

**AN ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GRADE FOUR LEARNERS' ABILITY IN
READING APPROPRIATELY PHONIC AND SIGHT WORDS IN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE IN SCHOOLS IN LUSAKA**

BY

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**A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Literacy
and Learning**

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DECLARATION

I, Sheila M. Mulenga do solemnly declare that this dissertation represents my own work and all the other sources of information and literature on related works consulted in the production of this report had been acknowledged by the author and that it has not previously been submitted for a degree at the University of Zambia or any other university.

Signature:.....

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APPROVAL

This dissertation of Sheila M. Mulenga is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Literacy and learning of the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to establish Grade four learners' ability in reading phonic and sight words in English Language appropriately. Reading proficiently is a crucial foundation for success in all academic areas. The following objectives guided the study; ability by grade four learners to identify the English alphabet by their sounds. The researcher tried to establish the reading ability of sight words in English Language by the grade four learners. Furthermore, the researcher attempted to find out the challenges, if any; teachers face in teaching reading phonic and sight words in primary schools in Lusaka district. The total sample size was one hundred and twenty five respondents. These were; one hundred learners, twenty teachers and five administrators. The study used qualitative approach. Observation, Semi-structured interview and focus group discussions were the methods used to elicit information from the respondents. The theoretical framework of this study was guided by Jean Piaget's cognitive learning theory.

Findings revealed that grade four learners were able to identify the letters of the English alphabet by their sounds. It was also revealed that learners were able to read sight words at a slow pace and pronunciation was not consistent in most learners. In addition, it was established that teachers faced challenges when teaching reading phonic and sight words in English language as evidenced from the themes that emerged. The researcher recommended that school administrators should continue monitoring the teaching of initial reading skills to learners in the early grades so that teachers do not neglect teaching of letters and their sounds. Teachers should intensify the Oral language activities for learners as early as grade two in order to practice the articulations of correct English sounds. The Ministry of General Education should ensure that appropriate and adequate teaching and learning materials are supplied in schools.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late son Chileshe, My husband Phillip and children; Mukumbwa, Temwa and Chubo. I am very grateful for the support and encouragement that you gave me when I felt like giving up. I love you all.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CDC	Curriculum Development Center
ROC	Read on course
SITE	Step into English
ZABEC	Zambia Basic Education Course
ZPC	Zambia Primary Course
PRP	Primary Reading Programme
NBTL	New Breakthrough to Literacy

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In this chapter the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitation and limitations of the study have also been given. Finally, the operational definitions of terms, organisation of the dissertation and summary.

1.1 Background Information

In the Zambian education system one of the fundamental aims for lower and middle basic curriculum is to enable learners to read and write clearly, correctly and confidently in Zambian Languages and in English (Ministry of Education, 1996). In today's society, it is important that every child has the fullest opportunities to become an accomplished reader. Anyone unable to read and write proficiently faces enormous social, personal and economic limitations in today's complex, information flooded world (Gove and Cvelin, 2011). However, low reading levels as studies indicated by Matafwali (2005, 2010), Kalindi (2005) and Kaani (2006) may not be the only problem that Zambian children face but also the correct pronunciation of words, especially those in English language where using Received Pronunciation (RP) is the intended goal by any learner of English language may or may not be a challenge to learners in grade four. According to Fowler (1965) the correct term is the 'Received Pronunciation'. The word 'received' conveys its original meaning of 'accepted' or 'approved' as in 'received wisdom'. In addition, Received Pronunciation' is a once prestigious variety of British English spoken without an identifiable regional accent. It soon became the voice of the public schools, BBC, the civil service, the British Empire and posh accent.

Yule (2006) argued that English pronunciation is one area of language acquisition, which until the beginning of the 1990's had received limited attention by linguistic researchers. He emphasised the need for continued research in this area of phonology and phonetics if we are to fully understand how native-like accents are achieved in Second language Acquisition (SLA) and how teachers, on the Practical level can help students develop proficient Second Language pronunciation.

In addition, Nilsson (2013) pointed out that Studies pertaining to pronunciation and oral proficiency are needed in order to fully assess the development and promotion of English language pronunciation in educational settings. It is necessary to encourage the active learning of pronunciation skills in young learners, in order for them to under pin the phonetically and Phonological structures of the English language at the earliest stages of

their language acquisition. Furthermore, Nilsson (2013) stated that the natural curiosity that young children display for sounds, rhymes and words is a resource that should be exploited by teachers in order to promote and encourage proficient pronunciation at the early stage.

In order to fully assess the development and promotion of English Language pronunciation in Education settings, studies pertaining to pronunciation and oral proficiency are needed. The focus of this study is not in any way talking about the attainment of Received Pronunciation but to establish the ability of grade four learners in reading and pronouncing phonic and sight words in English Language appropriately in schools in Lusaka district.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Pronunciation is an integral part of foreign language learning, since it directly affects learners' communicative competence as well as performance (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Meaning can be lost for some words when they are mispronounced. For instance, mere change of stress in a word can change its pronunciation thereby affecting the meaning of that word. Pronunciation can even change a word from it being a verb to a noun and thereby giving a different meaning altogether. The word 'contact' for example, can either be a verb or a noun with different meanings depending on where the stress is put thereby affecting the pronunciation. However, Bantu languages in Africa have an orthography different from that of many European languages such as English. Zambia's aim is to increase the number of learners reading proficiently in the earliest grades (Ministry of General Education, 2013). Since 2013, the Language of Instruction (LoI) in all schools from grade one (1) to four (4) is a zonal language assumed to be the familiar language to a learner. With this background that learners learn all subjects in a Zambian language with a different orthography from that of the English language, this study intended to establish how grade four learners who have been learning all the subjects in a Bantu Zambian language read and appropriately pronounce both phonic and sight words in English language.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish the ability of grade four learners in reading phonic and sight words appropriately in English Language in primary schools in Lusaka district.

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of this study were to:

- i. determine the extent to which grade four learners in primary schools in Lusaka district could identify letters in English alphabet by their sounds.
- ii. analyse the reading and pronunciation ability of sight words in English language by grade four learners.
- iii. identify challenges, if any that teachers faced in teaching reading phonic and sight words in primary schools of Lusaka district.

1.5 Research questions

The study attempted to respond to the following questions.

1. To what extent did grade four learners' have the ability to identify letters in English alphabet by their sounds in primary schools of Lusaka district?
2. What was the ability of grade four learners' in reading and pronunciation of sight words English language in primary schools in Lusaka district?
3. What challenges did teachers face in teaching reading phonic and sight words in primary schools of Lusaka District?

1.6 Significance of the study

Kombo and Tromp (2006) explained that the significance of a study refers to the importance of the study at hand. In this connection, the Curriculum Development Centre under the Ministry of General Education may benefit from the findings of this study because they may understand the grade four learners' ability of reading and pronunciation of phonic and sight words in English, whether or not they are able to identify the English alphabet letters by their sound.

Furthermore, it is hoped that the findings of this study may help some teachers teaching initial reading in English Language to pay particular attention to the oral language activities for learners to practice the articulations of correct English sounds at an early stage. Added to the aforesaid, other researchers in the field of Language may be able to use the findings on the establishment of the ability of reading phonic and sight words in English Language by grade four learners. It may also contribute to the already existing body of knowledge on the subject under study.

1.7 Delimitations

This study was conducted in primary schools of Lusaka district only. The sampled schools of grade four learners, grade four teachers and primary school administrators were drawn from five selected schools from Lusaka district only.

1.8 Limitations

The study was peculiar to 2017 grade four learners of the primary schools of Lusaka district only. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to all grade four learners in the country.

1.9 Operational Definitions of terms

Phonic words	Words made up from small units of sound called phonemes.
Sight words	These are words that young children are encouraged to memorise as a whole by sight, so that they can automatically recognise those words in print without having to use any strategies to decode.
Reading	The process of extracting meaning from a written or printed text.
Literacy	The ability to read and write.
Orthography	The writing system of the language.
Phoneme	Smallest sound unit of a language realised through graphemes.
Graphemes	Letter symbols represented in written language.
Decoding	Understanding the relationship between letters and their sounds.
Pronounce	To make the sound of a word or letter in a particular way.
Phonological awareness	Ability to perceive and attend to words sound structure as opposed to its meaning.

1.10 Organisation of the Study

The issues presented in this chapter include; background information, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation and limitations of the study.

The literature review is presented in chapter two. It attempted to explore some of the existing literature on an establishment of the ability of the grade four learners in reading phonic and sight words in English Language appropriately in primary schools in Lusaka district. Thereafter, the theoretical framework on which this study is anchored is discussed. Chapter three provides the methodology which was used in conducting this study. It describes the research design, population of the study, sample size and sampling procedures, and data collection procedures.

The research findings of the study are presented in chapter four. Research findings are presented using classified themes that emerged from responses to the research questions of the study. Chapter five discusses the findings of the study. The discussion has been organised using objectives of the study as sub-headings. The conclusion and recommendations are presented in chapter six.

1.11 Summary

In this chapter background information on the establishment of the grade four learners' ability in reading phonic and sight words in English Language appropriately in five primary schools in Lusaka district have been provided. It was stated that in the Zambian education system one of the fundamental aims for lower and middle basic curriculum is to enable learners to read and write clearly, correctly and confidently in Zambian and English languages (Ministry of Education, 1996).

The statement of the problem and purpose of the study have been presented. The researcher also stated the research objectives, research questions and significance of the study. Finally, the delimitation and limitation of the study and operational definition of terms used in the study were highlighted.

In the next chapter the theoretical framework of cognitive learning theory by Jean Piaget will be discussed and also reviews literature that is relevant to the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter literature review has been presented using themes generated from the study. Firstly, the theoretical framework which guided this study was discussed, and then the five component skills of reading were outlined. Thereafter, related studies conducted outside Africa, within Africa and Zambia, in particular with a view to identifying the gaps that this study intended to fill were reviewed.

2.1 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework used in this study is the cognitive learning theory by Jean Piaget. In his theory, he explained that the mental process leads to a particular outcome, either in terms of behavior or attitude change which a learner experience. The theory has been conceptualized by many theorists, for instance, the work of Jean Piaget is said to influence cognitive theory who viewed children as active explorers and thinkers who are constantly trying to find ways and means of adapting to the environment cited in (Munsaka, 2011).

Fraser (2001) pointed out that the key insight is that pronunciation is a form of behaviour, which, like all behaviour, is driven by concepts, in this case, concepts of speech. Furthermore, he stated that Speech in itself is a continuous stream of complex, rapidly varying sound. However, when we listen to speech, we hear it as a sequence of discrete, meaningful words, each one made up of a sequence of 'sub-lexical' units such as syllables and phonemes (individual units of sound). These concepts also drive our pronunciation behaviour. Concepts are the ideas in our minds about what sorts of sounds can be words, and what sorts of smaller sounds words can be made up of. They form the 'pair of glasses' through which we view speech, causing us to hear speech as words, phonemes and syllables without even noticing that it is really a continuous stream of sound.

Fraser (2001) emphasized further that with the framework in place, the most important thing teachers need to know about pronunciation is that speech is not like we think it is, and this can be readily taught through demonstrations designed to undermine confidence in the reality of phonemes. It is also very useful to give some understanding of the basics of speech perception, especially the importance of suprasegmentals. It is not necessary to go into technical phonetics or rules of segment or suprasegment phonology, though, of course, this can be done later if relevant to teachers' interests. It is important that they

gain a clear and solid idea of the distinction between phonetics (the reality of speech) and phonology (how we think about speech), and of the concepts behind basic metalinguistic terms like syllable, stress, phoneme, linking and so on. This is in line with objective one which determined whether or not grade four learners in primary schools in Lusaka district could identify letters in English alphabet by their sound.

The cognitive theory can be applied in the initial teaching of literacy at lower grades. Learning to read is not a naturally –developing skill, It requires an adaptation of the brain to be able to recognise letters, sounds and words (Ministry of General Education, 2013). Learners are introduced to new ideas, vocabulary and new structures in the reading materials. For instance, naming and sounding of the alphabetical order and pronunciation of words in English Language. However, these are not totally new because the learner or reader has grammar and the language deeply established and well organised in the cognitive structures that already exist. The learner then, draws upon prior knowledge to read and organise the new knowledge to be added onto the existing knowledge. In this study cognitive learning theory provides the basis upon which learners draw on prior knowledge to read and organise the new knowledge to be added onto existing knowledge, in this case, which is naming and sounding of the alphabetical order and reading of phonic and sight words in English Language appropriately.

