored how learning English was silhouetted by students' interests and utilitarian attitudes to the language. The fieldwork covered six secondary schools in Morogoro Urban and Mvomero districts in Morogoro Region. Respondents were students and their teachers of English. Data were collected through questionnaire and an achievement test. It was found that students differed in terms of their mastery of English, scoring higher in the structure section, while composition was the most poorly scored section. In all, students, in both Form One and Form Four, had strong and positive attitudes to English. Specifically, while Form 1 students had more positive interest attitudes than their counterparts, Form Four students displayed more utilitarian attitudes to learning English, compared to Form One students. Students' positive attitudes were in line with the current Government policy on the language of instruction in secondary schools. The paper ended by emphasising that students' positive attitudes to English can be exploited to enhance the learning of the language. This study paid attention to some parts of the English subject while the current study looked at English subject as a whole.

Mwanza (2017) conducted a study which intended to establish the attitudes of teachers towards unofficial languages and the implications such attitudes would have on the expected teachers'

juxtaposition of the horizontal and vertical discourses in selected multilingual classrooms in Zambia. The study involved Grade 11 secondary school teachers of English. Findings showed that teachers held monolingual purist language ideologies in which their negative attitudes towards unofficial languages resulted into symbolic violence. The current study relates to the above study in that both are interested in teachers' attitudes towards a language though the current study is looking at attitudes of more stakeholders towards English language specifically and at Grade 9 level.

In another study conducted by Mwanza (2016) the use of the eclectic approach in the teaching of grammar in secondary schools was investigated. The study was done in Zambia with 90 teachers and 19 lecturers. Mwanza observed that teachers' attitudes towards a given method of teaching language had a bearing on their classroom application. The study showed that some teachers demonstrated understanding of the eclectic approach and held positive attitudes while other teachers did not understand and that led to poor application and in some instances non-application of the approach. Among the teachers who were observed in this study, four used the eclectic approach and one did not. This implied that while the policy was accepted by some, others contested it. The findings of this study are significant to the current study in that they highlight the attitudes of teachers and other stakeholders towards policies in relation to what takes place in the classroom.

According to the literature reviewed, studies viewed learners' attitudes through their gender, age, grade level, peer groups, and learners' parents. Most of the studies reviewed showed that the attitudes of teachers and learners towards English teaching and learning were positive.

## **2.5 Summary of chapter two**

The chapter above reviewed different studies that had been done by different researchers which are in line with this study. It has also looked at different variables that are in tandem with this study: stakeholders' perspectives on the removal of English language as a mandatory passing subject. According to some studies reviewed, it was evidenced that some countries view English to be as important as their native languages and other subjects. Studies have shown how English became a medium of instruction in different countries, Zambia inclusive. Some countries have English as their compulsory subject at different level while other countries are just planning to do that because this is when they have attached importance to English language. In other studies,

teachers complained about being introduced to new policies now and again. They further complain about the removal of English as a compulsory subject as not being a good policy. There had also been studies that based their findings on the gender of pupils as being the cause of their positive or negative attitude towards English subject. The current study sought to look at the attitudes of teachers and pupils together with other stakeholders towards government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject. It sought to investigate the reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject in Zambia.

## **CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 Overview**

The previous chapter reviewed literature that guided the study. This chapter presents the theoretical framework. A theoretical framework is ‘a collection of interrelated ideas based on theories’ Kombo and Tromp (2006). This study will be guided by two theories; the Expectancy Theory and the Critical Discourse Analysis Theory. The chapter starts by giving a brief explanation on the theories to be used in the study, followed by how these theories guided the study.

### **3.2 The Expectancy Theory**

In 1964, Canadian professor of psychology Victor Vroom developed the Expectancy Theory. In it, he studied people’s motivation and concluded it depended on three factors: expectancy, instrumentality and valence (Mulder 2018).

**Expectancy:** A student’s estimation of the likelihood of successfully performing the particular assignment (Betz 2010). Expectancy is believed to be the relationship between efforts and performance. It relates to an individual’s expectation that their efforts will result into the achievement of their set goals. Teachers and pupils believe that if they work hard at a subject, their efforts would pay them off by achieving their set objectives. They are motivated to teach/learn when they know that with their efforts put in, their expectations would be fulfilled and at the end of it all pupils’ performance would be high. Parijat et al. (2014) add that our effort will lead to highly successful or the best performance. This is so because it is believed that there is a relationship between efforts and performance.

**Instrumentality:** A student’s estimation of the likelihood that the effort they put in will be in positive results (Betz 2010). When one believes that their efforts towards something will bring out a reward, they work hard to achieving the reward. Teachers and pupils put in their efforts in teaching and learning because they know that they will be rewarded intrinsically or extrinsically; teachers are rewarded for their performance through pupils’ results by being praised in meetings, being awarded during Teachers’ Day or being promoted. Pupils are rewarded for their good grades by receiving awards on Honors’ Day and being praised by their teachers. Therefore, when

teachers and pupils know that their efforts will be rewarded, they get motivated to work even harder. When a subject is compulsory, that in itself, is motivation enough for the teachers and pupils. Efforts are put in place because there is a reward of proceeding to Grade 10 at the end of the year. Parijat et al. (2014) add that instrumentality is the perception of an employee of the probability that performance will lead to organisational rewards or outcomes.

Valence: The value the student places on each of the outcomes; what are the rewards and will they satisfy a need? (Betz 2010). Valence, according to Vroom, means the value or strength one places on a particular outcome or reward. Pupils place more effort on subjects they know that without them they would not proceed to the next level in their education. Their devotion to such and their performance depend on what they expect to get at the end of it all. They get motivated if they know that there would be a reward to be offered. In this case, pupils work hard towards a subject if they know that it is a mandatory passing subject which will affect their stepping into the next level of their education.

According to Betz (2010), he stated that valence relates to one's perception that a need or needs will be satisfied whether or not there will be addition to value in terms of quality of life or social status. When there is value attached to the reward, hard work is displayed. Both teachers and pupils place value in their study/teaching efforts which positively affect their motivation to perform tasks. In this case, when pupils and teachers are expecting a reward, they work hard at it to ensuring better results. They get determined and develop positive attitudes to tasks if there is a great expectation at the end. In this case, the attitudes displayed by Grade 9 pupils toward the English subject determines their performance at the end of the year as well as at senior secondary school. Teachers and pupils are motivated to working diligently in teaching and learning because they know that a reward is attached to their work. Parijat et al. (2014) add that valence measures the attractiveness, preference, value or the liking of the rewards or work outcomes for the employee.

There are several reasons that influence the motivation level in learning such as the ability to believe in the effort, the unawareness of the worth and characteristic of the academic (Abubakar et al 2017). Parijat et al. (2014) explain that motivation is the driving force behind all human efforts and is essential to all human achievements. They further explain that an aspect of management occupies a very important place.

Motivational techniques have been successfully used in the workplace to increase worker productivity for many decades. These same techniques can also be used in the classroom to increase learning (Betz 2010). Teachers and learners are motivated to teach and learn with the rewards that follow their hard work.

Abubakar et al. (2017) state that the students' motivation and preference are among the fundamental factors for effective and useful learning and achievement. When teachers and pupils are motivated, they get successful and achieve their set goals. In this case, this would relate to the Grade 9 pupils in a way that they can be motivated to study and work hard in English subject if it was going to affect their end of year examinations results. When a subject is compulsory, students tend to pay more attention to it and devote their time to studying it so as to get a good grade in them. If passing English would be the way of proceeding to Grade 10, as it was some years back, pupils would be motivated to working hard at it so as not to repeat a grade or write under external programme.

If a student is to be highly motivated, all three factors of the expectancy model must be high. If even one of these factors is zero (for example, instrumentality and valence are high, but expectancy is completely absent), the student will not be motivated for the task (Betz 2010). Mwanza (2017) argued that teachers' attitudes determine their response to curricular implementation.

We can therefore conclude to say, to have good performance by the teachers and pupils, motivation is key. They are motivated at the rewards that come at the end of a specific education level. Teachers' and pupils' attitudes towards teaching and learning is affected by their motivation towards the specific subject area. When there is no reward attached, motivation is less and negative attitudes creep in. To encourage a low motivated student, external rewards are needed to convince students to participate in activities (Abubakar et al. 2017). By studying hard and passing English language at Grade 9, pupils would definitely do a good job at Grade 12 and beyond.

### **3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical Discourse Analysis is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text

and talk in the social and political context (Van Dijk (1998)). It emerged from ‘critical linguistics’ developed at the University of East Anglia by Roger Fowler and fellow scholars in the 1970s. According to Fairclough (1995), CDA argues that social practice and linguistic practice constitute one another and focuses also on investigating how societal power relations are established and reinforced through language use. Van Dijk (1993) explains that power involves control by one group over the other, while dominance refers to hegemonic existence where the minds of the dominated are influenced in a way that they accept dominance and act in the interest of the powerful out of their own free will. In this case, policy makers have power over institutions of learning and they take dominance of what takes place in the classrooms. Teachers, pupils and other stakeholders only follow what they are told to by government which uses its power to effect policies, like the one under discussion, in institutions like schools. Government has power to change policies according to what it considers best for schools. In this study, CDA, was used to analyse the influence of government’s policy of waiving English as a mandatory passing subject over what happens during the process of learning English subject in class. It also analysed the attitudes of both teachers and pupils towards the subject following the policy change. This also affects what exists between the government and what goes on in the classroom. CDA was used in this study to analyse the power and control that government has over teachers and pupils in line with education policies. This theory was used to analyse teachers’ and pupils’ views and attitudes towards the English waiver. Since the concept of power in CDA focuses on the weak, controlled and discriminated against, in the classroom it focuses on the teachers and pupils. It chooses the perspectives of those who suffer and critically analyses the language use of those in power and responsible for the existence of inequalities and have the means and opportunity to improve conditions (Wodak 2002).

CDA was used in this study to analyse the power between the classroom and the influence that government has over it. CDA considers the relationships of power, dominance, resistance and discrimination which characterise teaching and the entire education system. More specifically, it focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce or challenge relations of power and dominance in society (van Dijk, 1993).

Van Dijk (1993), splits up the issue of discursive power into three basic aspects for CDA-research; firstly, how (more) powerful groups control public discourse. In line with this study,

government, which is the (more) powerful group sets up policies through policy makers to control what goes on in the classroom. Secondly, how discourse controls the mind and action of the less powerful groups and what social consequences are there such as social inequalities. The consequences of government's power over the classroom (less powerful group), is that it affects attitudes of teachers and pupils towards the teaching and learning of English language subject. The third one is how dominated groups discursively challenge or resist power. Teachers and pupils develop negative attitudes towards the English subject teaching and learning and end up yielding poor results at Grade 9 end of year examinations. This happens so because they know that English language is no longer a compulsory subject at Grade 9 level and that whether pupils pass it or fail, they would still proceed to Grade 10. Teachers also have control over their pupils; they can control their pupils' attitudes by encouraging them to study hard so as to pass their examinations. This can be done by encouraging pupils of the benefits that would come out of passing English subject. For example, it is a mandatory passing subject at Grade 12 and a mandatory requirement at tertiary level.

In conclusion, there are many stakeholders in the education system but the ones that are mostly affected by the power relations are the policy makers, the teachers and pupils who are found in school and the classroom at large. All the stakeholders should be involved in decision making if power is to be distributed equally.

### **3.4 Summary of chapter 3**

This study was guided by two theories; the Expectancy theory and the Critical Discourse Analysis theory. The Expectancy theory looked at the motivation that teachers and learners have which affect their attitudes in the classroom as they teach and learn the English subject which eventually affects the results at the end of the year. Teachers and pupils were motivated to teach and learn because of the rewards they received when they produced good performance. Participants who held positive views stated that they valued the rewards they were given. Other teachers and pupils, however, were not motivated to teach or learn because they stated that pupils would still proceed to senior secondary education regardless. Critical Discourse Analysis focused on how some stakeholders were disadvantaged and eventually performed poorly because they were not involved in the policy formulation of curriculum related issues. Most of them did not

support what was laid on the ground for them. Some teachers stated that they only taught English subject for formality. They did not have a choice because policies were forced on them by the policy makers who were more powerful than them. The next chapter discusses the methodology of this study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the methodology that the researcher used in the study. It comprises the research design, research method, study population, study sample, sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection procedures and strategies, data analysis, and the ethical considerations.

### **4.2 Research Design**

According to Orodho (2003), a research design is the scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problems. It is an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance with the research purpose. It is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted. Bryman (2008) defines research design as one that helps the researcher in the development of the framework which assists to collect and analyse data. This study used a qualitative research design which employed a case study strategy of enquiry. Creswell et al. (2007) state that a qualitative design is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. A case study is stated to be a detailed investigation of individual, groups, institutions or other social units (Polit and Hungler 1983). A case study is also stated to be an in-depth study undertaken on a particular case which could be a site, individual or policy (Green and Thorogood, 2004). This study sought to get views of standards officers, school managers, teachers of English, current and former pupils as well as parents on the policy of removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level. Therefore, the case in this study is the ‘policy’ of the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9.

### **4.3 Target Population**

Kombo and Tromp (2008) state that population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurements. It is an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. They also state that population also refers to the larger group from which the sample is taken. The study targeted Ministry of Education’s standards officers responsible for examinations and languages, secondary school managers, teachers of English subject, Grade 9 pupils, former Grade 9 pupils and parents to current and former Grade 9 pupils. Standards Officers were targeted because they are responsible for the affairs of examinations.

School managers and teachers of English were targeted because they are involved in the implementation of policies. Former and current pupils were picked to participate in the study because they are the ones that the policy of waiving English language affect. Parents were also targeted because whatever affects pupils, who are their children, affects them too.

#### **4.4 Study sample**

This study's sample was drawn from Ministry of Education offices; national, provincial and district where four officers were interviewed. Three public schools were sampled; urban, peri urban and rural. From each of the three sampled schools, 1 school manager and 3 teachers of English were interviewed. From the same schools, 2 focus group discussions with 8 pupils in each group were done with the Grade 9 and 12 pupils respectively. More interviews were done with 4 former pupils who sat for their Grade 9 examinations before English was removed as a mandatory passing subject, 4 Parents for both categories of pupils were also interviewed. A total of 72 participants was sampled.

#### **4.5 Sampling Techniques**

Orodho and Kombo (2002) state that sampling technique is a process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group. The researcher used purposive sampling in the study. Feustein (1986) states that purposive sampling helps researchers to pick on people who have information and experience to answer questions regarding the study in question. Cohen et al. (2007) add that purposeful sampling is used to access knowledgeable people who have in-depth knowledge about a particular issue. Under purposive sampling, the researcher used homogeneous sampling technique. Homogeneous sampling was used to select standards officers, school managers, teachers of English, current and former pupils as well as parents. Kombo and Tromp (2006) state that homogeneous sampling picks up a small sample with similar characteristics to describe some particular subgroup in depth. Convenience sampling was also used to select schools where some participants came from. Convenience sampling is used to collect information where it is easily accessible to the researcher (Palinkas, 2013).

#### **4.6 Research Instruments**

This study used semi-structured interview guides and focus group discussion guides. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), research instruments include questionnaires, semi-structured interview schedules, observation and focus group discussions. Borg (1963) state that no system of inquiry can be more revealing as an interview. In this study, face to face interviews were done with the standards officers, school managers, teachers of English, parents to both current and former pupils, as well as former pupils who wrote their Grade 9 examinations before the policy of waiving English as a mandatory passing subject. Kombo and Tromp (2006) asserted that semi-structured interviews are flexible because they consist of both open and close-ended questions. The flexibility of the semi-structured interviews helped the researcher to rephrase questions and probe respondents further so as to get clearer responses. The semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from standards officers on the reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject and also to give their own views on the same. In the same way, data was collected from school managers, teachers of English, parents and former Grade 9 pupils on their views of English being removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level. The semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from the teachers of English on their attitudes towards the teaching of English subject after its removal as a mandatory passing subject.

Focus group discussions allow group members to interact while reflecting on and refining their thoughts towards deep insights into their own attitudes and behavior (Ritchie et. al. (2003). A focus group discussion is usually composed of 6 to 8 individuals who share certain characteristics that are relevant to the study (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The focus group discussions were used to collect data from the current Grade 9 pupils. The data collected from the current pupils was on their attitudes towards learning English subject at Grade 9. Data on attitudes of pupils who were in higher grades were also collected. From the former Grade 9 pupils, data was collected on their views of the English waiver. The pupils were responding to the second question on their attitudes towards learning English after its removal as a mandatory passing subject. Former pupils answered the third question which required them to give their views on the waiving of English. The discussions availed the researcher with insights into the pupils' attitudes towards English subject.

#### **4.7 Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher was granted permission to conduct the research by the University of Zambia, School of Education. Permission was equally granted by the provincial education office for the researcher to collect data in the province. The district education office granted the researcher permission as well to conduct research in the three schools. In schools, permission was sought from and given by the school managers to interview the teachers of English, pupils and school managers themselves. To seek permission is important in a study. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), a researcher will require a research permit before embarking on the study. Appointments were done in advance in order to find respondents for each proposed day. The researcher started by meeting the pupils who were selected to participate in the focus group discussions. Thereafter, teachers of English and the school managers were interviewed. Standards officers were interviewed starting from the district to the national level.

Interviews were done with the respondents on the agreed dates and time. Data was collected via note taking and voice recording, with the consent of the respondents. The use of the recording device was explained to the respondents before the commencement of the activity.

#### **4.8 Data Analysis**

Qualitative data was collected through interviews and focus group discussions and was analysed by grouping them into identified themes and categories. This was done through the process of coding where data was prepared, organised and reduced into themes. The study employed qualitative techniques to analyse data as it was collected. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), data analysis refers to the examining of what has been collected in the study and making deductions and inferences. Cohen et al. (2007) state that qualitative data analysis relies heavily on interpretation of emerging themes. Similar ideas were grouped from the emerging themes of the qualitative data. The study used the process of inductive-thematic analysis where patterns were picked in particular cases to analyse the research data (Selvam, 2017). The researcher used the inductive thematic analysis to sieve through the vast data collected.

#### **4.9 Ethical Consideration**

Ethical considerations are a protection over participants of the study who have their rights to privacy and whose informed consent must be sought. Therefore, the personal details of the

respondents were kept with high confidentiality. Letters of permission to do this study were collected from the University of Zambia, the Provincial Education Office, the District Education Office and the schools. It is important to look at the ethical implications of what we are proposing to do whenever human beings are the focus of the investigation (Leedey and Ormorod 2005). Participants were requested of their consent over the use of recordings during interviews. Some participants accepted to be recorded while others refused. The researcher, therefore, only recorded data from participants who consented to it. The study's participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any point if they wished to. The researcher recognised the participants' privacy and assured them of their confidentiality with regard to the data availed during findings.

#### **4.10 Summary of Chapter 4**

In the methodology presented we have looked at the research design, research method, target population, sample size, sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis and ethical considerations. The next chapter will present the study's findings.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Overview**

This chapter presents findings of the study in accordance with the study's questions;

- why was English removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level
- what were the attitudes of teachers of English and pupils towards government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9
- what were the views of standards officers, school managers, teachers of English, parents and former pupils on the waiving of English at Grade 9

In this chapter, data was generated through face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. The chapter is going to provide feedback on the findings of the research.