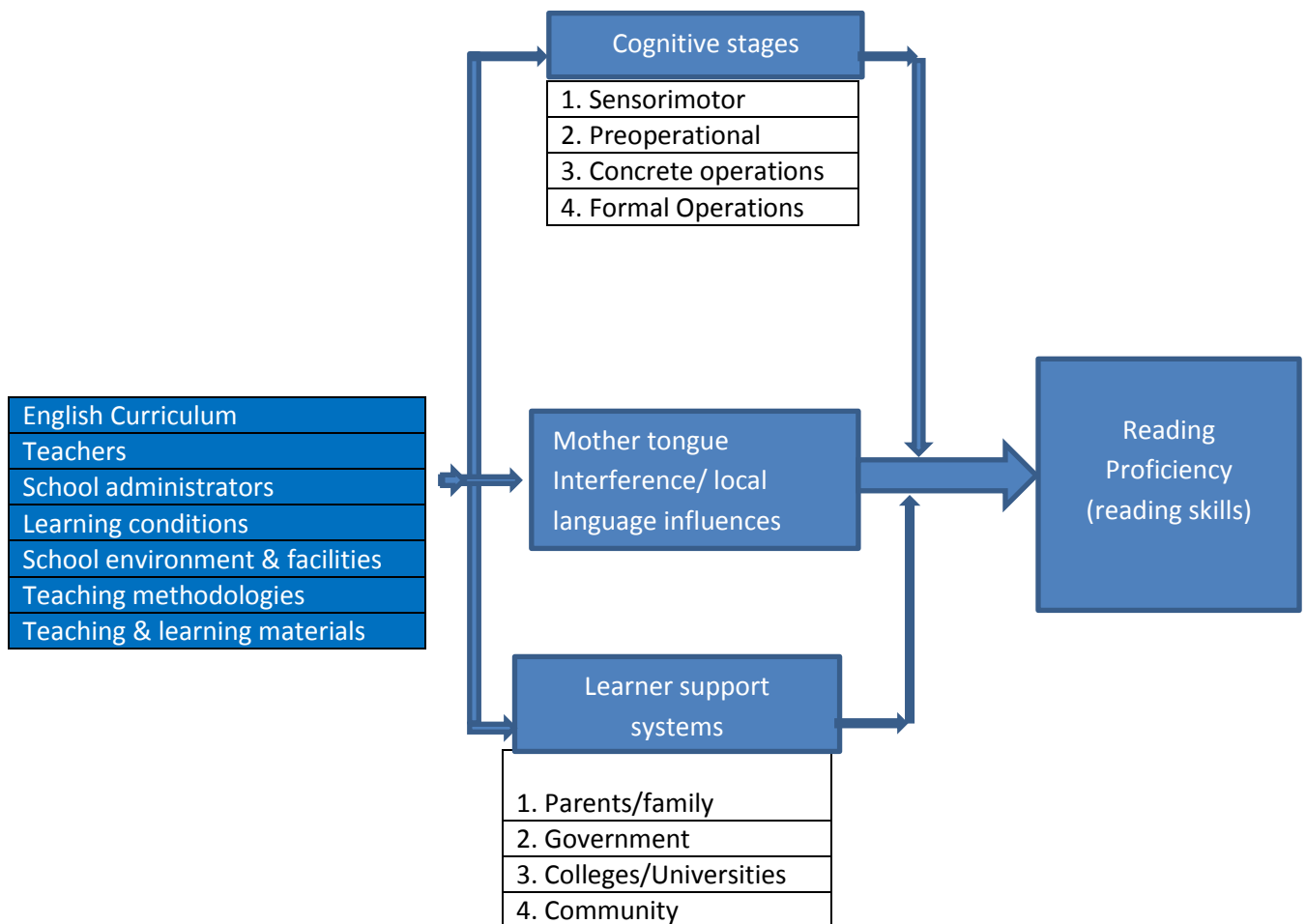
2.2 Conceptual Framework

According to Sinclair (2007) the search for theoretical understanding and its translation into meaningful practice is what is done when developing a conceptual research framework. The conceptual framework must have a clear practical outcome, if it is to be of any use and relevance. The theoretical foundation for this study is based on cognitive learning theory of Jean Piaget and some of its variables were used to develop the conceptual framework.

The conceptual framework for this study was a blend of the various variables illustrated in figure 2.1 below. The independent variables are English curriculum, teachers and school administrators, learning conditions, school environment, teaching methodologies, teaching and learning materials. The intermediate variables are cognitive stages, mother tongue interference or local language influences and learner support systems. The dependent variable is reading proficiency (reading skills).

2.2.1 Conceptual Framework model

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework depicted above shows that in order for a learner to attain reading proficiency (acquisition of reading skills) there should be in place independent variables. Namely; appropriate English curriculum, good teachers, experienced school administrators, suitable learning conditions, conducive school facilities and environment, adequate teaching and learning materials, In addition to up to date teaching methodologies. The independent variables are considered in the light of intermediate variables that play a vital role in influencing the progress that learners make in the process of acquiring reading skills. The intermediate variables include cognitive development stages (sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operation, and formal operations), mother tongue interference or local language influences, and the learner support systems comprising the family, government, colleges or universities and the community at large. The family is key because parents and guardians play an important

role in nurturing and providing social, moral and material support in bringing up the learner. The government is in-charge of all the educational systems and policies in the country. The colleges and universities are responsible for producing quality teachers, school administrators and other support personnel to ensure proper delivery of lessons, learning experiences and learning outcomes which among other things culminate in learners gaining ability to read phonic and sight words appropriately. Therefore, reading proficiency which is the dependent variable is the ultimate result achieved through a combination of independent and intermediate variables.

2.3 Component Skills of Reading

Studies as pointed out by the Public Library Association (2001) have shown that there is nearly a 90% probability that a child will remain a poor reader at the end of the fourth grade if the child is a poor reader at the end of first grade. Furthermore, it suggests that Head sprout's approach of explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, and a strategy for sounding out words can prevent many children from developing learning problems and can give almost all children an equal opportunity to become good readers. The Public Library Association (2001) identified five basic sub-skills or component skills of reading that all children must master if they are to become proficient readers. This is in line with the National Reading Panel (2000) findings which showed that the learners first language and the level of first language literacy have a role to play in relation to; learners phonemic awareness. Furthermore, it stated that all the five components (phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension) skills of reading are important and dependent on one another.

(i) Phonological awareness

Phonological awareness skills are important in order to develop good reading skills. Phonological awareness is said to be the basis for reading. Children begin to read by listening to others read aloud, then recognising sounds in words, sounding words out for themselves, recognising familiar words, and so on. By engaging in word play, children learn to recognise patterns among words and use this knowledge to read and build words. Having good phonological awareness skills means that a child is able to manipulate sounds and words or "play" with sounds and words. For example, a teacher or speech Language pathologist might ask a child to break the word 'cat' into individual sounds "C-a-t" (Ehri, 2004).

Ashmore, Farrier, Paulson, and Chu (2003) studied and tested the effectiveness of phonemic awareness drills on phonological awareness and word reading on the Chinese students in primary schools of English learning. The analysis was that explicit instruction in phonemic awareness worked well on the Chinese pupils because they were able to analyse spoken language into its component sounds (phonemes) and perform mental operations on these smaller linguistic units. Children who are taught phonemic awareness are able to understand that sounds in words can be moved, removed or replaced to make new words, sounds in words can be counted, represented with many different letters and that words have small sounds that can be pulled apart and put back together (Heilman, 2002). From the study it can be said that through phonemic awareness children perform better in their reading progress. This entails that when learners' master phonological awareness at their early grades, their reading fluency and automaticity develops, and these are important steps to reading. In that study the focus was on testing the effectiveness of phonemic awareness drill and it was not clear how learners managed to articulate sounds in English Language. However, this study tried to establish grade four learners ability in reading appropriately phonic and sight words in English Language and not the methods.

(ii) Phonics

This is the ability to associate sounds (phonemes) with letter names (graphemes) in order to use these sounds to read words. Phonics instruction is designed for beginners in the primary grades and for children having difficulty learning to read. It is important to recognise that the goals of phonics instruction are to provide children with some key knowledge and skills and to ensure that they know how to apply this knowledge in their reading and writing. In teaching phonics explicitly and systematically several different instructional approaches have been used. These include synthetic phonics, analytic phonics, embedded phonics, analogy phonics, onset-rime phonics, and phonics through spelling. Systematic phonics instruction is a way of teaching reading that stresses the acquisition of letter-sound correspondences and their use to read and spell words (Harris and Hodges, 1995). Though the focus of this study was not on different types of phonics, it is expected that at grade four level, learners would be able to associate sounds with letters names and this was one aspect the researcher tried to establish.

(iii) Fluency

Reading fluency refers to the ability to read a text accurately quickly and with expression. It is important because it provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. La Berge and Samuels (1974) proposed that learning to read involves increasing automaticity. The best way to counter the idea that reading speed is fluency and to help students develop the understanding that fluency is reading with meaningful expression and automaticity is for a teacher or parent to read to students regularly in a fluent manner and then to direct students attention to how that reading was fluent, what made it fluent. (Rasinski: et. al. 1998). Fluency is one of the ways of determining whether learners have grasped the skills of reading or not which is one of the key issues in this study.

(iv) Vocabulary

It is important for children to develop knowledge of words meanings from a young age because vocabulary development has an impact on their reading comprehension and academic success as they get older (Chall, Jacobs and Baldwin, 1990).

Hart and Risley (1995) conducted a study on young children's vocabulary development and found that when children from families with low incomes were 3 years old, they knew 600 fewer words than children of the same age from families with upper incomes. In addition Biemiller and Slonim (2001) stated that by grade 2 the gap widens to about 4000 words. The above facts heighten the need to purposefully teach vocabulary in early childhood. Because noticing words and being interested in them precedes learning and their meanings. Word consciousness is another important aspect of vocabulary development (Graves, 2004). Furthermore, reading books aloud in the classroom introduces children to new vocabulary in meaningful contexts. While the above study looked at children's vocabulary development this study tried to establish the grade four learners ability in reading appropriately phonic and sight words in English Language.

(v) Comprehension

Comprehension is another skill in reading, and knowledge of text structure is an important factor in fostering comprehension. To comprehend, learners must decode words and associate them with their meanings in memory (Kruidenier et. al... 2010). This means that phrases and sentences must be processed fluently enough so that their meanings are not lost before the next ones are processed. Furthermore, good comprehenders also use strategies that help them retain, organise, and evaluate the

information they are reading. The National Reading Panel (2000) examined the wide-ranging literature on repeated reading. A meta-analysis of fourteen studies indicated that the mean weighted effect size of comparisons of one or another of these techniques versus a no-instruction control varied depending on what type of outcome measure was examined. The National Reading Panel found that repeated reading was effective for normal readers through grade four (there was no studies of normal readers beyond grade four) and for students with reading problem throughout high school. Other studies have assessed the effect of simple practice in reading such as sustained silent reading. However, merely encouraging students to read extensively did not result in improved reading according to the findings of a meta-analysis (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Fluency, vocabulary and comprehension were not the main focus of this study. However, these were outlined in this study because they were part of the five component skills of reading. A good reader or speaker of English or Local Language is expected to produce correct forms of sound in the Languages to ensure effective communication (Tsojon et. al 2014).

2.3.1 Studies outside Africa

(i) Relationship between letters and sounds of the alphabet

Christina Reeb (2011) pointed out that Letter-sound acquisition is the foundation to the complexity of other literacy skills students will need to become proficient readers, speakers and writers. This needs to be developed at a young age and should be targeted if a child is not developing at a positive rate. In addition she stated that since letter acquisition is a valuable aspect to the rest of the literacy, it is important to find what strategies teachers should use to improve this skill for all of the students in the classroom. Her study addressed the question of how phonics strategies contribute to letter-sound acquisition knowledge through the use of three different phonics strategies. Her emphasis was that the use of Phonics strategies in support to instruction increased the students' identification knowledge of letters and sounds.

Data was collected through using three phonics strategies, letter and sound assessments, interviews, questionnaires, and observations. The findings of the study indicated that four out of the five students were able to increase their letter-sound acquisition knowledge by identifying more letters and sounds on the assessments following the initial. Therefore, she recommended that educators should use phonics strategies as a

tool to enhance their instruction since the students benefit from the extra support. In that study the focus was to find out the strategy teachers use to improve letter-sound acquisition while this study the focus was on establishment of grade four learners ability in reading phonic and sight words appropriately in English language.

An investigation by Punyapet and Laohawiriyanon (2014) on the effects of systematic remedial phonics instruction on the development of pronunciation, spelling and reading comprehension skills showed that there was a significant increase in the post test scores from (16.54% to 56.06%) level of 0.1 with large effect size (3.38). The results of the retention test taken four weeks after the post test revealed that the scores decreased to 49.11% with small affect size (0.37). The results indicated systematic remedial phonics instruction could help improve the participants' pronunciation, spelling, and reading comprehension skills. However, the participants found the target words which did not follow phonics rules problematic. The researcher recommended that students with low English proficiency requires a lot of time to practice reading with various reading activities coupled with using whole word approach.

Fox (2008) argued that English pronunciation help students improve their language skills. Learning and pronouncing new words are a way of building word banks. In addition, pronunciation helps students to read aloud fluently and clearly with confidence and result in students' understanding of what they will learn at a higher level.

From an observation during an examination, it was found that when they learnt a new or difficult word, students wrote their pronunciation in Thai next to the new words. They could read the words but very slowly and incorrectly. Some of the students could not remember and did not know all the twenty-six letters of English. Therefore, their teacher had to find a way to solve the problem in both reading and writing from the very beginning. They noted that many studies had found that Thai students had a pronunciation problem due to differences between sound system of English and Thai. Some sounds in the English Language did exist in the Thai Language such as linking sounds, ending sounds etc. As a result, some students could not pronounce words because they don't know the relationships between the alphabet and its sound when they see the alphabet, especially new words that they have never seen. They also had problems in spellings. Similarly, this study intended to establish whether or not grade

four learners could identify the relationship between the alphabet and its sound when they see the alphabet (Patchara, 2007). That study was conducted in Thailand with Thai students whereas this study was conducted in Zambia to be specific Lusaka district in selected primary schools.

Sriprasit (2009) studied a research conducted by the American National Reading Research Panel on teaching methods for reading and writing from kindergarten to grade six students and found that the most effective method for teaching pronunciation and spelling starts from phonetic awareness or sound decoding before reading words, followed by letter sound correspondence. This made reading word easier and correctly. Hence, phonics is a style of Language learning through learning the correspondence of letters and their sounds. In the above study the researcher focused on teaching methods in order to improve learners' identification knowledge of letters and sounds for the purposes of reading and writing. In this study the focus was not necessarily on teaching methods and writing from kindergarten to grade six but the establishment of the ability of grade four learners in reading phonic and sight words appropriately in English Language.