The respondents and schools in this study will not be mentioned by their names in order to uphold their confidentiality. Numbers and letters of the alphabet will be used as follows; standards officers will be coded as SO and a number (for example, standards officer 1 will be coded as SO 1), schools will be coded by letters of the alphabet, school managers will be coded as AD followed by the letter of the school they are representing, teachers of English will be coded as Tr followed by a number and the letter of their school, parents by P followed by a number, current pupils will be coded by CP followed by a number and the letter of the school. The former pupils who wrote their Grade 9 examinations when English was a mandatory passing subject will be coded by FP followed by a number. An abbreviation for removal of English as a mandatory passing subject will be represented by the short form REMPS and will be used as such in the presentation of findings.

### **5.2 Reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9**

The first objective was to find out reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level. The researcher analysed data from interviews that were done with the standards officers, school managers and teachers of English. From the analysed data, the following reasons were given: low literacy levels, access to senior secondary education, low pupil proficiency in English, and political expedience. The reasons were presented as follows:

### **5.2.1 Low literacy levels**

Respondents talked to revealed that there had been a problem in the Zambian education system concerning literacy levels. They mentioned that literacy levels had been measured in a standardized manner using the national surveys which had been conducted in the country since 1999 starting from Grade 5 level. They stated that English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level because of the low literacy levels in Zambia. The following was what they had to say;

*One of the big problems that our education system has had, has to do with low literacy levels because English falls within the literacy aspect of learning achievement. So, one of the major components of the national assessments is to assess literacy achievement levels by grade 5 learners and the agreement was that assessment be done after 2 years. Results of this national assessment, at national levels, show that our learners have consistently underperformed in terms of literacy acquisition (S O 1)*

*Most learners did not know how to read and write (SO 2)*

In addition to the aforementioned reason, one school administrator and two teachers stated their experiences in their school/classroom over their pupils' low literacy levels in the following verbatims;

*Most learners did not break through even up to Grade 9 level (AD C)*

*You know, pupils came raw from primary school. Teachers were made to start teaching them how to read and write at Grade 9 (Tr 3A)*

*Learners' vocabulary was bad. They did not know how to read or write correct spellings (Tr 9C)*

### **5.2.2 Access to senior secondary education**

Respondents disclosed another reason as to why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject. They stated that the issue of tying English to certification needed to be reconsidered to say we were throwing away potential entrants to senior secondary just because they did not

perform well in English at Grade 9. It was stated that pupils needed not to be judged on the basis of English.

This is shown in the following verbatims;

*Every year when exams are released by the Examinations Council of Zambia, the ministry's interest is in how many of those learners got grade 9 certificates, it's not in which subject (S O 1)*

*The system was sweeping the streets so as to give them access to education. We are practicing the swallow everything even if the stomach is full. Access to senior secondary schooling was another reason for removing English as a compulsory passing subject because some of our learners would do well in 6 or 7 subjects but as long as they failed English, they could not get a Grade 9 certificate (SO 2)*

### **5.2.3 Low pupil proficiency in English subject**

Some respondents mentioned that Grade 9 pupils had challenges with the semantics and syntax of the English language. They could not understand the subject matter and it resulted in them failing or having low marks in the subject. The following verbatims explain more;

*The issue of tying English to certification needed to be reconsidered to say we are throwing away potential entrants to senior secondary just because they did not perform well in English at Grade 9: pupils should not be judged on the basis of English. We should not disadvantage them when maybe they are not academically privileged to understand the syntax and the semantics which may be what made them not to pass English (SO 1)*

*The reason partly was that many children were failing English language. English language has grammatical rules that are followed which pupils are not conversant with despite being taught by the teachers who are trained to teach English (SO 2)*

One respondent brought out the issue of political ideology. The respondent mentioned that politicians had interest in the number of pupils who proceeded to Grade 10.

Therefore, they loosened some benchmarks to accommodate learners who did not pass in English subject. The following verbatim shows this;

*So, after they sat in parliament and passed that, it was not just that children were failing, no, they wanted to actually win political mileage as Zambian politicians. That particular year they saw that a lot of children would remain in the streets because whoever had not passed in English despite the fact that they had 6 subjects as long as they didn't have English, they could not proceed to Grade 10. They were afraid of discrediting government by the huge numbers of Grade 9 pupils who failed. Hence, they swept the streets by trying to loosen the benchmarks for Grade 9 pupils to proceed to Grade 10. English language was not necessarily removed but it remained in suspense because as long as they have it or not, they would still go to Grade 10. Meaning a child can even decide to say even if I remove English, even if I don't sit for it, I would still pass in other subjects (S O 2)*

### **5.3 Attitudes of teachers of English and pupils towards government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9**

The second objective was to investigate the attitudes of teachers of English and pupils towards government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9. They explained how this had affected their attitudes towards the teaching/learning of English as a subject in both positive and the negative ways. It was important to investigate their attitudes because attitudes play an important role in whatever a person is doing, in this case, teachers and pupils. Face to face interviews were done with teachers of English and focus group discussions were done with the pupils.

#### **5.3.1 Teachers' attitudes towards English language teaching**

Teachers mentioned that they had positive attitudes towards English subject teaching. They stated that their positive attitudes were because of the rewards that came after pupils had passed in their subject. They also stated that they worked hard because they knew that if they did not, then pupils' performance in other subjects would be affected. These and more reasons of their positive attitudes were given in the following verbatims;

*As teachers, we are putting in our efforts but learners don't mind whether they pass or not, teachers are trying. As a teacher we have a heart to teach learners whether the children are interested or not. We try to motivate them and talk to them one on one, those that are serious learners get motivated and improve, the selected few but most of them do not take interest. I'm sometimes motivated to work hard so that I can get a prize when they beam the results and say my learners have passed with a 100% (Tr 1A)*

*I attend to pupils as a group as well as individually when they have challenges in English. Sometimes they come with questions which I help them answer. I don't want my pupils to fail even if English is not a passing subject anymore (Tr 8C)*

Despite teachers having positive attitudes towards the teaching of English subject, other teachers stated their negative attitudes and what caused them to have such attitudes. Some teachers talked to stated that they just taught for routine purposes. They did not work as hard as they used to work before the REMPS because they knew that whatever the case, pupils would still go to Grade 10 even without passing English. They would teach English but not with the extra effort which they were putting in previously, before the REMPS. The following verbatims show the various responses of teachers regarding their negative attitudes towards teaching English;

*Well, we don't check pupils' books effectively. When we mark them in class after teaching then that's the end (Tr 3A)*

*I don't give much work to learners because of over enrollment (Tr 4B)*

*I don't have time to help pupils individually because there are a lot of pupils to attend to and other classes would be waiting for me. When I'm done teaching, I start preparing lessons for the following day (Tr 5B)*

*Sometimes we just use any language we are comfortable with instead of English (Tr 7C)*

*Since I knew about this policy, my desire to put in a lot of effort in teaching my subject has been destroyed somehow (Tr 9C)*

Some teachers blamed their negative attitudes on their pupils. They stated that their positive attitudes changed to negative ones because of the negative attitudes of their pupils. They mentioned that their pupils did not pay much attention to passing English or following teachers to ask on topics they were not clear on.

*My attitude has also changed because of the learners' attitude which is negative (Tr 2A)*

*Teaching English is so discouraging because of the learners who didn't do well at primary school. They came raw, we have to start teaching them what they were supposed to learn at primary. It's very discouraging (Tr 6B)*

*Most of the learners don't understand English so I usually just use Bemba to explain things. I'm discouraged to use English on them because they can't even express themselves in English (Tr 8C)*

*No matter how much you try, the attitude of learners is discouraging. There are those that take interest and work well with the teacher. Otherwise, the attitude of learners has been very negative (Tr 9C)*

### **5.3.2 Pupils' attitudes towards English language learning**

According to the information that pupils gave out during the focus group discussions, they mentioned that they would not stop paying attention to English subject because of it being removed as a mandatory passing subject. The participants talked to, stated that they would still continue to work hard in English because they would like to pass it at Grade 9 as well as at Grade 12. Different reasons were given by pupils as to why they would want to pass in English. The pupils talked to stated that they were working hard now because they would want to learn how to write application letters well and be able to speak out properly during interviews. They also mentioned that passing English would help them when they go to study abroad. These and more reasons were given. Consider the following verbatims;

*I'm working hard in English because if I don't work hard it can be difficult when I want to get a job. It will be difficult for you if you don't pass English. If you go somewhere else, in other countries where they don't speak your language, it will be*

*difficult for you. For example, if you want to find an address. If you go somewhere else in other countries where they don't speak your language, it will be difficult for you. So, I'm working hard so that I pass my exam (CP 2A)*

*I try my best to pass in English because it helps me in understanding other subjects because teachers teach us in English (CP 3A)*

*We are studying hard so that we can pass our exams. You can't go to college if there's no English (CP 4B)*

*We are working hard in English because we will need it to write application letters (CP 5B)*

Contrary, other pupils mentioned that they did not study hard in English subject because they knew that they would still go to Grade 10 without passing it. They mentioned how the REMPS had made them not to study hard or pay attention to English because they knew they would not need to pass it mandatorily at the end of their academic year.

*We stop concentrating because we know it's not a passing subject (CP 1A)*

*Pupils have a lot to contribute in class but because they can't speak in English, they can't say anything (CP 1B)*

*It's okay madam even if we don't pass it because we still use English when learning these other subjects (CP 1C)*

However, one pupil mentioned how other pupils' attitudes have been, knowing that they would not have to pass in English mandatorily to proceed to Grade 10. The following was what the pupil had to say;

*Some of my friends don't study English because they know they will still go to Grade 10 but they'll have difficulties in Grade 10. Some know to speak but can't write and they'll fail to write application letters and CVs (CP 3A)*

### **5.3.4 Pupils' attitudes towards English subject according to standards officers, school managers and teachers of English**

Standards officers, school managers, and teachers of English language made observations on the attitudes of learners towards the subject. The aforementioned participants revealed that they observed some negative attitudes in their learners. Consider the following verbatims;

*Pupils have a negative attitude and at the end of the day they do not attach seriousness to learning. They know that even if they don't pass English, they'll still go to Grade 10: hence the negativity. Teachers can prepare but some pupils don't even write, some pupils wait for others to write then they copy: I've come across a good number of such (SO 2)*

*They no longer care because they know that even if they don't pass English, they would still proceed to Grade 10 (SO 3)*

*This has affected learners in working hard, they are not working as hard as they used to sometime back. Learners have taken English as a by the way thing such that they don't even study in groups, I haven't seen them do that, they don't even consider it as a study subject, they don't even do tuitions in English now but before this policy they used to do tuitions (Tr 1A)*

*Pupils are no longer attaching any importance to English subject (Tr 3A)*

*Pupils have a negative attitude because they know they don't have to pass it. Those who didn't break through before coming to Grade 9 do not even pay attention to English because they know that they do not have to pass it (Tr 4B)*

*The attitude of learners has been very negative. Out of 100% of learners, just 5% of learners will come to ask for assistance with what they don't understand: they have a very bad attitude. Grade nines just read once in a while, even discussions, according to my observation (Tr 2A)*

The teacher added on to say that the policy had made Grade 9 learners lazy because they did not mind their grades in the subject. The following was what the teacher said;

*Learners have become lazy because they know that even if they have 40% in six subjects and whether they have English or not they'd still proceed to Grade 10 (Tr 2A)*

One teacher mentioned how their Grade 9 learners' attitudes towards English subject had also affected their attitudes at Grade 10, especially those who did not pass in English subject at Grade 9. Consider the following verbatim;

*Grade 10 learners have a negative attitude because of not doing well at Grade 9 (Tr 6B)*

#### **5.4 Views of standards officers, school managers, parents and former pupils on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level**

The researcher also sought to find out the views of various stakeholders on the English waiver. Participants gave out their different perspectives of the REMPS. Some participants mentioned that the policy in question was a good initiative while others stated that it was not helpful at all.

Various stakeholders interviewed disclosed that the REMPS had compromised the standards of education in different ways. They mentioned that pupils did not strive hard to pass in English anymore because they knew they did not have to pass it to proceed to Grade 10. They mentioned that the standards of education that were being displayed by the current pupils in the nation during secondary school and beyond were not good. This was what they had to say on education standards;

*The removal of English as mandatory passing subject has compromised quality. There is no hard work for learners because they know that even if they have 40% in all subjects, they would still proceed to Grade 10. They know that even if they fail, they can still write and combine marks under external. Most learners don't understand or deduce meaning from what they learn: they just memorise. The removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 has even affected the performance at Grade 12 as well where seriousness has been attached. We have brought our education standards down, ourselves, both from political will and technocrats (S O 2)*

*The policy is not good; we are not looking at offering quality education. We just want to make access to education but not the value of education, it's not considered. This policy has killed the standard of education; we have unbaked learners. It's like learners are just being pushed. Even when they start working, they will not offer quality for the country. In our time 350 meant one had failed but this time a pupil with 240 has passed and can go to Grade 12, learners are now in a laissez faire kind of situation (AD A)*

The aforementioned respondents shared that there were some negative effects to the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject. The participants mentioned the effects that the REMPS had brought on the subject of English itself. The effects that the REMPS had on other subjects were also mentioned. Participants mentioned the effects that the REMPS had on the future of the pupils and the nation at large. It was stated as well that there had been contradictions on the REMPS and what the education system in Zambia states.

The issue of how the REMPS affected English language as a subject at Grade 9 was raised. Respondents brought out the issue of performance: they mentioned that the policy had affected the performance of learners in English subject. They also mentioned that pupils no longer put efforts in trying to perform well in English. Respondents also stated that most of the pupils at Grade 9 scored between division 3 and 4 and that schools no longer produced 100% pass rate. Consider the following verbatims;

*The policy has implications on English performance at Grade 9 because most learners do not know how to read and write. Most of them are in division 3 and 4 (SO 2)*

*If you look at the mock and final exams results, there are very few pupils who score in division 1 or 2, many are in division 3 or 4 where majority are in division 4. The performance at Grade 9 is very poor. Since the change of policy, performance has been very poor: most of the learners' scores are in division 4 (SO 3)*

*If someone fails English at Grade nine, it means that the person is not conversant since it is from Grade 5 up to university. Such pupils will find challenges in learning other subjects and their performance is affected (SO 4)*

*The issue of sweeping the streets has affected performance. The performance is not at 100% but those with English are able to perform better than those without (AD A)*

*This policy has affected learners negatively: they have not broken through. It has even affected their performance. Learners come raw into senior secondary school, teachers have to teach handwriting and other skills. It has affected communication in English: pupils don't express themselves in the target language (AD B)*

*I strongly feel that the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject brought a negative effect on the performance of pupils. Pupils no longer put efforts to pass English. Some pupils think that English is not difficult and they end up failing terribly (AD C)*

However, it was noted by participants of the study that the REMPS did not only have effects on English subject but also on other subjects. The respondents talked to revealed that the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject had affected pupils' performance in other subjects. The following were their responses;

*It has affected performance overall. Performance has gone down. There have been complaints from other subject teachers that it has affected performance in information subjects. This has affected learners negatively. (AD B)*

The respondent continued to say;

*If learners fail to perform well in English, other subjects would be affected. It would be prudent to allow them to pass English at Grade 9 (AD B)*

*English is the engine in school, if a child can't read and write then the child can't perform well in other subjects. If a child can't do well in English, then they can't do well in other subjects (AD A)*

*This has contributed to them failing other subjects because they fail to understand other subjects and write wrong spellings. They would do better if they are passing English because this has contributed negatively to their performance. When something is mandatory, there is extra effort made (AD C)*

*Most of the subjects are taught in English, pupils would transfer their failure in English to other subjects when they go to Grade 10 (FP 1)*

English is not compulsory at Grade 9 level but it is at Grade 12 and is a prerequisite at tertiary level. It was in this line that respondents brought out future effects of waiving English at Grade 9 on their upcoming higher grades as well as their tertiary education where it is mandatory to pass it. They brought out the issues of how performance would be affected in the pupils' senior secondary and their tertiary education level. They mentioned how pupils would fail to communicate with their colleagues in case they go to study outside their country. Participants brought out the issue of the effect it would have on other subjects whose instructions are given in English. The study's participants were concerned about the learners who progressed to Grade 10 without passing in English. They stated that pupils would have challenges to tackle English and other subjects at senior secondary if they did not pass in English subject at Grade 9. Consider the following verbatims;

*This system of 'sweeping the streets' has an effect at Grade 9 and a triple effect at Grade 12 (S O 2)*

*This is a policy which is not helping us. They forget that we are trained to go around the world where you can't find your own mother tongue or familiar language, the policy is confusing everything (SO 4)*

*Learners are pushed into senior secondary where they are not even able to express themselves. You find that those pupils who came into Grade 10 without*

*English are not performing well as compared to those who passed English (AD 1)*

*Progression to Grade 10 is also affected because we are building. If they don't have English at junior level, we still get back to the same thing because the medium of instruction is English (FP 3)*

*Currently, English is our official language and if pupils do not pass in it, how sure are we that they would be competent communicators even after they finish school! (FP 2)*

*There are many effects of removing English as a mandatory subject; English is key; it can be difficult for the pupils in future if they do not pass it. Pupils write all the subjects in English, even in offices they use English (P 1)*

*The policy is not good because children learn all other subjects in English and most children just know spoken nowadays. If children are allowed to proceed without English, they will fail to interact with others in English. It's like the ministry is just pushing them without knowing the caliber of pupils. Changing of the curriculum has affected our children so much (P 3)*

*The policy is not good. It's the same as just pushing a child to go forward. That's why there are examination classes: pupils have to pass both English and Maths because they are major subjects. You don't expect a child to pass them in Grade 12 if they failed at Grade 9 (P 2)*

Some participants felt that the removal of English subject at Grade 9 contradicted to what the system required. They stated that the Zambian system required that for one to get into tertiary education and get employment in the country, they should have had passed in English at Grade 12. Consider the following verbatim;

*This has an implication because the system brings out that without English there is no employment and no tertiary education: we are contradicting ourselves. Why attach seriousness at Grade 12 while at Grade 9 which is the foundation there is no seriousness attached! The teacher only attaches*

*seriousness because it is mandatory to plan, teach and assess: they are compelled to. Teachers ask questions like ‘why do we teach pupils if it is only to read and write?’ or ‘do we teach English to help learners learn other subjects?’ (S O 2)*

Participants gave out their views on the importance of having English as a mandatory passing subject. They also gave views of how important it was to pass in English subject. Participants also stated that English was a language that pupils needed in order to perform well at all levels of education because it is a medium of instruction. They also brought out the issue of employment where one needs to pass in English subject at Grade 12 mandatorily before they are employed. Respondents mentioned the opportunities of going to study or work abroad as one of the importance of passing in English. Consider the following verbatims;

*English is a medium of instruction right from Grade 5 up to Grade 12. English is used for various purposes and functions for higher education, business and as an official language. English is very important to us; I can give an example of an experience I went through where we were told to submit our English proficiency test results. For us Zambians, we were not under restrictions to submit our results or to undergo English tests as compared to our friends who came from other countries like Tanzania because they knew that we were coming from a country which has English as a medium of instruction (S O 3)*