(ii) Reading phonetic words

In Indonesia a research was conducted on Java students at the state college for Islamic studies (STAIN). M. ArifRahmanHakin (2011). Its objective was to analyse how to pronounce phonetics b, d, g, j, dʒ, and schwa into English pronunciation for Java students in English study program. The data were collected by using a record player and then to analyse how strong the influence of that phonetics when they pronounce it. To avoid subjectively, this research was helped by a native speaker from the United States of America. The result of this research was as follows: |b|: 26, 67%, |d|: 80% |g|: 16, 67% |dʒ|: 13, 34%, |schwa|: 83, 34% From the percentage above, the researcher concluded that from six phonetics that were researched, there were two phonetics that are difficult to be lost by Java students, such as:|d| and | schwa |. The researcher stated that, to minimize it, students can memorize the English songs or imitate English conversations in English movies in order that, they must accustom to listen and speak English well. The objectives and methodology used in the above study were different from the ones used in this study.

Similarly, Geylanioglu and Dikilitas (2012) stated that pronunciation of certain English words by Turkish English Learners is a challenging task. The difficulty posed by pronunciation is closely related to little exposure to interaction with native speakers,

distinctive phonological system of first Language (L1) as in Turkish, a shallow orthographic language. In their study they claimed that most of the pronunciation problems stem not from physical articulatory but from cognitive causes. In other words, the problem is not that the person cannot physically make the individual sounds, but that they do not conceptualise the sounds appropriately or discriminate them, organise them in their minds and manipulate them as required for the sound system of English, Fraser (2001).

The study attempted to examine cited sounds such as Schwa (ə), voiced and voiceless Th (|schwa| - and ng |g| sound. The data were collected from 24 adult learning English as their second Language. Each student was given 10 words from Schwa, th and ng sounds respectively. Their pronunciations were recorded and transcribed through IPA alphabet and compared with the phonetic transcription in Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary 3rd Edition. It was found that Turkish Foreign Language learners of English have serious difficulties in pronouncing Schwa, Th and ng sounds. The researcher suggested that, in order to facilitate the pronunciation of these sounds, the students could be trained through conceptualisation methodology, which helps learners to form an idea or principle about what is to be learnt. In that study, the focus was only on few selected letters of the alphabet, this study moved a step further by considering sixteen letters of the alphabet.

Tergujeff (2012) reported in her study that the teachers offered pronunciation teaching very different from each other, but in general the pronunciation teaching was found to be pragmatic and teacher –led, and traditional teaching methods were used. She observed how English pronunciation teaching practices are like in Finish schools from the primary to upper secondary level, in particular which methods are used and which items are emphasised. Four English Foreign Language teachers were each observed for six to nine lessons within a period of one week. A pre-prepared form was used as a tool, and then developed into a categorization of a teaching methods used by the observed teachers.

Furthermore, she stated that at a segmental level, a strong emphasis was placed on phonemes that have typically been found to be difficult for L1 Finish-speaking learners. Despite the emphasis on suprasegmentals in pronunciation teaching literature, explicit teaching of suprasegmental features of speech was neglected by the observed teachers. A study of factors affecting English Foreign Language learners in English pronunciation learning and the strategies for instructions by Gilakjani (2012) indicates that intelligible

pronunciation is seen as an essential component of communicative competence. Furthermore, the researcher stated that the teacher must then set obtainable aims that are applicable and suitable for the communication needs for the learner. The learner must also become part of the learning process, actively involved in their own learning.

The content of the course should be integrated into the communication class, with the content emphasising the teaching of suprasegmentals, linking pronunciation with listening comprehension, and allowing for meaningful pronunciation practice. With the teacher acting as a “speech coach”, rather than as a mere checker of pronunciation, the feedback given to the student can encourage learners to improve their pronunciation. If these criteria are met, all learners, within their learner unique aims, can be expected to do well learning the pronunciation of a foreign language. While Tergujeff (2012) and Gilakjani (2012) emphasised on suprasegmentals in pronunciation teaching, the emphasis for this study was on segmental levels of reading and pronunciation of phonic and sight words.

Thatcher (1998) in her study pointed out how phonic awareness and direct phonics instruction could affect the decoding abilities of children with reading problems. She demonstrated that phonemic awareness intervention programmes were very effective in increasing reading skills. The researcher implied that an effective reading programme for young children with reading problems should include both phonological training and phonics instruction. In this study, groups of children instructed in a phonics programme called Project Read were compared to another group instructed in both project read and phonemic awareness. The results showed substantial gains for all the groups in decoding skills. However, the group with both interventions (project read and phonemic awareness) did not show any higher substantial gains than the other groups.

In a related study, Catts (1993) examined the relationship between oral language impairment and reading disabilities. His prediction was that standardised and non-standardised language measures given in kindergarten would be related to reading achievement in first and second grade and that there would be a strong relationship between phonological awareness and word recognition. Fifty six children with speech-language impairments and thirty children with normal speech-language abilities were the subjects in the study. In the investigation, all the children were given a battery of standardised speech-language tests which indicated that forty one of these subjects had language impairments while the other fifteen displayed articulation problems.

In addition to the standardised test of receptive language expressive language, articulation, and non-verbal abilities all the children were given a set of non-standardised language task which involved two measures of phonological awareness and three measures of rapid automatised naming. Reading achievement was assessed by using the word identification and word attack subtests from the word cock reading mastery test-revised. The two subjects were administered to all the subjects in the spring of first and second grade. The results indicated that the speech and language impaired group demonstrated lower reading achievement scores than the normal group in first and second grades.

Correlational analysis showed no significant relationship between first grade reading achievement and articulation or between first grade reading and non-verbal abilities. All in all the results indicated that certain speech-language abilities are related to reading achievement and others are not. Articulation ability seemed to be unrelated to reading achievement. On the other hand, semantic-syntactic language seemed to be related to reading comprehension while phonological awareness and rapid automatised naming proved to be the best predictor of word recognition abilities. The focus of this study was on letter identification and sound pronunciation and not word identification as the above studies stated.

Varasarin (2007) in his research expressed that there are many English training courses teaching speaking but they do not focus on pronunciation. As English teaching has moved to language functions and communicative competences, a new urgency for the teaching of pronunciation has arisen (Celce-Murcia, 1987; Morley, 1994; Gilbert, 1994). He stated that Thailand in terms of pronunciation has not yet received similar attention. According to his experience, a great number of students have many difficulties in pronunciation. When speaking English, with every little or poorly trained pronunciation skills, they have problems either making themselves understood or understanding others. This was an issue this study intended to establish whether grade four learners in selected primary Schools of Lusaka were able to read appropriately phonic and sight words in English Language. The above researcher conducted his research in Thailand while this study was conducted in Zambia.

(iii) Reading of Sight Words

According to August and Associates (2003), Oral English Language proficiency plays a role in children's ability to read in English. Research by Hakuta, Butler and Witt (2000)

indicates that even in districts considered the most successful in teaching English to English Language learners, Oral English proficiency takes three to five years to develop and academic English proficiency can take four to seven years. The researcher indicates that children who acquire literacy skills in a first Language transfer those skills to their second Language (Fitzgerald, 1995; Garcia, 1998; Collier and Thomas, 1989) reported that children who had attended school and learned basic literacy skills in a native language before immigrating to the United States achieved academic parity with peers as soon as they had acquired proficiency in English in U.S. schools. In contrast, younger children showed long-lasting negative effects an academic achievement associated with initial literacy instruction in English (Collier and Thomas, 1989). In those studies the focus was on the transfer of literacy skills from first language to the second language while the focus of this study was not necessarily on the transfer of acquired literacy skills in first language to second language but to establish the ability of grade four learners to read phonic and sight words appropriately in English Language.

Suggestion by Chall (1996) indicated that from birth to around age eight, Oral Language Proficiency precedes reading development, and afterwards, as the Language in reading materials becomes more advanced than the child's Oral Language Proficiency (OLP), reading contributes to its development. When children begin reading in their first Language (L1), the text they are reading is considerably below their level of oral language proficiency, their focus is on learning the print-sound code. In second and third grades, children read material that requires more advanced texts which include unfamiliar vocabulary, more complex syntactic structures, and new information. This begins to contribute to oral Language proficiency (Chall, 1989, Jacobs and Baldwin, 1991).

Bender and Larkin (2003) pointed out that when high-quality phonetic approaches do not work; research suggests that a whole-word, visual discrimination approach using repetition and review may be the most effective way to teach reading. Some children may require additional instruction that is not tied directly to letter-sound manipulation or phonics. In fact, for some students, the most effective reading instructional tactic may be based on techniques that are not exclusively dependent on the alphabetic principle, but rather involve rote memory of whole words coupled with context clues in order to determine the meaning of new words.

These non-alphabetic-principles techniques, taken together, may be thought of as sight-word instruction. Studies suggest that teaching students to automatically recognise words on sight can greatly improve fluency, and thus comprehension of text. For instance,

Perfetti and Hogoboom (1975) found that students who comprehend well are more rapid at oral word decoding than students who are less skilled at comprehending. In addition, Hargis and Gickling (1978) found that high-imagery words are more readily learned and stored in long-term memory. They suggested that low-imagery words need greater repetition or exposure than high-imagery words. Further, presenting these low-imagery words in phrases or sentences may be necessary to cement the words in memory. Similarly, this study tried to establish the ability of grade four learners in reading appropriately phonic and sight words. The objectives were different from the above study.

Juel's seminal research (1988; 1994) revealed that poor readers in fourth grade had entered first grade with limited phonological awareness and that this skill gap contributed to their slowness in Learning letter-sound correspondences and decoding. Torgesen & Mathes (2000) confirmed these findings when they tested children on the growth of their sight words (word identification) and word attack (phonemic decoding) skills. When they compared those children who began first grade with average phonological awareness skills to those who began first grade below that threshold, they found that those with higher phonemic awareness in first grade tested higher for sight words and word attack skills in every grade.

The achievement gap in the scores between these two groups of children grew considerably. Larger starting in third grade and continued to grow dramatically in fourth and fifth grades.

They concluded that those children with sufficient phonemic awareness had a better understanding of "how words work," and were therefore able to identify and read words by sounding them out. Those students who did not possess sufficient phonemic awareness skills had to rely on memorising words by sight. As these children entered second grade, the texts they read grew less patterned and predictable and as a result their reading skills began to suffer. These results show that the deficit of phonemic awareness persists over time and if it is not rectified, it would continue to affect reading performance in middle and high School (Fawcett & Nicolson, 1994) and into adulthood (Pennington et al., 1986). This study did not test the phonemic awareness for the first grade learners instead it tried to establish the ability of grade four learners in reading appropriately phonic and sight words in English language.

Heather Williamson (2003) observed that reading is the key to learning in all subjects. Students must be able to read and understand what they are reading in order to survive in

the world of education. Many students today are struggling readers. His study focused on teaching sight words to struggling readers in order to help them become more fluent readers. The focus was on the connection between students' knowledge of sight words and its effect on reading fluency. The study was conducted in a small rural elementary school with a high, low-socioeconomic population. The subjects consisted of 14 English language learners between the ages of 8 and 9, all with Spanish speaking backgrounds and all in the third grade. Data was collected and analysed using an action research method. When averaged, the data shows that each student learned an average of 20 new sight words by the end of the sight word training. The largest amount of sight words gained by one student was 93, while one student scored one less on the posttest.

In conclusion, the findings indicate that there is a connection between sight word knowledge and reading fluency. Findings also led the researcher as a teacher to feel and see the difference in the impact of learning sight words through context rather than isolation drills. The conclusive findings were that sight word automaticity was directly related to greater reading fluency. Unlike that study, the focus in this study was not on teaching sight words but reading of phonic and sight words in English language by Grade four learners appropriately.

2.3.2 Studies within Africa

Olufin et.al (2013) attempted to examine the confusion created by lack of agreement between the sounds and letters of English language. Their aim was to see how far these irregularities have affected the linguistic knowledge of the learners. They tried to do this by observing the effect of certain linguistic concepts that can lead to communicative conflicts and can as well cause homonymic discrepancies on 50 HND 1 students of the Business Administration and Management Department from the Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti. Their analysis showed that there were irregularities between the sounds and the letters of English Language and that these irregularities constitute a hindrance to effective communication.

In addition, the study indicated that where the subjects recorded the worst performance show no relationship between the words and their pronunciations and further, it collaborates their claim that lack of correlations between the sound and letters of the English Language do not allow for a smooth representation of what we say in its written form. The overall performance which showed 199 for the spoken and 212 for the written,

appears to suggest that the respondents were clearly at ease and better in the written form of communication than the spoken form.

The study concluded that, speaking and writing are different things and also require two different skills. The knowledge of vocabulary is key to reading comprehension and the more a learner knows, the better he or she will understand a text. Finally, the paper recommends the use of a variety of effective methods, capable of increasing the learners' ability to learn new words, in the teaching of vocabulary. The provision of books on narrative and expository texts with tapes on one side of the classroom can also help to build the learners' vocabularies. By hearing and seeing the words in context at the same time, learners do not only pick up the meanings, they also gain prosody and oral fluency. Whilst their study attempted to examine the confusion created by lack of agreement between the sounds and letters of English language, one of the objectives in this study was to determine whether or not grade four learners in primary schools in Lusaka district could identify letters in English alphabet by their sounds and not the confusion between letters and sounds.

Phajane (2014) said that it is important to recognise that the goals of phonics approaches are to provide children with key knowledge and skills and to ensure that they know how to apply that knowledge in their reading and writing. Her paper focused on the teaching of the beginning reading Sepedi in the Grade one classrooms using the phonics approach. In addition, she stated that the report by the National Reading Panel (2000) stressed that phonics instructions is an effective approach of teaching reading for children from Kindergarten through 6th grade, and for all children who are having difficulty in learning to read. Among other results, the report includes the finding that phonics instruction improves children's ability to identify words.

Furthermore, it reports that useful phonics strategies include teaching children the sounds of letters in isolation and in words, and teaching them to blend the sounds of letters together to produce approximate pronunciations of words. It also states that phonics instruction should occur in conjunction with opportunities to identify words in meaningful sentences and stories (Gray McCutchen, 2006 Muringi, Mukuthuria and Gatavi, 2011). In the above study teaching beginning reading Sepedi was the main focus while this study concentrated on the ability of grade four learners in reading phonic and sight words appropriately in English language.

Brady, Fowler and Winbury (1994) conducted a study on urban children aged four and five years. Their findings were that fewer than half could generate rhymes and none

could segment simple words into phonemes or read any words, children who received training in rhyme and segmentation could generate rhymes and segment phonemes at the end of an 18-hour training period, thus demonstrating that these skills can be taught to Kindergarten students in a relatively short period of time when presented systematically.

The Levin Committee (2000) investigated methods for fostering oral and written Language skills in preschool and Kindergarten age children, while the Shimron Committee (2002) examined ways to reform reading instruction in the primary grades. Both committees reported that phonetic awareness and alphabet recognition were key components in literacy acquisition and specifically recommended instruction in both, which was one of the key issues in this study. This study focused on grade four learners which the Levin Committee could not investigate, their focus was on preschool and kindergarten age children.

An investigation by Tsojon and Aji (2014) on pronunciation problems among Jukun (Wapan) speakers of English revealed that pronunciation problems among the people are due to some extent at least, to mother-tongue influence. Data were collected through participation observation of utterances of one hundred native speakers who are considered as educated with relative degree of communicative competence in English. They were also asked to read a list of English words in order to determine their levels of proficiencies in pronunciation. They suggested that Wapan speakers of English need to find out how English speech sounds are articulated by listening to good speakers and articulating them as much as possible. This will enable them to attain a level of oral proficiency that would be easily understood by speakers of English which is spoken across international boundaries. The above study does not state whether the respondents were able or unable to identify and sound some or all the twenty six letters of the alphabet, which this study attempted to answer.

Shelley O Carroll (2006) reported that assessments conducted with a sample of children from two disadvantaged communities in Cape town indicated that in this context, almost half of the learners entering grade one were unable to recognize any letters. In another study with grade one children, O'Carroll (2006) found that a short term intervention that included teaching of letter-sound knowledge, phonological awareness, reading and writing was effective in improving the word-reading and spelling of children relative to a control group of children who started school at a similar level but had no intervention. The children were learning to read and write in English as a second Language. According to the researcher it is clear that interventions in low socio-economic contexts

can make a difference to children's letter knowledge, and this has an impact on levels of early word reading and spelling. The researcher in the above study conducted her research in Cape Town with a sample of children from two disadvantaged communities while the respondents for this study were learners, teachers and administrators selected from Lusaka district.

Dave Owolabi (2014) examined Yoruba speakers of English as a second language to discover their recognition of some vowels and their production as a result of the inconsistencies between spelling and sounds in the English Language as opposed to what are obtainable in the Yoruba Language. Forty respondents, randomly selected, from a class of fifty seven students on a sandwich program, were used for their study. Each of the forty students was made to read a specially prepared passage laced with specific words to discover how they pronounce some vowel sounds in different word environments in the English Language.

The results show that the subjects, who are teacher trainees and expected to be models could not pronounce some of the sounds correctly, especially some words containing the letter (i) in words like 'hide' 'ride' and 'rid', in the words like 'Kite' and 'Kit' and in the words 'bite' and 'bit'. The same problem was also noticed in the 'O' letter in 'woman' and 'women'. The study concludes that because there is no one to one correspondence between letters and sounds in English as it is the case in the Yoruba Language, there is a problem of production of some vowel sounds in English by Yoruba Speakers of English as a second language. This is as a result of transfer of their native Language pronunciation in Yoruba to the English Language in some words, thus leading to inappropriate pronunciation. In the above study it is not clear whether respondents were able to recognise all the letters in the alphabet, which was one of the key issues this study intended to establish which picked sixteen letters from the alphabet.

2.3.3 Studies within Zambia

Mubanga (2010) in his study on nature and prevalence of reading and writing difficulties in English language in grade two, noted some difficulties in letter-identification from Mbala basic school among grade two learners. He further stated that learners had difficulties in differentiating letters such as 'b' and 'd', 'p' and 'q', 'e' and the digit '6'. On the other hand Swanepoel van de (2009) cited in Mubanga (2010) noted that when a phonological awareness deficiency is identified as a major contributor to a child's reading and spelling difficulties, it is, in a way, a relief because it is a trainable system that can be taught and practiced, especially in the early stages of reading

development. Training undoubtedly improves reading and spelling systems. The above study and this study looked at reading in English language among learners in early grades, although the language policies were different at the time the above research was conducted, and also the objectives were different from what this study fulfilled.

According to Ojanen (2007) the issue about pronunciation is important for it helps the child to remember the letter-phoneme connections better that is why pronunciation of phonemes is also an element of classroom teaching methods in Finland (Lerkkanen, 2000, Sarmavuori, 2003 cited in Ojanen, 2007). The objective of her study was to explore the possibility of transferring a Finish literacy teaching method to Zambia. The idea was based on the apparent similarity of Finish language and Zambia Native languages. It was also hoped that the study would bring new information about the underlying reason for the low literacy levels in Zambia, except that the objectives from the above study was different from the ones used in this study.

Mulenga (2012) conducted a research to assess grade three learners preparedness for the Read on course (ROC) under the primary Reading Programme (PRP) in reading and writing in Bemba as a first Language. The study showed that most learners faced a number of difficulties in reading and writing in Grade three when Bemba and English began to move simultaneously. Most learners in Grade three were not able to read and write at the desirable level including some that had supposedly broken through by the end of Grade two. The study also revealed that the learners faced difficulties in spelling English and Bemba words especially when words were raised from simple one-syllable to three-syllable words. Learners could not write simple sentences that were deemed to be at their grade level.

In his study Mulenga (2012) indicated that the majority, 25 out of the 30 respondents that were unable to read the words given were those whose performance in the alphabetic knowledge was also poor. Reading in English can thus equally be tied back to the pupils' ability to name and recognise the letters of the alphabet. These results are similar to those shown by Matafwali (2005) and Mubanga (2010) who both indicated that one of the contributing factors to poor reading is lack of proper alphabetic knowledge in English. While Mulenga (2012), Matafwali (2005) and Mubanga (2010) indicated in their studies that one of the contributing factors to poor reading is lack of proper alphabetic knowledge in English, their studies drew their conclusions regarding the schools they researched from which were different from the ones used in this study. This study

endeavored to establish the ability of the grade four learners in reading phonic and sight words appropriately in English Language.

Mwambazi (2011) sought to explore the causes and the nature of the low reading achievement among grade two pupils and confirmed that grade two pupils were not reading according to their grade level. Few learners can identify letters (initial and ending sounds.) In addition, Mwanamukubi Linda (2013) cited in Mando (2008) indicates that reading failure is mainly caused by failure to acquire phonological awareness and skills in alphabetic coding. On the other hand Kabali (2014) analyses factors that influence acquisition of reading skills (orthographic awareness and decoding) in the home environment. Her study revealed that reading materials predicted orthographic awareness and not decoding. In addition, the study showed that children's home environments were experienced differently and significantly impacted children's reading skills. This study moved a step further by looking at pronunciation of sight and phonic words which were not highlighted in the above studies.

An enquiry into the attribution of phonetic skills as an enabler of initial written and oral communication proficiency among Grade one and two learners by Chilufya (2014) indicated that there was progressive low reading levels among learners from grade one to twelve. Furthermore, the study revealed that the causal factors include a correlation of progressive low awareness levels of the imperativeness of phonetic skills in reading and writing among learners, a lack of systematic phonetic message design and transmission among educators and inadequate duration of phonetic skills communication to the learners. While this study was an enquiry into the attribution of phonetic skills as an enabler of initial written and oral communication proficiency among grade one and two learners, it did not discuss the reading of phonic and sight words appropriately among learners. Hence, this study endeavoured to establish the ability of the grade four learners in reading phonic and sight words appropriately in English Language.

In another study Mulikelela (2013) research findings showed that some grade two learners experienced challenges during the transition between language of initial literacy (Nyanja) and the second language of literacy (English). Furthermore, he argued that these were in terms of getting used to learning in a local language, pronouncing English words in Chinyanja, inability to read some of the English words in the SITE course because of failure by teachers to complete teaching the Chinyanja phonic sounds stipulated in Teachers' Guide. However, he recommended that Grade two teachers should be putting effort to help pupils who have been noted to have problems related to

pronouncing and spelling English words in Chinyanja or vice versa through emphasis on correct pronunciation of the noted words and exposing them to more supplementary story books to help them be familiar with the written word and eventually spell the words correctly. While Mulikelela (2013) addressed the inability of pronouncing English words in Chinyanja and reading some of the English words, his study did not examine how second graders learners read and pronounce phonic and sight words in English which was the main objective of this study.

2.3.4 Summary

In this chapter the cognitive learning theory has been discussed, and also many areas pertaining reading and pronunciation of words in English Language for beginners are covered. Studies reviewed showed that phonemic awareness, alphabet recognition and phonetic sounds are among the first fundamental skills that all children need to master for successful reading as they progress through school. In general the research had been guided concerning the study on establishing the ability of the Grade four learners in reading phonic and sight words appropriately in English Language.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The aim of this chapter was to describe the research methods that were employed in the study and explain why these methods were considered appropriate. The components to be explained included research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, research instruments and data collection methods, data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design and used the qualitative approach of data collection. Though the study used qualitative approach, some quantitative techniques were borrowed. Kothari (2012) stated that descriptive research design involves those studies which are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or of a group. He further added that studies concerned with specific predications, with narration of facts and characteristics concerning individual, group or situation are all examples of descriptive research studies. The descriptive design was appropriate for this study because the researcher interacted with the respondents in their natural environment, so that the characteristics of the respondents are described.

By definition, qualitative approach is an investigation that involves studying people's experiences as they occur in their expected situations, the meaning that they attach to the experiences, and the multiple contexts within which these experiences occur Chilisa and Preece (2005). On the other hand, Borg and Gall (1989:386) explain that:

In a qualitative inquiry, the investigator starts with a very tentative design and develops the design as the inquiry progresses. This permits adopting the design to include variables that were not anticipated prior to the start of the empirical research. The rationale for an emergent design was that it was impossible for enough to be known ahead of time to develop an adequate research design.

For this reason, the study used the qualitative methods to collect data from the respondents to the set research questions of the study. Using the descriptive study design, the researcher interacted with the participants in their natural environment for thirty days so as to fully understand the grade four learner's ability in reading phonic and sight words in English language appropriately in the primary schools of Lusaka district.

3.2 Population.

A target population is a group of elements or courses, whether individuals, objects or events that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:169). In this study the target population was all the grade four learners, teachers and School administrators of primary schools in Lusaka district. Grade four learners were picked because they were the first group to learn in a familiar Language of instruction (local Language). According to the National Literacy Framework (2013) strategy toward a Language policy indicates that in order to support early Literacy and later, English literacy instructions, Ministry of Education Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE) in Zambia introduced instruction in a local Language so as to build a learners arsenal for learning to read in additional Languages as well as general learning. It was expected that by the time learners reached grade four, they would be able to exhibit competences in demonstrating basic skills and knowledge to retell a read story, punctuate simple sentences and short paragraphs, and describe various activities, objects, places, actions and simple processes.

3.3 Sample

The term, 'sample size' is defined as the number of participants selected from the universal to constitute a desired sample of the study (White, 2003). The sample for the study was one hundred (100) learners, twenty (20) teachers and five (5) administrators drawn from five primary schools in Lusaka district. The total number of respondents was one hundred and twenty five (125) from the five schools.

3.4 Sampling procedure

There were ninety five primary schools in Lusaka district. The schools were picked from the already established zones. These zones were formed for administrative purposes. There were eight zones in Lusaka district. Namely; Lusaka Central, Kaunda Square, Chilenje, Mumuni, Chibolya, Lilanda, Matero, and Emmasdale Zones. The five zones selected were Lusaka central, Chibolya, Matero, Mumuni and Emmasdale. In order to come up with the right sample, convenience sampling was used to select twenty grade four learners from each of the sampled primary schools. Purposive sampling was used to select teachers and administrators.

3.4.1 Convenience sampling

Convenience sampling is a technique that gives a sample of individuals that are readily available (Ethridge, 2004). The schools were clustered into eight zones. The zones included: Matero, Lilanda, Emmasdale, Kaunda square, Chilenje, Central, Chibolya and Mumuni. Zones have a range of nine to seventeen both primary and secondary schools, and are based on geographical demarcations for ease administration. For the pilot study, one zone was conveniently selected from the eight zones leaving out seven zones. It was from the remaining seven zones that five zones were conveniently selected for this study. Thereafter, five primary schools were conveniently selected from the five selected zones.