*When it comes to instructions almost all the subjects, even Zambian language on the part of translation, are given in English as the official language. My opinion is that Curriculum should simply uphold English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 (AD A)*

*What we used to exercise was better: English is a medium of instruction not only in Zambia but worldwide. We have many tribes so English brings us together. If we get a person who completed Grade 12 in the 1990s without tertiary education and a graduate of today, the former would write a better composition than the latter. They should resolve back to the old system. It’s*

*important that English is maintained because it's a cross cutting subject (AD C)*

*Before the policy of English as a mandatory passing subject, it was like a forcing matter, they were forced to push because they knew they wouldn't go anywhere if they didn't pass English, whether they had 500 points but without English one wouldn't go to Grade 10 (FP 3)*

*English is a medium of instruction; its removal has contributed to high failure rate. Pupils no longer look at it from that point of view they used to. Removing English has meant that they can teach other subjects in the local languages. Let them set exams in local languages, we have variety of local languages because it's not saving any purpose (FP 2)*

However, one respondent expressed the flaws that might come with the use of selected local languages in the following verbatim;

*Zambia is a multilingual state and if we adopt one language, we are limiting learners. For example, in Northern Province we have Bemba, Mambwe, Bisa, etc. and that's the major reason of getting English as an official language. I cannot go for this idea (of waiving English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level). Zambia is a multilingual state, if we divide according to locations how will communication be! We must not just look at Zambia but also beyond. A child can learn outside Zambia, how will that child communicate? For me it's a no, I'm not for that idea. It's better we continue with English as a mandatory subject at Grade 9 (FP 1)*

A positive view was given by a participant who mentioned that having English as a mandatory passing subject was unfair on the pupils. They had the following to say;

*This policy is a good thing because pupils had a hinderance: English is not their language. Zambian languages are also languages that learners can use, unless they want to go abroad. It was unfair for them to fail pupils who passed*

*in other subjects but English. The content is too much for the juniors: it should be reduced because what comes in the exam is less than what is taught (FP 1)*

Another respondent gave out their positive view on the REMPS stating that it was a good move because the subject has too many topics for the pupils to cover and hard for them to understand.

*There are so many topics in English subject and it's not all the topics that learners are tested on in exams. Topics at Grade 9 are hard for learners to understand. That's why they were even failing (Tr 7C)*

One respondent gave their views both in support of the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject and against. The respondent mentioned that the waiver is a good thing because those pupils that are not good at English subject would be incorporated in the senior secondary education. They also mentioned to say that it is not a good thing because English language is used in other subjects. The respondent, adversely, stated that the REMPS is good because it gives access to education even to learners who fail in English. They stated that failing in English is not an indicator that the learner is dull because they used the same English to pass other subjects. The following was what they had to say;

*The policy is a two-way thing. Firstly, English as a mandatory passing subject is a good thing. English is an official language, if a child has a low grade in it let them not proceed to Grade 10 because English is used even in other subjects. In Grade 12, they will need it. Secondly, in education for all, no one should be left behind if they are doing fine in other languages. If passing English is a barrier, then it is unfair to have it as a mandatory passing subject (AD C)*

## **5.5 Summary of chapter 5**

The chapter presented the findings of the study on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level. The findings were presented according to the research objectives. The next chapter presents the discussion of the findings.

## **CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **6.1 Overview**

The discussion is based on findings presented in chapter five. The findings will be discussed with reference to the results obtained from interviews and focus group discussions. The discussion will also be done in line with the three objectives of the study which are; to establish the reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9, investigate the attitudes of teachers of English and pupils towards the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 and to explore the views of standards officers, school managers, parents, and former pupils on the waiving of English at Grade 9.

### **6.2 Reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9**

The government of Zambia removed English language as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level on 11th February, 2009 through a statement to parliament by former Minister of Education Honorable Geoffrey Lungwangwa. Government has power to set up policies through policy makers to control what goes on in the classroom. Policy makers have power over institutions of learning and take dominance over what takes place in the classrooms. Teachers, pupils and other stakeholders only follow what is laid down for them by government which uses its power to effect policies. Van Dijk (1993) explains that power involves control by one group over the other. English was removed as a mandatory passing subject for various reasons which were revealed by different stakeholders who were interviewed. Below is a discussion of the reasons why English was removed:

#### **6.2.1 Low literacy levels**

Standards officers disclosed that literacy levels in Zambia had been measured in a standardised manner using the national surveys which had been conducted since 1999 from Grade 5 level. They revealed that the national assessment showed that learners consistently underperformed in terms of literacy acquisition nationwide. In agreement, Mulenga (2012) states that pupils in Zambia are not able to read and write at the desirable levels, including some that had supposedly broken through by the end of Grade 2. Teachers revealed that they were made to teach spellings and simple words to pupils who supposedly had broken through to literacy. Findings from some Standards Officers, school managers and teachers of English interviewed revealed that most of

the pupils did not actually breakthrough to literacy from lower grades up to junior secondary level. The Government of Zambia removed English language as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 because of these low literacy levels. This was in tandem with Mwambazi (2011) who states that pupils were not able to read according to their grade level. These findings show that poor literacy levels are not just at primary level but extended to secondary school at Grade 9 level.

Nevertheless, findings revealed that there was an assumption by the Ministry of Education that in the next three years of senior secondary schooling, pupils would possibly upscale their competences in the English language. However, teachers of English revealed that pupils who did not perform well at junior secondary school did not perform well at senior secondary school as well. The Ministry of Education's assumption was in contradiction with what was revealed in the findings. Further, the Minister of General Education revealed in a ministerial statement about the 2020 Grade 9 External and GCE Examinations that performance in English Language continues to be poor as the subject poses a challenge to the candidates. What this means is that pupils face problems at Grade 9 and continue with the challenges throughout senior secondary school. In this context, Mwanza (2020b) advises that teachers in Zambia should embrace translanguaging in order to help poor readers to access learning. Further, Nyimbili and Mwanza (2020) believe that translanguaging as pedagogic practice will enable linguistically disadvantaged learners to access learning and improve their reading.

### **6.2.2 Access to senior secondary education**

The other reason for the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject was that the Government of Zambia wanted to grant opportunity to Grade 9 pupils to access senior secondary education. The removal of English as a mandatory passing subject came about after the abolition of cut-off point system. The abolition of the cut-off point system was aimed at ensuring that all Grade 9 certificate holders proceeded to Grade 10. A lot of pupils proceeded to Grade 10 who previously would not have had the opportunity, thereby drastically reducing the number of drop-outs after Grade 9. Miti (2017) states that the cut-off mark system was a tragedy and robbed children from under privileged backgrounds access to education. In addition, Moonga et al (2018) also state that both the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) and the Patriotic Front (PF) parties ensured that there was access to education for all at all levels of education. It

appears that the removal of cut off points was not adequate. English was seen as the major obstacle to this. However, while the removal of English has increased the number of pupils going to Grade 10, performance in the subject has remained poor. In 2009, the Zambian parliament disclosed that in 2008, 110,798 Grade 9 candidates obtained full certificates out of the 228 107 who sat for the examination. Consequently, all Grade 9 pupils who had full certificates, with or without passing English qualified to Grade 10.

It was revealed in the findings that government removed English as a mandatory passing subject because it realised that it was throwing away potential senior secondary school entrants by putting English language as a compulsory passing subject at Grade 9 level. More findings revealed that government was practicing the ‘swallow it all even if the stomach is full’ by sweeping the streets to give pupils access to senior secondary education. This was in tandem with The Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children (2014) which states that it had put a strategy for increasing access to senior secondary (Grade 10) which was to abolish the Grade 9 cut-off point system in Zambia. While access has been achieved, the implication is that there is over enrollment in schools. Teacher pupil ratio is poor and teaching materials are inadequate. It would have been expected that the removal of English should have corresponded with construction of more schools and furniture to cope with large numbers.

#### **6.2.2.1 Political ideology**

Findings revealed that politicians had interest in the number of pupils who proceeded to Grade 10. It was revealed that politicians loosened some benchmarks to accommodate all the pupils even those who did not pass in English subject. Participants revealed that in that particular year (2009), politicians observed that many pupils who had written their Grade 9 examinations in 2008 would remain on the streets. Therefore, they made English to be equal to other subjects. Consequently, the interest of government through the Ministry of General Education was in how many of those learners passed in six subjects and not a particular subject they passed. Findings from stakeholders interviewed revealed that ‘sweeping the streets’ system had a negative effect at Grade 9 performance in English and a triple effect at Grade 12 where English was required mandatorily. Participants revealed that the government was just pushing the pupils forward without taking note of pupil’s strengths or weaknesses. They further revealed that government was interested in granting access to education for all pupils whether they passed in English or

not. Findings suggest that government or politicians measure their governance and success through the success of their citizens. Therefore, removing English as a mandatory passing subject was to aid the ‘success rate’ of the children.

### **6.2.3 Low pupil proficiency in English**

Low pupil proficiency in English subject was another reason for the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject that was revealed by the stakeholders interviewed. Participants revealed various ways that pupils displayed their low proficiency in English subject. It was revealed that Grade 9 pupils had challenges with the semantics and syntax of the English language. Teachers also revealed that they had to teach pupils in Grade 9 how to read and write. They also revealed that pupils could not understand the subject matter, hence their failure in English at Grade 9. It was revealed further that most of the pupils did not pay much attention to the subject because they knew that they did not have to pass English to proceed to senior secondary school. In agreement, Ama (2019) states that students do not take their studies seriously. They often think that the same English they speak at home or on the street is the same they will write in their exams and they do not try to learn new words. Poor proficiency can be attributed to the sociolinguistic backgrounds of the pupils where they speak Zambian languages at home but mandatorily use English at school. While this is the case, it is important that the divide between home languages which are seen as interfering with English be accepted as stepping stones to accessing English. According to Mwanza and Bwalya (2019), this will result into democratization of the classroom and school spaces in which epistemic access will be the norm. To this extent, it is crucial to realize that translanguaging and hibridisation of language in the classroom is not only needed at primary level but at secondary school too. This will help learners to improve their English proficiency although it is no longer a mandatory passing subject at grade nine.