In this study convenience sampling procedure was employed in selecting one primary school from each of the zones. This method has no complexities involved. Based on this definition, the researcher chose convenience technique as it allowed her to bring to the fore a relatively small, clearly defined population used in the study. Numbers were assigned to the sampling frame of each of the primary schools of the five school zones and then conducted a raffle to select one school from each zone. The selected number of schools from all the zones were five namely; Lotus, Jacaranda, Muleya, Mambilima and Chibolya. In addition the convenience sampling was also used to select twenty grade four learners from each of the sampled primary schools.

All the sampled schools had four grade four classes. The procedure to pick grade four learners from different schools was as follows; small papers were cut and folded properly according to the number of learners at each of the five schools. Then out of the number of papers cut, only twenty were marked with the symbol “L”. Learners both girls and boys were asked to pick one paper from the box one at a time. Then they were asked to unfold the papers. Those who picked papers marked with ‘L’ were selected for the study.

Twenty learners were selected from the four classes from each of the five sampled schools.

3.4.2 Purposive sampling

At the same five sampled schools, purposive sampling procedure was used to select teachers who taught grade four learners and school administrators. Purposive sampling was used because this type of method allows the research to select respondents who provide the richest information for in-depth analysis related to the central issue being studied (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). By purposive sampling Saunders (2003) intimated that a non- probability sampling technique is one in which the researcher's judgment is used to choose some appropriate characteristics required of the sample members. Senior teachers and the deputy head teachers of each school were purposively sampled because they were the key informants in the study since the former supervised the teachers directly while the later oversaw the teaching and learning in general. Four teachers and one administrator were purposively picked from each of the five sampled schools. Therefore, the total number of teachers and administrators from the five schools sampled were twenty teachers and five administrators.

3.5 Instruments of Data Collection

Data collection is the process of finding information for the research problems. It may involve administering a questionnaire, conducting an interview or observing what is occurring among the subjects of study (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The main research instruments used in the study were observation using check list as a guide, focus group discussions and semi- structure interview guides. The instruments were developed by the researcher for the purposes of the study. Data collection was done between 20th January and 22nd February 2017.

3.5.1 Focus group discussion

Focus group discussion involves a number of participants more than one and not more than ten in a group. This involves a discussion often with the researcher as a facilitator whose goal is to keep the group discussion directed on specific topics (Gass and Mackey, 2005). It is the fastest way of collecting data as it involves a good number of people with divergent views. The study employed focus group discussions with the grade four learners so that different views regarding the learner's ability in reading phonic and sight words in English were investigated thoroughly. The discussion consisted of 10 participants per group. There were a total of 10 focus group discussions with grade four

learners from all the five schools where the study was conducted. Each school had 2 groups comprising of 10 members. For focus group discussion learners were purposively chosen to take part in the focus group discussion because they were already picked through convenience sampling for the main study, so the researcher divided the twenty learners from each sampled school and divided into two groups hence, the two groups comprised of ten learners from each school.

3.5.2 Class observation

An observation check list was used as a guide. The reading tests were given to one hundred grade four learners in the sampled five primary schools. The data was collected as follows; firstly, learners were called one by one to identify, name and sound the sixteen letters of the alphabet which the researcher picked from the twenty six letters of the alphabet. Then the number of correct responses was recorded for each learner. Secondly, learners were asked to read ten words formed from the sixteen letters selected. Their performance was recorded for each learner. This aspect measured learners ability to identify, pronounce and read the given letters and words. Thirdly, a reading test was administered on learners. They were asked to read ten phonic words. Similarly, the number of correct responses was recorded for each learner. And finally a reading test was administered. This time the researchers' attention was on the way learners read the selected ten sight words from the passage. One mark was given for each selected sight word a learner read correctly.

The reading tests were administered to grade four learners to measure the ability of reading phonic and sight words in English Language. The researcher choose this technique because it was likely to yield a great deal of information about the ability of reading phonic and sight words in English Language by grade four learners.

Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) contended that in research, observation entails that the researchers observe subjects as they go about in their daily activities and record what they do. Similarly, in this study, the researcher focused on the four main aspects which could have a bearing on grade four learner-achievements in reading phonic and sight words. These were: naming and sounding of the sixteen letters picked for the study, reading and pronunciation of the ten words created from the sixteen letters, reading and pronunciation of ten phonic words and reading and pronunciation of ten sight words selected from the passage. The researcher recorded the responses according to the learner's ability to pronounce and read English sight and phonic words. The researcher

had a checklist where items of interest were recorded and ticked according to the content. Reading abilities were described according to the different factors which might have influenced the learner's performance while their pronunciation was described according to the different interferences observed.

3.5.3 Interview guides

The researcher conducted face to face (one to one) in-depth interviews using a semi-structured interview guide with all the 20 teachers. Other interview guides were used to collect information from school administrators who comprised of Head teachers; Deputy Head teachers and senior teachers. Chilisa and Preece (2005) defined an interview as conversation or interaction between the researcher and research respondents. To conduct the interview a set of semi-structured interview guide was used. The interviewer does not address each topic in a particular order; instead he or she creates questions based on the progress of the interview, thereby allowing for a fluid conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee. Teachers and administrators were asked to give their opinion regarding learners' ability to identify the letters of the English alphabet by their sounds, and also reading and pronunciation of phonic and sight words appropriately.

With permission from the respondents, the conversations were either recorded and were also written down as the interview was in progress. The researcher ensured that respondents understood the questions and were allowed to ask questions for explanation concerning some of the answers. This enabled the researcher to collect comprehensive, systematic and in-depth information on reading phonic and sight words by grade four learners in the primary schools of Lusaka district.

3.6 Data collection procedure

The researcher sought permission from the District Education Board Secretary to access the sampled schools. The researcher then sought permission from the School Head teachers of the concerned schools and started by conducting interviews with administrators and teachers. After that, focus group discussions were held with learners and lastly, a class observation was conducted in every school.

3.7 Data analysis

Data analysis is categorising, summarising and ordering the data and describing them in meaningful terms. A number of analysis methods are employed. However, the type of analysis method used depends on the research design and the method by which data were collected and measured (Moore and McCabe, 1989).

Qualitative data was analysed thematically. Thematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living or behaviors of emerging from respondents and participants (Morton, 1975; 335). The data collected was coded based on the themes that emerged. Themes become the categories for analysis (Saldana, 2009). A cross case analysis was conducted using all themes. Themes are patterns across data sets that are important to the description of a phenomenon and are associated with a specific research question. Themes Salient across all cases were kept as well as those that were extremely different. Merging findings procedure was employed by the researcher to make generalisations about the cases.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The study took into consideration the following possible ethical issues. The researcher sought and obtained permission from the District Education Board Secretary, the Head teachers and teachers and to allow the conducting of the study. The researcher explained to learners the intention of sourcing information from them concerning what they had learnt in English from grade one to January, 2017. The researcher was granted that opportunity. The respondents were informed that no form of reward was going to be given after the study has been conducted. The respondents were not at any given moment coerced, or subjected to undue influence and no financial inducement such as tips was involved in soliciting responses from them. Information was voluntarily and freely given by participants. Anonymity was accorded to participants because the interest of the study was on the information that was given and not their names or personal details. Administrators, teachers and learners were assured that the information they gave would be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Therefore, no name of the respondents appeared in the findings or any part of the dissertation.

3.9 Summary

The chapter has outlined the methodology that was used to collect and analyse data in the study. The population, sample and research instruments were outlined to show how the research questions would be responded to. A descriptive research design was adopted in order to allow the researcher gain an understanding of the grade four learners' ability in reading phonic and sight words in English Language. Qualitative techniques in data collection were employed in order to enhance triangulation. Data was collected using focus group discussion, semi-structure interview guides and observation using an

observation checklist as a guide. A sample of one hundred and twenty five respondents was preferred which was drawn from the universal population. Finally, Data analysis procedures were also highlighted.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter the presentation of research findings were given. This study was a qualitative study. Therefore, the findings were presented according to the emerging themes in relation to the research questions. However, it will be noticed that some quantitative techniques were borrowed to present the findings. The study had three questions as follows:

1. What is the grade four learners' ability to identify the English alphabet by their sounds in the primary schools of Lusaka?
2. What is the ability of grade four learners in reading and pronunciation of sight words in English Language in primary schools of Lusaka district?
3. What challenges, if any, are teachers facing in teaching reading phonic and sight words in the primary schools of Lusaka district?

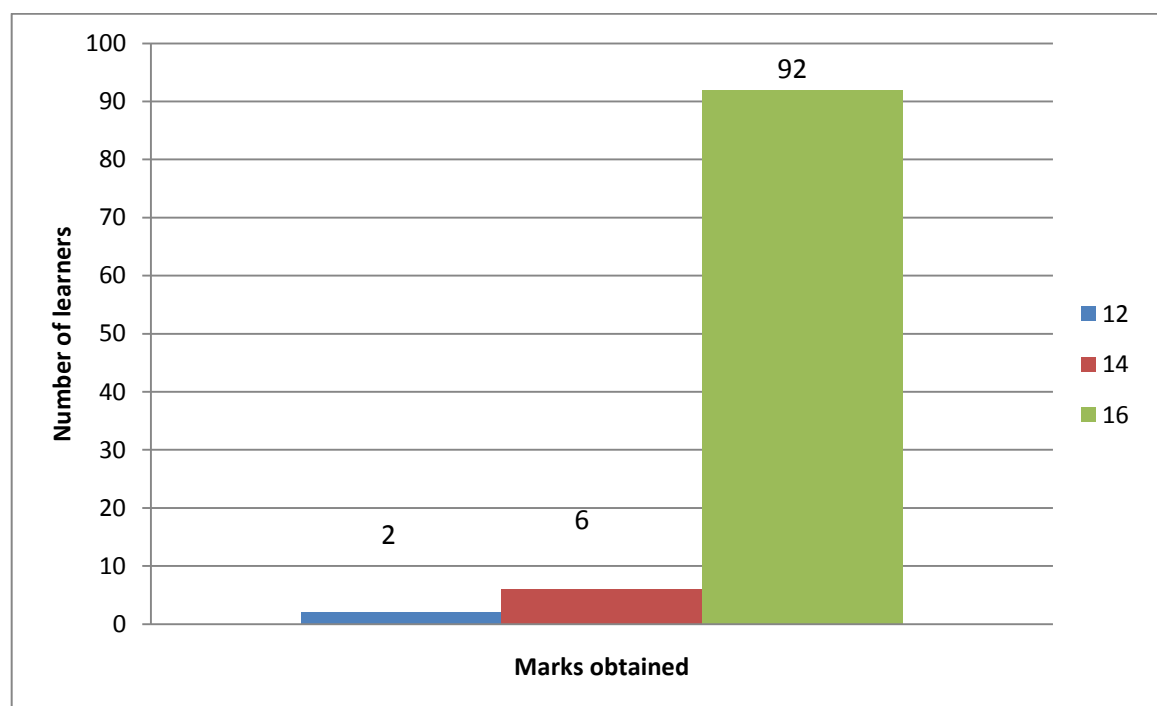
4.1 Letter naming and sounding

4.1.1 Reading Test 1

The researcher observed whether learners from the sampled schools were able to identify letters by their sounds or not, the test which was given to learners involved sixteen letters. These were; a,b,h,e,n,r,o,l t, l,d,g,f,p,c,and s. Learners were asked to identify the letters and relate them to their sounds.(see Appendix 1)

The findings revealed that learners were able to match the letters to their exact sounds of the English alphabet. Figure 4.1 below shows that 92 respondents obtained 16 marks, 6 obtained 14 marks while 2 obtained 12 marks. One learner managed to identify all the five letters allocated to the children without failing to pronounce any of the letters. This is in line with the findings from teachers at Chibolya primary school who indicated that learners were taught the sounds of the alphabet using the local language in the early grade and that was the basis of teaching the English sounds since few letters were different in sounds. Teachers and administrators were asked whether learners were able to identify letters by their sounds. Refer to Appendix 5 and 6.

Figure 4.1: Distribution of the number of grade four learners' ability in identifying English alphabet by their sounds



A teacher from Jacaranda primary school said that:

It is not difficult for grade four learners to identify sounds of the alphabet.

This is because children learn sounds of the alphabet from the pre-school.

She went on to say:

Teaching which starts with a Zambian language has helped much in the teaching of sounds in English language. The learners first use the sounds which they know in their language and then later apply the same sound knowledge into English. So, it is difficult for learners to fail an English sound.

In addition, the senior at Jacaranda primary school indicated that teachers taught sounds of the English alphabet in the earlier grades like 1 and 2. They added that it was very easy for the learners to identify the sound of the English alphabet and read the preceding English words.

A teacher from Mambilima primary school said:

Grade 4 learners are able to identify the sounds of the English alphabet correctly even without seeing the letter. They have done this several times.

According to the deputy head teacher of Lotus primary school,

Teachers teach word identification in about grade 1 in the local language. When children enter grade three, they already know the letters sounds at heart and it is easy to transfer the sounds into the English alphabet.

The deputy head teacher at Chibolya primary school noted that:

Teachers teach sound identification as part of revision and introduction to sight words. This is the more reason that learners are performing very well with phonic word reading because they know the letter sounds of English.

The study revealed that the learners were taught letter sounds in English hence they performed very well in the exercise. On the other hand, it was established that some learners had challenges in pronouncing /u/ and /y/ because these are voiceless or silent sounds in English.

The study further revealed that learners managed to identify the sounds of the English alphabet correctly except sounds for /h/, /l/, /r/ and /y/. In other words, at least every respondent had a challenge in pronouncing one sound of the English alphabet amongst the words given.

With regards to reading the words which matched the sounds of the letters, learners read the words without much difficulty. The learners were able to use the sounds effectively in their reading of the allocated English words.

Regarding reading of the associated words are in line with the sounds of the words, A teacher at Kamwala primary school revealed that grade four learners could not have failed to read words from the sound that they pronounced.

The reading of sounds starts in grade one. It was then very impossible that a grade four learners could fail to read a sound and consequently a word at this level. Even if the words are jumbled, the children would still read.

Another teacher from Kamwala primary school added that:

Learners will always associate a sound to a word hence the learners read the words and sounds perfectly.

The teachers were then teaching the learners according to the required material and content which the learners were supposed to grasp in a required grade. The researcher noted that this was the reason that the children were able to identify the sounds of the English alphabet and read the English words perfectly.

The head teacher from Mambilima primary school said:

Teachers teach word identification in about grade 1 in the local language. When children enter grade 3, they already know the letters sounds at heart and it is easy to transfer the sounds into the English alphabet.

The deputy head teacher from Lotus noted that:

Teachers teach sound identification as part of revision and introduction to sight words. This is the more reason that learners are performing very well with phonic word reading because they know the letter sounds of English.

The findings revealed that the learners were taught letter sounds in English hence they performed very well in the exercise.

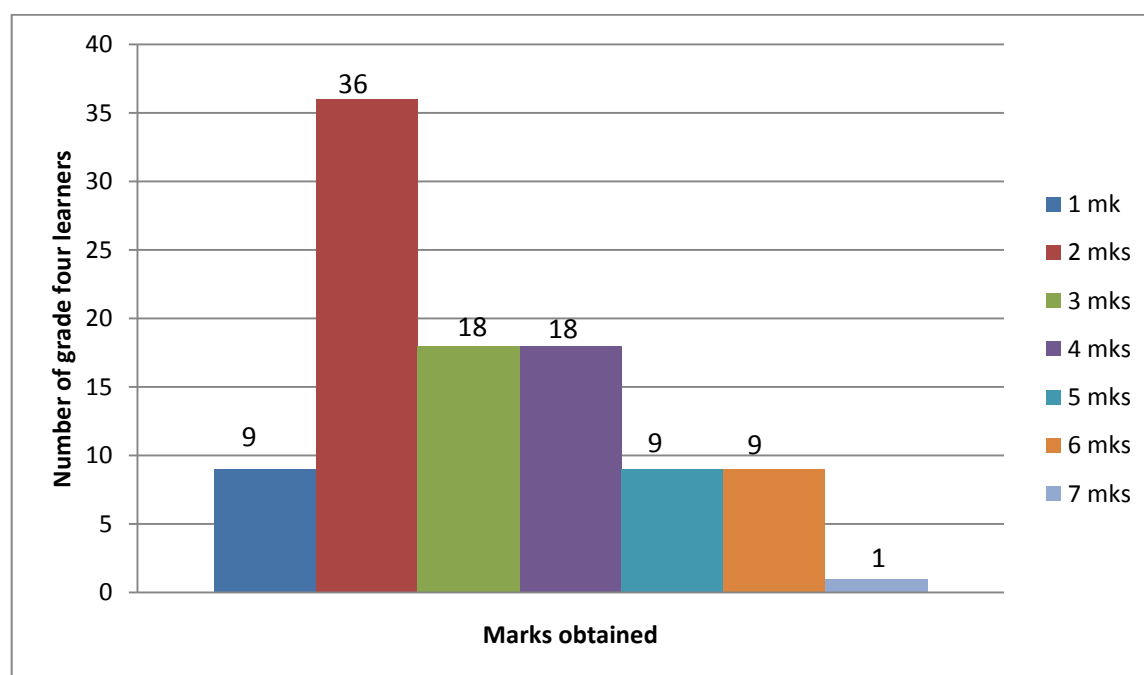
4.2 Reading sight words

4.2.1 Reading of phonic words

Learners were given ten phonic words to read (see appendix 2). Later learners were asked to read the passage to read and the researcher's main interest was to observe how learners were reading and pronunciation sight words in from the passage. (See appendix3)

It was revealed that learners from different schools had different reading and pronunciation abilities of the different words of emphasis in the text. Further, the findings showed that learners were able to read sight words at a slow pace and the pronunciation was not consistent in most readers. Figure 4.2 below indicated that 9 respondents got 1 mark,36 got 2marks,18 got 3 marks, another 18 got 4 marks,9 got 5 marks, another 9 got 6 marks and 1 got 7marks.

Figure 4.2: Distribution of the number of grade four learners' ability in reading sight words in English



4.2.2 Reading from the passage

From the passage that were provided one reader read the word '*bedroom*' correctly but failed to read '*bed*' in the following sentence. And other reader failed to pronounce the

word '*brighter*' and said, '*briter*' which was not a correct one. Another reader stressed the sound /*d*/ in the words, '*peeped*', '*looked*', '*climbed*' and '*rushed*'. The phonemic difference in the two words lied in their realisation of the sound /*t*/ in '*peeped*' and '*looked*' while /*d*/ was for '*climbed*' and '*rushed*'.

Learners also showed some pronunciation errors in reading sight words in English. They read the words using the local language phonemic structure. One learner from Chibolya primary school read the word '*shone*' as '*shonne*' in local language. Another from Mambilima primary school read the word '*quickly*' as '*kukilya*' in local language. The other challenging word was to correctly read '*weeding*' which was read as '*wedding*' to mean the marriage ceremony.

The findings revealed that some learners had some pronunciation and overgeneralisation of certain sight words because of the first language influence. The passage they read to the friends had some specific words which had special phonemes that needed sight pronunciation. Some readers read the passage correctly with few pronunciation errors in some sight words like '*woke*' which read using the local language phonemic knowledge. Then some readers failed to read '*boarded*', '*sweating*', '*wheelbarrows*' and '*weighs*'. The readers used all the vowels at times to produce a '*shwa*' intonation in the pronunciation of the sight words especially, '*sweating*' and '*wheelbarrows*'. Other sight words like '*sugar*' and '*Saturday*' were not a challenge for the readers.

Third readers as well had their own challenges in reading and pronouncing sight words in English in the passage they read to the friends. Firstly, the readers failed to pronounce '*argued*' while they were very comfortable at pronouncing stronger, cold, took, blanket, blow and blew. The phonemic structure for these words which called for sight pronunciation was not difficult to the learners. However, the learners failed to pronounce sight words like '*wearing*', '*laughed*' and '*argued*'. In the word '*wearing*' learners used all the vowels to pronounce the word which created a mispronunciation of the word. The '*ue*' in '*argued*' was not followed, readers instead used '*u*' only, thereby sending a wrong pronunciation to the audience. In pronouncing the word '*laughed*', the readers stressed the sound /*d*/ instead of using the sound /*t*/ in the word. Another reader failed to use the sound '*f*' to replace '*ughe*' and made the word be mispronounced. The findings however represented that the learners had the phonemic knowledge just like the others who read the first passages.

In establishing further reading and pronunciation abilities in sight words among grade four learners of Lusaka district, learners read a passage which had some sight words while the words were phonetically and semantically different. Learners were able to read and pronounce correctly words like. Elephant, parks, king, calf and eat. The readers failed to pronounce the word 'wild'. The readers stressed on 'l' making a wrong pronunciation. The word 'tusks' was mispronounced on the vowel sound /u/ instead of using the sound /a/. This was similar in the word 'run'. The readers used the sound /u/ instead of the sound /a/. These sight words needed reading them by following sight sounds and not their phonemic composition.

In the last group of readers, the findings indicated that readers were able to read some sight words without hesitation while they failed to read others fluently. Learners read correctly the following sight words 'shoots', 'ranger' and 'horns.' In the other sight words, there were some wrong readings from the learners as they used wrong sounds in some words. In the word 'poachers' the learners ensured that the vowel sound /a/ was also part of the sound and the sound of /e/ was also prominent. Further, the word 'tusks' was read with a wrong sound of the vowel /u/ instead of using the sound /a/ when pronouncing. The word 'rhino' was also read without a gliding sound of /ai/ towards the letter sound /n/. This made the learners to read it as if there was no /h/ in the word. The word 'hunted' was also read without the realisation of the sound /a/ to replace the /u/ in pronunciation. With such simple sight words being read with difficulties, it was evident that the teaching of sight words in English was done to some extent.

The teachers and administrators were questions in line with the research questions (see appendix 5 and 6). Findings from the teachers established that learners were able to read phonic words in their classes during lessons.

One teacher from Lotus primary school said:

My children are very conversant with the sounds in the English alphabet. I always ensure that I make them read through the sounds whenever I was about to teach sight words during a literacy period.

Another teacher from Jacaranda primary school explained that:

Phonic teaching is usually a continuous process to pupils in the lower class. We remind the learners of the sounds they learnt previously so that we build on in the new lesson. These are children

and they forget. So, it is my role as a teacher to ensure the children connect what they learnt to the new lesson.”

In the teaching of sight words, it was established that teachers built on the sounds that were taught in the earlier grades. The sounds were the basis or the corner stone for teaching phonic and sight words in English to grade three and four.

Another teacher from Kamwala primary school said:

Sight words are just a continuation of the phonic words which were taught in the local language first, then in English. I ensure that I start with the known words before going to the unknown words. This helps my learners not to get lost in the lesson.

Another teacher from Chibolya primary school noted that:

Sight words are best taught using a passage just the way the grade four books are structured. You first write the words on the board which you want to teach to the learners. After that, you explain the meaning of the words to the class. If possible, you even give examples in the local language for better understanding. Then ask the learners to read the passage, they will not make mistakes.

Another teacher from Kamwala primary school said that:

Sight words in English are better taught using charts. You write a list of the words you want to teach on a chart and allow learners to read. From their reading, as a teacher you will know the syllables which needs emphasis and that will be your main teaching point.

In supporting teachers, it was established from administrators that teachers used segmentation in their teaching of sight words in English.

It was established that they used segmentation in their teaching of sight words in English. They further added that they used the phonic system of word attack to ensure that the learners understood the sounds and syllable which were worth pronouncing in a given word as evidenced by a teacher from Jacaranda who stated that:

He teaches sight words in two ways, the difficult sight words he use the syllables found in that word. He segments the word and uses the

sounds to make the learners pronounce after him in the lesson.
Through this, the children learn sight words by heart.

A teacher from Lotus primary school said that:

Sight words are taught just like local words in the local language. You just segment them and then pronounce the different sounds to the children. After that, the children will also pronounce after you and all is done. They can now read the passage and pronounce the words correctly.

In supporting teachers, it was established from the senior teacher of Lotus primary school that learners were learning sight words and pronunciation because the learners were able to break through in literacy. The deputy Headteacher from Kamwala primary school established that:

The teachers are teaching well literacy in their classes because the children were able to read sight words in English in class and outside class. We see children reading what is written on the notice boards and on walls. Some of the words are beyond sight learning. This gives us confidence that the teachers are teaching.

According to the Headteacher of Mambilima primary school, he ensures that the teachers conduct literacy fares every term at school level before going for the zonal and district fare. From the way children read, it is impressive that learners read sight words without hesitation. He went on to say that even when he check the teaching files of the teachers handling grades 3 and 4, they teach sight words and reading in their classes. The lesson plans speak volumes and the books for pupils also talk much.

The senior teacher Lotus said that:

Teachers also ensure that they examine the children on sight words every midterm and at the end of the term. These are tests we approve as administrators.

The deputy Head teacher from Kamwala primary school noted that:

Teachers teach these components because even when we go observe the lessons, we don't tell them the day of observation. But we find

teachers prepared to teach and they teach sight words, like the one I observed last week.

He went on to say that teachers were able to teach sight words in their classes as evidenced by the level of literacy in the learners and the teaching files from the teachers teaching the classes.

In a class at Jacaranda primary school, the teacher assisted the researcher with following sight words to teach the learners; *boat, bought, boot, march, match, park* and *pack*. The teacher explained the individual meanings of the words to the learners and wrote sentences using them on the board. After that, the teacher used the sentences to explain the semantic difference of the words. The children in the oral presentation were able to pronounce the words correctly. In the reading exercise, the learners were able to read the passage correctly and use the words accordingly. The researcher could not disappoint the teacher by not allowing other words apart from the ones provided by the researcher. Instead the researcher was patient enough to wait for the teacher to finish his teaching on sight words to the learners. Then the researcher proceeds with her observation based on what she prepared for the study. Researcher was tempted to ask teachers from Chibolya and Mambilima to conduct lessons on sight words before she could collect data based on her research instruments.

At Mambilima primary school, the teacher used some complex words to teach sight to the children maybe because the learners were few and easy to handle. The teacher wrote the following words on the board. Talked, punched, waited, landed, pegged, melted, quiet, charcoal, beautiful, leaf and whistle. The teacher used a chart to give the meanings of the words and explained further their meaning in the local language. The teacher segmented the words into syllables. The learners were then asked to read after the teacher. Learners gave some examples on where they heard the words being used and how they were used. The teacher capitalised on the two examples and emphasised the reading through the sounds of the syllables. In the reading exercise which was done in groups, learners read the different passages with good pronunciation and they were able to answer the questions orally. Syllabic segmentation provided a smooth avenue for easy sight word learning.