### **6.3 Attitudes of teachers and pupils towards government’s removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9**

The second objective was to investigate the attitudes of teachers of English and pupils towards government’s removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9. In the face-to-face interviews with teachers of English and focus group discussions with pupils, findings revealed

how the removal of English had affected their teaching/learning of English language. Below is the discussion on attitudes of teachers and pupils respectively:

Findings revealed that some teachers held positive attitudes towards English teaching even after its removal as a mandatory passing subject because of the rewards that followed after pupils had passed in English. These rewards were expected after the end of year examinations results where teachers and pupils would be given prizes during Teachers' Day/Open and Prize giving Day respectively. This means that teachers were instrumentally motivated. This was in tandem with Parijat et al. (2014) who state that instrumentality is the perception of an employee of the probability that performance will lead to organisational rewards or outcomes. Findings revealed that the motivation that teachers had to teach English was because of the rewards they received. In agreement, Mwanza (2017) states that attitudes of teachers often directly impact the implementation of a curriculum.

On the contrary, findings revealed that most of the teachers of English held negative attitudes towards the teaching of English after its removal as a mandatory passing subject. According to findings collected from teachers, they revealed that their negative attitudes affected their teaching and pupils' performance negatively. Teachers further revealed that they taught for routine purposes. Most of the teachers interviewed revealed that they did not work as hard as they used to when English was a mandatory passing subject. Findings also revealed that teachers' efforts to work hard in teaching English were destroyed when they knew that it was no longer a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9. In agreement, Mwanza (2017) states that teachers' attitudes are key to the success or failure of policy implementation. In addition, Kapansa (2019) states that poor attitudes by teachers are a barrier to pupil learning. Thus, the findings contradict Wu and Lee (2017) who found that there was no relationship between teacher attitudes towards the policy and pupil performance.

The findings also show blame games between teachers and pupils. Teachers stated that their negative attitudes were as a result of pupils' negative attitudes toward English subject. They stated that they were mostly discouraged because their pupils did not know how to read or write and that very few took interest to work well with teachers. However, Mwanza (2016) advises that it is the teachers' attitudes that superimpose pupils' attitudes. In addition, Gajalakshimi (2013) states that it is the job of teachers to enhance pupils' attitudes to learning English through

the use of more classroom activities that resonate with pupils' language interests and aspirations. The above authors assert that it was the teachers' duties to ensuring that learners developed positive attitudes and that learning took place in class.

Findings revealed that the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject had an implication on what went on in classrooms in relation to the number of pupils per class. Teachers revealed that they could not give the amount of work that was supposed to be given to their pupils due to over enrollment. They could not manage marking their pupils' books or to go through individual pupils' work due to the many numbers of pupils in their classrooms. However, Dixon (2016) asserts that with the increased enrollment of learners, teachers need to be prepared to meet their students' needs. This means that teachers should not render themselves vulnerable in the face of classroom challenges but instead, be creative and agile to handle teaching challenges.

Regarding pupils, some of them revealed that they held positive attitudes towards learning English. Findings revealed that they were still working hard in English even if it was not a mandatory passing subject. Findings further revealed that the positive attitudes held by some pupils towards learning English was because they wished to pass in the subject. These pupils did not only want to pass English in order to proceed to senior secondary school but also to access tertiary education. Findings further revealed that the pupils who held positive attitudes towards English learning were motivated to do so because they wished to study further both in and outside Zambia. These findings are in tandem with Abubakar et al. (2017) who state that the students' motivation and preferences are among the fundamental factors for effective and useful learning and achievement. In view of the Expectancy Theory, these pupils knew that passing English would reward them in future. Thus, they worked hard for future rewards.

However, other pupils disclosed their own negative attitudes towards learning English through focus group discussions. Findings revealed that some pupils stopped paying attention to English subject because it was not a mandatory passing subject. They also stated that they stopped paying attention because they did not have to pass it to proceed to Grade 10. Unlike those pupils who held positive attitudes, these pupils did not consider the future gains of mastering English. They did not consider that they would need it to pass Grade 12 and that English still remained the only medium of instruction in tertiary institutions in Zambia. This lack of knowledge made them

focus on the Grade 9 level. It is therefore important that teachers of English and guidance and counselling teachers advise pupils.

Findings further revealed that pupils' classroom performance in English was not good because of their negative attitudes towards learning it. In line with this finding, Almed (2015) mentions that students' attitude towards English learning might hinder their learning.

From a motivational point of view, findings revealed that pupils were negatively affected if teachers were not motivated to teach. Pupils were also negatively affected if teachers were not awarding them. Pupils expected to be awarded during Honors' Day as well as in their respective classes by way of praising them. Abubakar et al. (2017) state that to encourage low motivated learners, external rewards are needed to convince them to participate in activities. This asserts that teachers hold the strongest keys to pupils' attitudes towards their subjects. Thus, schools may need to consider the reward system to motivate learners in English at Grade 9.

In addition, Mlay (2010) states that for students to perform well in examinations they need to be motivated by teachers and be willing to study conscientiously. Teachers and other stakeholders need to understand their pupils' negative attitudes and shape them into positive ones as Viet (2017) adds that better understanding of students' attitude would help language teaching programmes, school managers and educators to develop strategies to improved student's learning outcomes. It is therefore possible to argue that pupils are motivated to learn when their teachers motivate them. In another study, Abubakar et al. (2017) state that when teachers and pupils are motivated, they get successful and achieve their set goals.

Findings further revealed that the effects of Grade 9 pupils' negative attitudes towards the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject affected their performance. This was so because pupils knew that it was not mandatory for them to pass English to get into senior secondary education. It was revealed that the negative effect of the removal of English went up to tertiary education level. This finding is in tandem with Sa'ad and Usman (2014) who state that causes of poor performance in English language among students was due to negative attitudes of students toward English language. It was also revealed that pupils who did not pass in English at junior secondary level did not have the motivation to work hard at senior secondary level even with the teachers' efforts and help. In line with this, Primadi et al. (2015) state that students'

positive attitude may be caused by their motivation. They also state that teachers should respect and carefully investigate their students' feelings to maintain the positive attitudes towards English and English language learning. In this view, it can be deduced that government should consider the long-term effects of this policy because it may negatively affect the social mobility of learners both in tertiary education and in the end at work.

#### **6.4 Views of standards officers, school managers, parents, and former pupils on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9**

The third objective sought to find out the views of standards officers, school managers, parents, and former pupils on the REMPS. To respond to this objective, face to face interviews were done with the standards officers, school managers, parents and former pupils who sat for their Grade 9 final examinations before the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject. Both positive and negative views were revealed during the interviews. Three participants revealed that the policy in question was a good initiative while the rest of them revealed the opposite.

Three of the study's participants revealed that having English as a mandatory passing subject was a hinderance to pupils' progression to senior secondary school. Participants who supported the policy stated that it was unfair to fail pupils who passed in other subjects but failed in English because some pupils were not strong in English but were in other subjects. This was in tandem with Ma (2001) who opines that students are differently successful in different subject areas. Findings further revealed that English as a mandatory passing subject was a hinderance to pupils because it was not their native language.

Participants further revealed that there were too many topics for the Grade 9 pupils to cover. It was revealed that during the Grade 9 final examinations, pupils were tested on very few topics despite covering many during their junior secondary school. They find this to be the reason they failed the subject. Daniel et al. (2015) opine that the number of courses a student takes in a particular subject area played a role in the student's sub scores and overall scores. Findings revealed that removing English as a mandatory passing subject was a good move. Participants who held positive views revealed that pupils needed not to be judged on the basis of English language because it was not a good way of measuring pupils' intelligence. However, although Banda and Mwanza (2017) agree that English was not a good measure of intelligence, they

argued that removing English at Grade 9 as a mandatory passing subject is thwarted by what happens at Grade 12 and entry into tertiary institutions where every student needs to have credit or better in English mandatorily. This shows a contradiction in policy where English is not a measure of intelligence at Grade 9 but becomes a measure of intelligence at Grade 12. This proves what Haugen (2009) noted that education policies are not normally characterised by progression or retrogression but by contradiction.

Although some stakeholders held positive views, most of the study's participants gave negative views on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9. Participants revealed that the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject had negative effects on the standards of education, on performance in English and consequently on other subjects.

School managers revealed that pupils' performance was not up to what teachers of English expected. Findings revealed that teachers of other subjects had also been complaining that the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject had affected pupils' performance negatively in their subjects, especially information subjects. Participants mentioned that English was the engine in schools, therefore, if a pupil could not read or write then such a one could not perform well in other subjects. Participants further stated that pupils' progression was negatively affected because they were supposed to build their skills and performance from junior to senior secondary education up to tertiary. If they did not have English at junior level then teachers would get back to the primary school work instead of building on. Findings disclosed that teachers of English taught Grade 9 pupils the work that was supposed to be covered at primary school level. An example of this was handwriting. Participants revealed that further consequences of poor performance would be that pupils would fail to communicate with their colleagues in case they wished to study abroad. Findings also revealed that pupils were not only trained to work from within their country but outside as well. The point here is that since pupils were failing to read, they were equally failing to learn because at junior secondary school, pupils need to read in order to learn as opposed to learning to read.