In a class at Chibolya primary school the teacher used the following words; strengthen, cereals, root, sweet, sorghum, grown, diseases, build, repair, diet and healthy to teach sight words. The teacher read the words and asked learners to read after her. The teacher

emphasized on the sounds that were different from the sounds that the learners knew. For example, the vowel sound /u/ was used to replace /o/ in the double vowel of the word 'root'. The other example given was in the word 'grow'. The teacher used the sound /gr/ and /o/. Therefore, the pronunciation was simple as it was in two syllables. The reading passage on food groups was easy for the learners because they went through words before the reading. Eleven learners failed to read accurately 'sorghum' and 'cereals'. The researcher then administered the reading passage which she prepared to learners. The learners had challenges in reading sight words as the researcher did not read the passage for them. Thereafter, the researcher administered the reading passage to the learners. Similarly, learners had challenges in reading sight words. For instance Eighteen learners read the words weeding as 'wedding' and wonder as 'honder'

In this study it was revealed that although learners were able to relate letters by their sounds, most learners had challenges in reading sight words. It was noted that some words were being pronounced in vernacular.

4.3. Challenges faced by teachers in teaching phonic and sight words

The researcher had prepared different questions pertaining challenges that teachers face in teaching reading phonic and sight words to teachers and administrators (see appendix 5 and 6).

4.3.1 Absenteeism

The respondents raised a number of challenges which they faced in the process of teaching learners reading phonic and sight words appropriately in English Language. The respondents indicated that some children absconded themselves in the early days of their grade one where early reading was introduced. Such learners fail to pick up when they lose the early lessons.

A teacher from Kamwala primary school said:

Children who usually fail to understand the sounds on the alphabet are those pupils who were perpetually missing lesson in early grade one classes.

In addition he stated that:

These children usually come from homes where the parents do not consider education important. So, for them to come to school, they

need some pushing and motivation from homes at times. If there is no one to push or remind them, they usually abscond for a month or so. These are the pupils who have difficulties in following the sounds of the alphabet.

According to a teacher at Chibolya added that:

Absenteeism was caused by parents. I had two boys who failed to break through because they attended grade one for less than a term. The children went to the market to help sell goods with their mother instead of coming to school.

4.3.2 Over enrolment

The respondents also established that there was over enrolment of pupils in the schools in the early grades because the government schools were few in the area.

One teacher from Chibolya primary school lamented that:

My class started with about 70 pupils in grade 1. It is now that they have reduced to 60. It is difficult to handle such a large class alone.

At Lotus primary school a teacher said:

The free education policy comes with over enrolment because the government wants every child to be in school. For this reason, all early grade classes are usually over enrolled. This makes it difficult for us teachers to give individual attention to learner in class.

Another teacher from Mambilima primary school noted that:

The teaching of reading sounds or phonics requires the teacher to interact with every learner in the class. With 60 pupils, it is very difficult to make the children practice individually the sounds. This makes some shy pupils to remain behind in class.

4.3.3 Teaching and learning materials

In terms of resources results showed that there were shortage of quality teaching and learning materials for early grade reading in the primary schools of Lusaka district.

One teacher from Jacaranda primary school mentioned that:

There are no sufficient teaching and learning materials in the familiar language. The few charts which had phonic sounds were wrongly written hence we did not use them in fear of confusing children.

Another teacher from Kamwala primary school added that:

The best teaching and learning aid for the pupils has been the chalkboard. The government supplied few quantities of early reading books to our school, about 40, against a class of 70 learners. Sharing brings fights amongst them.

4.3.4 Lack of permanent rooms

The other challenge was the lack of permanent rooms for the children to learn from. Classrooms changes from term to term meant that the children who used come in the morning in the previous term could now attend classes in the afternoon.

A teacher from Chibolya primary school complained that:

They fail to sustain the teaching and learning aids which they put on the walls because classes are swapped every term. The new class owners usually pull down the old materials and put their own materials for that class. This makes it difficult for learners to remember learnt sounds.

These challenges hampered the teaching and learning of phonics and reading very difficult for the teachers and to the learners in the primary schools of Lusaka district. On the other hand, findings from the administrators indicated that teachers were at times busy with their personal work at the expense of teaching learners. The teachers were mostly busy with their advancement in education and went to school regularly depriving the learners their educational right.

The Head teacher from Mambilima primary school said:

Most teachers are doing degree courses on distance. So they are out of the station to attend their residential schools and write exams. The

time lost is usually not recovered hence learners remain behind at times.

The deputy head from Kamwala primary school noted that:

At times the teachers do prepare a very good scheme but they do not teach everything which they plan making learners to remain behind in literacy.

He acknowledged the absence of learners in classes at times to be a major challenge for other not to be conversant with phonic and sight words.

The senior teacher of Lotus primary school indicated that:

Pupil absenteeism is quite high at times and the curriculum does not wait for pupils. The few pupils who are found in class at that given day are taught while others miss. Such disparities make others not to be conversant with sight words when in grade four.

The respondent also said that the learning environment where the learners could actively be involved in learning is mostly at school while at home they interacted with local language words.

In addition the deputy Head teacher Lotus primary school said that:

These children do not have time to interact with parent on school issues but rather play all the time after knocking off. They only learn English when they come to school and in class with their teacher.

He went on to say that, *“without a teacher there is no learning for our learners because they depend on the teacher.”*

The deputy Head teacher Chibolya primary school cited laziness amongst teachers as a major course of learners not being able to read phonic and sight words correctly.

She further stated that:

I remember castigating one teacher for not teaching what the learners were supposed to learn in a term. She taught half of the work and yet term three was approaching which was laziness.

The findings established that learners established that learners were able to match the letter to its exact sound of the English alphabet. The only challenge was in pronouncing /u/ and /y/ because these were voiceless or silent sounds in English. The respondents established that the learners were taught the sounds of the alphabet using the local language in the early grade and that was the basis of teaching the English sounds since few letters were different in sound. The study also revealed that teachers taught sounds of the English alphabet in the earlier grades like 1 and 2 hence it was very easy for the learners to identify the sound of the English alphabet and read the preceding English words.

The study revealed that grade four learners had different phonic and reading abilities in the English language in the primary schools of Lusaka district. The findings established that learners were able to read sight words at a slow pace and the pronunciation was not consistent in most readers. Their reading also showed some pronunciation errors in reading sight words in English. The grade four learners read the words using the local language phonemic structure. The study also revealed that the readers also had some pronunciation and overgeneralization of certain sight words because of the first language influence. The readers used all the vowels at times to produce a '*shwa*' intonation in the pronunciation of the sight words. However, the learners had the phonemic knowledge just like the others who read the first passages. The teaching of sight words, the respondents established that they built on the sounds that were taught in the earlier grades. Findings also established that teachers used segmentation in their teaching of sight words in English. The findings further found that teachers used the phonic system of word attack to ensure that the learners understood the sounds and syllable which were worth pronouncing in a given word.

Regarding challenges teachers faced if any in the process of teaching phonic and pronunciation of sight words to the grade 4 learners. It was established that some children absconded themselves in the early days of their grade one where early reading was introduced. There was over enrolment of pupils in the schools in the early grades because the government schools were few in the area this was coupled there were shortages of teaching and learning materials for early grade reading in the primary schools of Lusaka district. Further, teachers were at times busy with their personal work at the expense of teaching learners. The teachers were mostly busy with their advancement in education and went to school regularly depriving learners their

educational right. The absence of learners in classes at times to be a major challenge for other not conversant with phonic and sight words. Lastly, laziness amongst teachers as a major course of learners not being able to read phonic and sight words correctly.

4.4 Summary

The findings show that learners were able to relate the letters to its exact sound of the English alphabet. It was revealed that learners were taught letter sounds in English hence they performed very well in the test. It was also noted that teachers taught sounds of the English alphabet in the earlier grades like grade one and two hence, it was very easy for the learners to identify the sound of the English alphabet and read the preceding English words. In addition, it was established that learners from different schools had different reading and pronunciation abilities of the different words of emphasis in the text. Furthermore, the findings showed that learners were able to read sight words at a slow pace and the pronunciation was not consistent in most learners. They read the words using the local Language phonemic structure.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter the key findings of the study shall be discussed. The researcher will present her own views in line with what other researchers have said in the Literature review in Chapter two. Learner performance as well as views from teachers and administrators from the interviews shall be discussed.

5.1 Learner's ability in identifying the English alphabet by their sounds

The study has established that learners were taught the sounds of the alphabet using the local language in the early grade and that was the basis of teaching the English sounds since few letters were different in sound. This was in accordance with the responses received from respondents, (refer to chapter 4). The study established further that the teaching which starts with a Zambian language has helped much in the teaching of sounds in English language (see figure 4.1, p. 35) and learners were able to match the letters to its exact sound of the English alphabet. Although the study established that learners were able to match the letters to its exact sound, It was discovered that some learners had challenges in pronouncing /u/ and /y/ because these are voiceless or silent sounds in English, Geylanioglu and Dikilitas (2012) (refer to chapter 2), and Fraser (2001) (see p.15) and Linda (2013) (see p. 24) shared the similar views. It was noticed in this study that learners' performance seemed to vary from school to school. They

performed better than others, for instance, learners from Jacaranda primary school performed better than learners from Chibolya primary school.

The study also revealed that teachers taught sounds of the English alphabet in the earlier grades like 1 and 2 hence it was very easy for the learners to identify the sound of the English alphabet and read the preceding English words (refer to chapter4). The results are also in line with the National Reading Panel (2000) (see p.9). Furthermore, it stated that all the five components (phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension) skills of reading are important and dependent on one another. It was encouraging to hear from some administrators that their teachers were making effort to teach learners letters and their sounds. Adequate knowledge in Letter identification and its relationship with sounds is one of the key factors in learning to read and pronunciation of words in English Language. Therefore, lack of this reading skill can affect learners by making it difficult to sound out words in print resulting in reading challenges.

5.2. Learner's ability in reading and pronunciation of sight words in English language

It was revealed that grade four learners had different phonic and reading abilities in the English language in the primary schools of Lusaka district. The results are in agreement with Bender and Larkin (2003) (see p.18) who pointed out that when high-quality phonetic approaches do not work; research suggests that a whole-word, visual discrimination approach using repetition and review may be the most effective way to teach reading. Some children may require additional instruction that is not tied directly to letter-sound manipulation or phonics hence teachers should continue teaching learners in class. In fact, for some students, the most effective reading instructional tactic may be based on techniques that are not exclusively dependent on the alphabetic principle, but rather involve rote memory of whole words coupled with context clues in order to read effectively to learners.

The results of the study indicated that learners were able to read at a slow pace and the pronunciation was not consistent in most readers. The learner's inability to realise the different sounds in English was a hindrance to sight word pronunciation in the higher grades than grade 2. English was then supposed to be taught in line with the English language orthography to enable learners grasp the sight words faster like in the local language.

These results concur with Punyapet and Laohawiriyanon (2014) (refer to chapter 3) who said that the results indicated systematic remedial phonics instructions could help improve the participants' pronunciation, spelling, and reading comprehension skills. Further, the participants found the target words which did not follow phonics rules problematic. It was from such an observation that students with low English proficiency required a lot of time to practice reading with various reading activities coupled with using whole word approach. This might improve their reading speed in English language.

The study also showed some pronunciation errors in reading sight words in English. The grade four learners read the words using the local language phonemic structure. The study also revealed that the readers also had some pronunciation and overgeneralisation of certain sight words because of the first language influence. The readers used all the vowels at times to produce a '*shwa*' intonation in the pronunciation of the sight words. The results are in agreement agree with Ashmore, Farrier, Paulson, and Chu (2003) (see p. 9) whose study recommended that explicit instruction in phonemic awareness worked well on the Chinese pupils because they were able to analyze spoken language into its component sounds (phonemes) and perform mental operations on these smaller linguistic units. Further, Heilman (2002) (refer to chapter 3) adds that children who are taught phonemic awareness are able to understand that sounds in words can be moved, removed or replaced to make new words, sounds in words can be counted, represented with many different letters and that words have small sounds that can be pulled apart and put back together. Therefore, phonic and sight words were key in helping learners pronounce words in English perfectly.

The study revealed that learners had the phonemic knowledge just like the others who read the passages earlier. The teaching of sight words, the respondents stated that they built on the sounds that were taught in the earlier grades in local language. These findings concur with another researcher which indicates that children who acquire literacy skills in a first Language transfer those skills to their second Language (Fitzgerald, 1995; Garcia, 1998; Collier and Thomas, 1989) (chapter 3) reported that children who had attended school and learned basic literacy skills in a native language before immigrating to the United States achieved academic parity with peers as soon as they had acquired proficiency in English in U.S. schools. Indeed, this was the case for the Zambian children in grade 4 in the primary schools of Lusaka district.

It was also established that teachers used segmentation in their teaching of sight words in English. These results were similar to Owolabi (2014) (see p. 22) who stated that at a segmental level, a strong emphasis was placed on phonemes that have typically been found to be difficult for L1 finish-speaking learners. Despite the emphasis on suprasegmentals in pronunciation teaching literature, explicit teaching of supra-segmental features of speech was neglected by the observed teachers. Gilakjani (2012) (see p.15) too added that intelligible pronunciation is seen as an essential component of communicative competence hence phonic should be taught through segmentation to help learners read sight words properly.

Furthermore, it was indicated that teachers used the phonic system of word attack to ensure that the learners understood the sounds and syllable which were worth pronouncing in a given word. The results agree with Tergujeff (2012) (see p. 15) who reported in her study that the teachers offered pronunciation teaching very different from each other, but in general the pronunciation teaching was found to be pragmatic and teacher led, and traditional teaching methods were used. She observed how English pronunciation teaching practices are like in Finish schools from the primary to upper secondary level, in particular which methods are used and which items are emphasised. From the findings it is noted that some teachers were to blame for learners' failure to read sight words due their bad conduct towards work. For instance, laziness at work was coming out strongly.

5.3 Challenges faced by teachers in teaching sight words

From the findings various challenges which the schools and the teachers faced in the process of teaching phonic and pronunciation of sight words to the grade four learners were noted.