According to the findings collected, participants revealed that the old system where English was considered a mandatory passing subject was better as compared to its removal because English is an official language in Zambia. It was further revealed that pupils in the 1990s used English functionally even without attaining tertiary education as compared to the current ones who would

fail to write job application letters even after their senior secondary school. Thus, removing English without putting measures in place to counter its negative effects has proved problematic. This argument is in tandem with the Former minister of Education, Honorable David Mabumba (2019) and Honorable Dennis Wanchinga (2020) who in their separate statements state that there has been an increase in pupils' failure in the recent years. Findings further revealed that the standards of education being displayed by the current pupils in the nation were not good. Part of the blame was put on technocrats and the other part on political ideology. Study participants lamented that the country's education standards had been brought down by the aforementioned. They stated that the system was not looking at offering quality and valuable education to pupils but access to senior secondary education only. The consequences were that pupils did not perform well both at junior and senior secondary schools and would not offer quality services for the country. This implies that the Ministry of General Education should devise measures of mitigating the negative effects of this policy so that access should not curtail quality.

Standards officers revealed that teachers of English did not attach seriousness to teaching English. It was disclosed that teachers of English only attached seriousness to teaching because they were compelled to mandatorily plan, teach, and assess. They were not motivated to teach. Most of the standards officers interviewed revealed that since English was a medium of instruction then pupils needed it in order to perform well at all levels of education. Adversely, Chapple (2014) argued that one cannot naively equate English as a medium of instruction alone to an automatic improvement in English language ability.

Some participants further 'suggested' that the ECZ should set Grade 9 final examinations in the country's local languages because setting it in English was not saving any purpose. It was also revealed that the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject meant that other subjects could be taught in local languages. In agreement, Kafata (2016) states that the using of local language in class is a good development that will improve the performance of pupils in all areas of study. However, other participants contradicted to the suggestion of teaching in local languages that it would bring about confusion because of the multilingual classrooms around the country. In this context, what can work is neither English alone or local languages alone but translanguaging which would help the weak to understand and access knowledge while

developing proficiency in the target language (Mwanza 2020; Mwanza & Manchishi, 2019; Nyimbili and Mwanza, 2021).

In conclusion, participants stated that it was better for pupils to use local languages when learning all subjects. They gave an option that only pupils who wanted to go and study abroad should put more effort in passing English. Their consolation was that English was already used in other subjects. Adversely, other participants revealed that the use of local languages alone would disadvantage the country since the world is a global village that require use of international languages to communicate. After all, none of Zambia's local languages is an international language, hence English becomes essential. Participants further revealed that the REMPS contradicted to the existing system in the country which does not allow students without a pass in English to access tertiary education and ultimately get employment (white collar jobs).

### **6.5 Summary of chapter 6**

The chapter has discussed the findings of stakeholders' perspectives on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level which were in line with the study's objectives. The next chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.1 Overview**

This chapter presents the main research conclusions in reference to the research objectives and makes recommendations. The chapter suggests further research in the field of English language subject. This study sought to find out the stakeholders' perspectives on the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level. The researcher would like to make conclusions in relation to the research topic with the guidance of the following research objectives; establish reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9, investigate the attitudes of teachers of English and pupils towards government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject and explore the views of standards officers, school managers, parents, and former pupils on the English waiver at Grade 9. Thereafter, recommendations and suggestions for further research will be presented.

### **7.2 Reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9**

Face to face interviews were done to establish reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9. Four standards officers, three school managers and nine teachers of English were interviewed. These participants revealed that there had been a problem of low literacy levels in the Zambian education. The low literacy levels in Zambia have had been measured in a standardised manner using the national surveys which have had been conducted in the country since 1999 starting from Grade 5 level. This was one of the reasons why English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level. Access to senior secondary education was another reason given by the aforementioned participants. It was revealed that the Government of Zambia had been sweeping the streets by giving opportunities to pupils who passed other subjects but failed English. Participants indicated that it was not fair to judge pupils' intelligence on the basis of English because the government was throwing away potential entrants to senior secondary school. Tying English to certification was considered unfair by participants. The other reason given by participants was low pupil proficiency in English subject. Findings revealed that pupils had challenges with the semantics and syntax of the English language that was why they had either a low mark or fail in the subject. It was because of the

above discussed reasons that English was removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level.

### **7.3 Attitudes of teachers of English and pupils on government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9**

Teachers were interviewed individually while pupils were talked to through focus group discussions. Findings revealed both positive and negative attitudes by teachers of English and pupils. Some teachers revealed that they had positive attitudes towards teaching English because of the reward that they expected to get when their pupils got higher grades in English after writing their examinations. Other teachers revealed that their negative attitudes were because they knew that English was no longer a mandatory passing subject and they were just teaching for routine purposes. Teachers disclosed that they did not work as hard as they used to when English was a mandatory passing subject. The findings revealed that the negative attitudes displayed by teachers were as a result of the negative attitudes that pupils displayed. Pupils revealed that they did not pay attention to English subject because whether they passed it or not, they would still proceed to senior secondary school. According to the focus group discussions held with the pupils, it was revealed that some of them had not stopped working hard in English while others had. Pupils talked to stated that they were working hard because they wished to know how to write application letters properly and speak out boldly and properly during job interviews. They also mentioned that passing English would make them go and study abroad. Contrary, other pupils disclosed that they did not need to put a lot of effort in studying English subject because they would still proceed to Grade 10 with or without it. The findings further revealed that pupils did not attach seriousness to learning English. Participants disclosed that the negative attitudes of pupils towards the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 had a negative effect on their attitudes at Grade 10.

### **7.4 Views of standards officers, school managers, parents, and former pupils on the English waiver at Grade 9**

From the findings collected, stakeholders revealed that the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject had compromised the standards of education in different ways. Pupils no longer worked hard in English because they stated that they did not have to pass it mandatorily.

Participants complained that the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level was just granting access to senior secondary school and not attaching value to education. They revealed that the negative effect that the policy had on English was also on other subjects. Findings further disclosed that there were negative effects on the future of the pupils and the nation at large because the policy contradicted to what the system stated. The system of the Zambian education requires a pupil to pass English mandatorily at Grade 12 for them to access tertiary education and employment. Participants revealed that pupils needed to pass English mandatorily in order to perform well at all levels of education. Findings further revealed that pupils were just being pushed to senior secondary school without letting them pass English. However, findings also revealed that the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject was a good thing because it was previously hindering pupils to progress to senior secondary school. Participants stated that English was not the pupils' mother tongue. It was therefore not easy to understand its concepts. Findings revealed that topics in the subject were too many for the pupils and that was why they were getting low marks. Therefore, it was a good move to abolish English as a compulsory passing subject. Another revelation was that if passing English was a barrier then it was unfair to have it as a mandatory passing subject.

## **7.5 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and the conclusion, the study made the following recommendations:

- ❖ Government should devise measures of scaffolding pupils who failed English at Grade 9 so that they perform better by the time they reach Grade 12
- ❖ For the sake of consistency, English should be made a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 because it is mandatory at Grade 12, a prerequisite to tertiary education and an official language by statute.
- ❖ Government, through the Ministry of Education, should involve policy implementers in the policy formulation processes.

## **7.6 Recommendations for future research**

The study proposes that a research be undertaken to;

- ❖ Compare English performance at senior secondary school between pupils who passed in English subject at Grade 9 and those who failed.

- ❖ Determine performance of Grade 12 pupils before the policy was abolished and after.

## **7.7 Summary**

The chapter presented conclusions made in the study as well as recommendations that emanated from it.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Consent form from the Dean

  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Telephone: 291381  
Telegram: UNZA, LUSAKA  
Telex: UNZALU ZA 44370

PO Box 32375  
Lusaka, Zambia  
Fax: +260-1-292702

Date, 5<sup>th</sup> MARCH, 2020.....

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Dear Sir/Madam

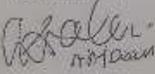
RE: FIELD WORK FOR MASTERS/ PHD STUDENTS

The bearer of this letter Mr./Ms. PAMELA MAMA MUSHAGGA..... Computer number 20.82.46.1.25..... is a duly registered student at the University of Zambia, School of Education.

He/She is taking a Masters/PhD programme in Education. The programme has a fieldwork component which he/she has to complete.

We shall greatly appreciate if the necessary assistance is rendered to him/her/.

Yours faithfully

  
B. Kalinde (Dr)  
P.P. ASSISTANT DEAN POSTGRADUATE STUDIES SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

  
THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA  
ASSISTANT DEAN (PG)  
- 5 MAR 2020  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
LUSAKA

cc: Dean-Education  
Director-DRGS

## Appendix B: Letter of Approval



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**  
**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**

Great East Road | P.O. Box 32370 | Lusaka | Zambia | Tel: +260-211-290 258/293 777  
 Fax: +260 21 290 258/293 952 | Email: director@ds.uza.zm | Website: www.uza.zm

**APPROVAL OF STUDY**

14<sup>th</sup> July, 2020.

**REF NO. HSSREC-2020-MAR-004**

Fumela Muna Mutoro  
**LUSAKA.**

Dear Ms. Muna,

**RE: "STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVE ON THE EFFECT OF REMOVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A MANDATORY PASSING SUBJECT ON PUPILS' PERFORMANCE AT GRADE 9 PROMOTION ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXAMINATION: A CASE OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KASAMA"**

Reference is made to your protocol dated 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2020. HSSREC resolved to approve this study and your participation as Principal Investigator for a period of one year.

Review Type	Ordinary Review	HSSREC: 2020-MAR-004
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 13 <sup>th</sup> July, 2020	Expiry Date: 12 <sup>th</sup> July, 2021
Protocol Version and Date Information Sheet	Version - NI • English	12 <sup>th</sup> July, 2020 To be provided
Consent Form and Date	Version - NI	To be provided
Recruitment Materials	NI	NI
Other Study Documents	Questionnaire	
Number of Participants		
Approved for Study		

Specific conditions will apply to this approval. As Principal Investigator it is your responsibility to ensure that the contents of this letter are adhered to. If these are not adhered

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as, the approval may be suspended. Should the study be suspended, study sponsors and other regulatory authorities will be informed.

#### Conditions of Approval

- No participant may be involved in any study procedure prior to the study approval or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated or Serious Adverse Events (SAEs) must be reported to HSSREC within 5 days.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to HSSREC within 5 working days.
- All recruitment materials must be approved by HSSREC prior to being used.
- Principal investigators are responsible for initiating Continuing Review proceedings. HSSREC will only approve a study for a period of 12 months.
- It is the responsibility of the PI to renew his/her ethics approval through a renewal application to HSSREC.
- Where the PI desires to extend the study after expiry of the study period, documents for study extension must be received by HSSREC at least 30 days before the expiry date. This is for the purpose of facilitating the review process. Documents received within 30 days after expiry will be labelled "late submissions" and will incur a penalty fee of K500.00. No study shall be renewed whose documents are submitted for renewal 30 days after expiry of the certificate.
- Every 6 (six) months a progress report form supplied by The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee as an IRB must be filled in and submitted to us. There is a penalty of K500.00 for failure to submit the report.
- When closing a project, the PI is responsible for notifying, in writing or using the Research Ethics and Management Online (REMO), both HSSREC and the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) when ethics certification is no longer required for a project.
- In order to close an approved study, a Closing Report must be submitted in writing or through the REMO system. A Closing Report should be filed when data collection has ended and the study team will no longer be using human participants or animals or secondary data or have any direct or indirect contact with the research participants or animals for the study.

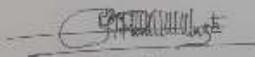
- Filing a closing report (rather than just letting your approval lapse) is important as it assists HSSREC in efficiently tracking and reporting on projects. Note that some funding agencies and sponsors require a notice of closure from the IRB which had approved the study and can only be generated after the Closing Report has been filed.
- A reprint of this letter shall be done at a fee.

- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC by way of an application for an amendment prior to implementation (unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator's or site address or methodology and methods. Many modifications entail minimal risk adjustments to a protocol and/or consent form and can be made on an Expedited basis (via the IRB Chair). Some examples are: format changes, correcting spelling errors, adding key personnel, minor changes to questionnaires, recruiting and changes, and so forth. Other, more substantive changes, especially those that may alter the risk-benefit ratio, may require Full Board review. In all cases, except where noted above regarding subject safety, any changes to any protocol document or procedure must first be approved by HSSREC before they can be implemented.

Should you have any questions regarding anything indicated in this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at the above indicated address.

On behalf of HSSREC, we would like to wish you all the success as you carry out your study.

Yours faithfully,



**Dr. J. Mwanza**  
Dip. Clin. Med. Sc., BA M.Soc., PhD

**CHAIRPERSON  
THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA HUMANITIES AND  
SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE - IRB**

cc: Director, Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies  
Assistant Director (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies  
Assistant Registrar (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies

## **Appendix C: Interview guide for Standards officers 1 and 2**

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

Research title: **Stakeholders' Perspectives on the Removal of English as a Mandatory Passing Subject at Grade 9**

1. How long have you been working in the Ministry of Education?
2. What were the reasons for the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9?
3. How have been the standards in English performance according to your observation?
4. Are there any observable differences in performance in the Grade nine final examinations since the policy was effected?
5. What do you think are the effects of this policy on English as a subject which had been waived as a mandatory passing subject?
6. Are you involved in the formulation of policies that concern the affairs of the Ministry of Education? If not, who is? Were you involved in the formulation of the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject?
7. Why was English removed as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9 level?
8. What is your opinion over the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject?
9. Has there been any follow up on the same?
10. What is your opinion over government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject?

Thank you very much for your participation.

## **Appendix D: Interview guide for Standards officer 3**

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

Research title: **Stakeholders' Perspectives on the Removal of English as a Mandatory Passing Subject at Grade 9**

1. How long have you been working in the Ministry of Education?
2. What were the reasons for the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9?
3. According to your observation, has there been any changes in attitude by the teachers after the policy was effected?
4. How have been the standards in English performance according to your observation?
5. Are there any observable differences in performance in the Grade nine final examinations since the policy was effected?
6. What do you think are the effects of this policy on English as a subject which had been waived as a mandatory passing subject?
7. What is your opinion over government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject?

Thank you very much for your participation.

## **Appendix E: Interview guide for Standards officer 4**

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

**Research title: Stakeholders' Perspectives on the Removal of English as a Mandatory Passing Subject at Grade 9**

1. How long have you been working in the Ministry of Education?
2. How often does your office observe teachers?
3. What were the reasons for the removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9?
4. According to your observation, has there been any changes in teachers' attitude towards work after the policy was effected?
5. Has there been any effect on teachers' English lesson preparations?
6. How has been the standards in English performance according to your observation?
7. Has there been any rule as regards the use of a specific language in schools in your district? Has there been any restrictions as to which language to use in school premises?
8. Has the policy affected the procurement of teaching and learning materials in your district, English in particular?
9. Are there any observable changes in performance in the Grade nine final examinations since the policy was effected?
10. What do you think are the effects of this policy on English as a subject which has been waived as a mandatory passing subject?
11. What is your opinion over government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject?

Thank you very much for your participation.

## **Appendix F: Interview guide for school managers**

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

Research title: **Stakeholders' Perspectives on the Removal of English as a Mandatory Passing Subject at Grade 9**

1. How long have you been working in the Ministry of Education?
2. How many times is English subject slotted on the school time-table?
3. Do you allow pupils to use any local Zambian language of their choice in the school premises or you punish them if they do?
4. Has the 'policy' affected the procurement of teaching and learning materials in your school, especially in English subject?
5. Is there any observable difference in the preparations of lessons by teachers of English?
6. How often does your office observe teachers?
7. Do parents involve themselves in the education of their children? Does the school have discussions with parents over their children's performance?
8. Has government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject affected the performance of your learners in English subject in any way?
9. What is your opinion over government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject?

Thank you very much for your participation.

## **Appendix F: Interview Guide for Teachers of English**

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

Research title: **Stakeholders' Perspectives on the Removal of English as a Mandatory Passing Subject at Grade 9**

1. How long have you been working in the Ministry of Education?
2. Were you trained to teach English?
3. Do learners come to you to ask for help if they have challenges in English? Do you attend to them individually or as a group?
4. Do learners frequent school for discussions in English subject? What other efforts do learners put in place that you have observed, to prepare for their English promotion examinations?
5. Do learners who use Zambian Languages to communicate in the school environment receive punishment?
6. How often do you check your learners' English books (apart from the time you are teaching them in class)?
7. Are teaching and learning materials sufficient in your English class?  
Are there any observable effects on the Grade 9 English performance due to its removal as a mandatory passing subject?
8. Has government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject affected the procurement of teaching and learning materials in your department?
9. What is your opinion over government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject?

Thank you very much for your participation.

## **Appendix G: Interview guide for parents (for former Grade 9 pupils)**

1. How did you earn income for your family?
2. Did you procure study materials for your child?
3. Explain how you were involved in your child's education especially with regard to English language. Did you find it easy to go to your child's school anytime to find out about their progress?
4. Did the school call you to discuss your child's academic performance?
5. Did you organize extra lessons for your child in English?
6. What did you put in place to make sure that your child passed in English?
7. Were there any barriers that you may be aware of that can/could prevent some parents from getting involved in their children's Education?
8. What do you think are the effects of removing English as a mandatory passing subject on English performance?
9. What is your opinion over government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject?

Thank you for your participation.

## **Appendix H: Interview guide for parents (for recent Grade 9 pupils)**

1. How do you earn income for your family?
2. Do you procure study materials for your child?
3. Explain how you are involved in your child's education especially with regard to English language. Do/did you find it easy to go to your child's school anytime to find out about their progress?
4. Does the school call you to discuss your child's academic performance?
5. Do you organize extra lessons for your child in English?
6. What do/did you put in place to make sure that your child passes in English?
7. Are there any barriers that you may be aware of that can/could prevent some parents from getting involved in their children's Education?
8. What do you think are the effects of removing English as a mandatory passing subject on English performance?

Thank you for your participation.

## **Appendix I: Focus group discussion guide for pupils**

1. Do you use any other language in class apart from English (when it is not time for your local language subject)?
2. Do you get punished when you use any other language apart from English when you are in school?
3. How many times do you learn English in a week?
4. Do you find difficulties in learning English?
5. Do you have enough learning material during English lessons, for example, text books?
6. Do you ask your teachers of English for help when you have challenges with English questions? Do teachers attend to you individually or as a group?
7. Do you still pay attention to English subject after its removal as a mandatory passing subject?

Thank you very much for your participation.

## **Appendix J: Interview Guide for Former Pupils**

1. Did you like the English subject?
2. Were you using any other language in class apart from English (when it was not time for your local language lesson)?
3. Did you get punished when you used any other language apart from English when you were in the school premises?
4. How many times did you learn English in a week (if you can remember)?
5. Did you find difficulties in learning English?
6. Did you have enough learning material during English lessons, for example, text books?
7. Were you asking your teachers of English for help when you had challenges with English questions? Did teachers attend to you individually when you had such challenges?
8. What is your opinion over government's removal of English as a mandatory passing subject at Grade 9?

Thank you very much for your participation.