5.3.1 Absenteeism

Firstly, some children absconded themselves in the early days of their grade one where early reading was introduced. This is similar to Hart and Risley (1995) (refer to chapter 3) who proposed that children from families with low incomes who were 3 years old, knew 600 fewer words than children of the same age from families with upper incomes. In addition Biemiller and Slonim (2001) (see p.11) stated that by grade two the gap widens to about 4000 words. The above facts heighten the need to purposefully teach vocabulary in early childhood. Because noticing words and being interested in them precedes learning and their meanings. Their lack of consistent attending lessons reduced

their ability to acquire sight words faster. This scourge can be overcome if administrators in these schools engage parents in various activities. The researcher noted from the interviews with administrators and teachers that parents only visit these schools during open days and annual general meetings.

5.3.2 Over enrollment

The researcher observed that there was over enrolment of learners in some schools in the early grades because the government schools were few in the area, this was coupled with the shortage of teaching and learning materials for early grade reading in the primary schools of Lusaka district. For example, Chibolya and Lotus had a high number of learners in classes. On average there were 50 and 60 learners respectively. Teachers stated that because of overcrowded classes, there were no opportunities for learner-teacher contact so that learners can be given individualised learning support especially the needy. This can be compared to Shimron Committee (2002) (refer to chapter 3) who reported that phonetic awareness and alphabet recognition were key components in literacy acquisition and specifically recommended instruction in both, which was one of the key issues in this study. Their complaint was the over enrolment of learners in the early grade classes which reduced teacher contact time with the children. This resulted into some children remaining behind in reading sight words in English. Teachers should find ways of attending to each learner's need because over enrollment seemed to be a problem in the schools the researcher visited. Over enrollment cannot be an excuse for not to acquire the skills needed for one to become a proficient reader, otherwise the country cannot progress meaning it will produce an illiteracy society.

5.3.3 Laziness among teachers

Further results revealed that there was laziness amongst teachers as a major cause of learners not being able to read phonic and sight words correctly. This is backed by Mulikelela (2013) (refer to chapter 3) whose research showed that some grade two learners experienced challenges during the transition between language of initial literacy (Nyanja) and the second language of literacy (English). Furthermore, he argued that these were in terms of getting used to learning in a local language, pronouncing English words in Chinyanja, inability to read some of the English words in the SITE course because of failure by teachers to complete teaching the Chinyanja phonic sounds stipulated in Teachers' Guide. There were no other reasons given for teacher's failure to complete the syllabus apart from laziness. This contributed highly to the high number of

children who could not read sight words in English. In this regard administrators should take appropriate punishment for those teachers who exhibit laziness at work.

5.3.4 Lack of teaching and learning materials

According to the findings of this study, Lack of teaching and learning materials in schools hinder the quality of teaching reading in schools. Teaching and Learning materials are essential if effective learning is to take place. They give guidance to teachers on what to teach and by that learners are able to grasp the concepts easily. It is important that teachers who teach initial skills in reading follow stipulated guidelines from teaching and learning materials, failure to do so teaching young learners English which most of these learners are learning as a second language may manifest interference or transfer from their first language to English especially now that they are learning initial reading skills in a familiar language. Otherwise, learners can make errors due to the direct influence of first language structure.

5.4 Summary

The findings have been discussed in relation to objectives and themes generated. Through the researcher's observations and interviews, it was evident that learners were able to relate letters by their sounds. The study showed that learners were reading sight words at a slow pace compared to phonic words. Teachers had challenges in teaching phonic and sight words as evidenced from the themes that emerged from the findings.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter the conclusions and recommendations of the research findings are presented. It will also give areas for future research. The research sought to establish the ability of the grade four learners in reading phonic and sight words appropriately in primary schools in Lusaka district.

6.1 Conclusions

The study found out that learners were able to identify the English alphabet by their sounds. It was observed that learners were taught the sounds of the alphabet using the local language in the early grades and that was the basis of teaching the English sounds since few letters were different in sound. This made learners to match the letter to its exact sound of the English alphabet. In this study the researcher concluded that grade four learners were able to identify letters by their sounds without difficulties.

The findings revealed that learners were able to read sight words at a slow pace compared to phonic words. This affected the pronunciation of sight words in English Language. The grade four learners read the words using the local language phonemic

structure. Therefore, it be concluded that learners still had challenges in reading sight words.

Findings showed that teachers faced a number of challenges in teaching reading phonic and sight words in English language. For instance, some learners absconded themselves in the early days of their grade one when early reading was introduced. This affected the reading of words in English language. It was observed that there was over enrolment of learners in some schools in the early grades because the government schools were few in the area, this was coupled with shortage of teaching and learning materials for early grade reading in the primary schools of Lusaka district. In terms of challenges the researcher concluded that teachers faced a number of challenges in teaching phonic and sight words.

6.2. Recommendations

Arising from the findings, the following recommendations were proposed as measures to be taken.

1. School administrators should continue monitoring the teaching of initial reading skills to learners in the early grades so that teachers are not reluctant in teaching letters and sounds.
2. Teachers should intensify the oral language activities for learners as early as grade two in order to practice the articulations of correct English sounds.
3. The Ministry of General Education should ensure that adequate teaching and learning materials are supplied in schools.
4. School administrators should engage parents in most of the school activities so that the issue of absenteeism among learners in the early grades can be addressed.

6.3 Areas of Future Research

1. A research involving parents in the promotion of reading English Language among early grades learners.
2. There is need to broaden this study to other districts and provinces in the country.

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Appendix 1: Reading Test 1

Alphabet recognition, letter naming, sound pronunciation, word reading

- a) Child's particulars _____
- Childs name _____
- Date of birth _____
- School _____
- Class _____
- Province _____
- District _____
- Location _____
- Gender. _____ Male _____ Female _____
- Age _____

Part A

There are sixteen (16) letters in part A, two marks should be given: one mark for naming and one mark for the sound of the letter.

Letter naming	Score	Letter sound	Score	Total score
A		/a/		
B		/b/		
H		/h/		
U		/u/		
N		/n/		
R		/r/		
O		/o/		
L		/l/		
T		/t/		
I		/i/		
D		/d/		
Y		/y/		
F		/f/		
P		/p/		
C		/c/		
S		/s/		
Total				

Part B

There are ten words created from the letters given above. One mark should be given for each word a learner pronounces correctly.

1	Polite	
2	Elephant	
3	Report	
4	Puppy	
5	Choir	
6	Shape	
7	Loose	
8	Shook	
9	Burn	
10	Tools	
	Total	

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Appendix 2: Reading Test 2

a) Child's particulars

Childs
name_____

Date of
birth_____

School_____

Class_____

Province_____

District_____

Location_____

Gender. _____ Male_____ Female _____

Age_____

Reading list of phonic words

One mark should be given for each word a learner pronounces correctly

1	Dig	
2	Fat	
3	Eye	
4	Sweeping	
5	Chewing	
6	Meat	
7	Dog	
8	Door	
9	Cane	
10	Coming	
	Total	

Appendix 3: Reading Test 3

a) Child's particulars

Childs
name_____

Date of
birth_____

School_____

Class_____

Province_____

District_____

Location_____

Gender. _____ Male_____ Female _____

Age_____

Reading Text

One night, Sarah **woke** up. Sarah **peered and peeped** outside her **bedroom window**. She **looked** at with stars. She **rushed** outside and was **sweating**.one star **shone** much **brighter** than the others. “I **wonder** what it is...” thought Sarah as she **climbed** back into **bed**. “Tomorrow I shall ask grandfather. He knows about the sky. “The next morning, she was **wearing** a blue dress. She rushed to the breakfast table, hoping to find her grandfather, but he was not there. She **quickly ate** her breakfast and then went into the **field** to look for him. He was busy **weeding** the maize. The grandfather picked a **wheelbarrow** and put some maize to **weighs** it.She **laughed** at him. Sarah went over to him **argued** with him. Sarah went away and **boarded** a bus.

The researcher selected some sight words from the passage. One mark should be given for each selected sight word a learner pronounces correctly.

1	Peered	
2	Bedroom	
3	Looked	
4	Shone	
5	Wonder	
6	Ate	
7	Field	
8	Weeding	
9	Bed	
10	Window	
	Total	

Appendix 4: Focus group discussions guide for grade 4 learners

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS GUIDE FOR GRADE 4 LEARNERS

1. What languages do you use at home?
2. Which year did you start school?
3. Where were you learning English when started grade one?
4. What was the first thing that you learnt in English Language?

5. Are you able to name all letters on the Alphabet?
6. Are you able to sound all the letters of the alphabet?
7. Are you able to read very well in English Language?
8. Do you face difficulties in reading English Languages?
9. Do you understand when your teachers are teaching in English Language?

Thank you very much

Appendix 5: Interview guide for teachers

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

The general objective of this study is to establish the grade four learners ability in reading phonic and sight words in English Language appropriately in five schools in Lusaka district. You are kindly requested to be open and honest as the information you will give will only be used for the sole purpose of this study. I therefore, thank you in anticipation to your positive response.

1. Name of the School _____
 Location _____
 District _____
 Province _____

2. Position Held _____
3. Gender. _____ Male _____ Female _____
4. Date of interview _____
5. Time of interview : Start _____ End _____
6. How long have you been teaching? _____
7. What is your highest academic qualification? _____
8. How long have you been teaching grade four learners? _____
9. What is the total number of learners in your class? _____
10. Are all learners in your class able to identify the twenty six letters of the English Alphabet? _____
11. Are learners who are able to identify the letters of the English alphabet identifying the Letter-sound relationship?

12. Are learners in your class able to read and pronounce about 90% of words appropriately in a given text in English Language?

13. In case of learners who cannot read and pronounce most of the words appropriately, what do you do to help them?

14. Are there any major challenges that hinder learners in your class in reading and pronunciation of words in English Language?

15. Do learners in your class read phonic words in English Language appropriately?

16. Do learners in your class face some challenges in reading sight words from any given work in English Language?

17. What suggestions can you give in order to help learners who cannot read and pronounce words appropriately in English Language?

18. Do issues to do with reading and pronunciation of words among learners affect you in terms of teaching reading in English Language?

19. Do you face any challenges in teaching phonic and sight words?

20. As a teacher, what advice can you give to relevant authorities concerning reading and pronunciation of words in English Language by grade four learners?

Appendix 6: Interview guide for administrators

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE GUIDE FOR ADMINISTRATORS

The following interview schedule aims at finding out how you feel on reading and pronunciation of phonic and sight words in English Language among grade four learners in your school. You are kindly requested to be open and honest as the information you give will be used for academic purposes only. I therefore, thank you in anticipation to your positive response.

1. Name of the school_____

Location_____ District_____

Province_____

2. Position Held_____

3. Gender_____ Male _____
Female_____
4. Date of Interview_____
5. Time of interview start_____ End_____
6. How long have you been heading this school? _____
7. What is your subject specialty? _____
8. What is your highest academic qualification?

9. What is the total number of grade four learners in your school?

10. How is the reading culture of learners in your school?

11. Are teachers in your School doing enough to ensure that learners in lower grades acquire the necessary reading skills needed in learning to read?

12. Have you ever received any complaints from teachers of grade four on reading phonic and sight words in English Language by their learners?

13. Do learners in your school make an effort to read and pronounce words in English Language appropriately?

14. Have you received any reports from teachers about learners in grade four who cannot name the twenty six letters of English alphabet?

15. Are there any major challenges that hinder learners in your school to make appropriate reading and pronunciation of words in English Language?

16. Give your opinion concerning reading and pronunciation of words in English Language among learners in your School.

17. Do learners who are able to name the twenty six letters of the alphabet identify the letter-sound relationship?

18. In case of learners who are unable to identify letters of the English alphabet do teachers initiate projects to help them?

19. What do you do as a school to ensure appropriate reading of phonic and sight words in English by grade four learners?

20. Have you received any reports from teachers of grade four learners on the challenges they face when teaching phonic and sight words in English language?

Appendix 7: Observation check list

OBSERVATION CHECK LIST

SCHOOL: PROVINCE:
 GRADE: DISTRICT:
 LOCATION: CLASS:
 GENDER: MALE: FEMALE:
 DAY: TIME:

S/N	ASPECT TO BE OBSERVED	SCORING	
A	Identifying letters by their sounds		
	<u>Naming</u> <u>Letter Sound</u>		
	1. a / a /		
	2. b / b /		
	3. c / c /		
	4. d / d /		
	5. e / e /		
	6. f / f /		
	7. g / g /		

	8. h	/ h/		
	9. I	/ i/		
	10. j	/j /		
	11. k	/k /		
	12. l	/ i /		
	13. m	/m/		
	14. n	/ n /		
	15. o	/o /		
	16. p	/ p/		
B	<u>PHONIC WORDS</u>			
	17. Polite			
	18. elephant			
	19. report			
	20. Puppy			
	21. Choir			
	22. Loose			
	23. Shook			
	24. Burn			
	25. Tools			
	26. Dog			
	27. Can			
	28. Dig			
	29. Meat			
	30. Door			
	31. Coming			
	32. Sweeping			
C	<u>SIGHT WORDS</u>			
	28. Peered			
	29. Bedroom			
	30. Looked			
	31. Shone			
	32. Wonder			
	33. Ate			
	34. Field			
	35. Weeding			
	36. Bed			
	37. Window			
	38. Brighter			
	39. Peeped			
	40. Climbed			
	41. Rushed			
	42. Quickly			
	43. Sweating			

	44. Wheelbarrows		
	45. Laughed		
	46. Argued		
	47. Weighs		
	48. wearing		