

**STRATEGIES USED IN TEACHING READING TO LEARNERS WITH
INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES. A CASE OF UTH SPECIAL SCHOOL,
LUSAKA ZAMBIA**

BY

TEMBO BERNADETTE

**A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Zambia in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Award of Master of Education in Special Education**

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

LUSAKA

2019

COPYRIGHT

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means of photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of the author or the University of Zambia.

©2019 Tembo Bernadette

DECLARATION

I, **Bernadette Tembo** do declare that this dissertation is my own work, and that it has not previously been submitted for a degree, diploma or other qualification at this or any other University.

Author's Signature:Date

APPROVAL

This dissertation of Bernadette Tembohas been approved as fulfilling the requirements or partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Education in Special Education by the University of Zambia

Examiner 1:..... Signature: Date:.....

Examiner 2:..... Signature: Date:.....

Examiner 3:..... Signature: Date:.....

Chairperson of

Board of Examiners:.....Signature.....Date.....

Supervisor:Signature.....Date.....

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish the strategies that were used in teaching reading skills to learners with intellectual disability (ID) at UTH Special School in Lusaka. The study was guided by the following objectives: To establish strategies teachers used in teaching reading to learners with ID, To ascertain the appropriateness of the teaching strategies teachers used in teaching reading skills to learners with ID and to ascertain the challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with ID. The study was purely qualitative and a descriptive research design was employed. The sample size consisted of 10 participants comprising 2 administrators and 8 special teachers. Data was collected through interviews and observation checklists. Participants were selected through use of purposive sampling technique. Analysis of data was done thematically leading to merging themes. These were presented descriptively. The findings of the study have revealed that the strategies teachers used in teaching reading skills to learners with ID were phonics, word card/picture, pair and group reading and individual reading, dictation, Language Experience Approach and syllabic. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the most used teaching strategies were phonics and word card/picture. With regards to the appropriateness of the teaching strategies, the study found that the teaching strategies were appropriate for example, word picture helped children to learn new words easily, and phonic made learners develop the understanding of the letter-sound relationship, group reading facilitated peer teaching. The study further revealed that the major challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading to learners with ID were inadequate teaching/learning resources and absenteeism. The study therefore recommends that the Ministry of General Education should ensure that there is adequate provision of teaching/learning materials to enhance the teaching of reading skills to learners with ID. A special curriculum for learners with intellectual disability should be developed by specialists from the Curriculum Development Center (CDC).

Keywords: *Strategies, Intellectual Disabilities and Reading*

DEDICATION

This research study has whole heartedly been dedicated to all my family members for their holistic support they have always rendered to me not only in academics but also as a member of the family. My sincere gratitude goes to all Course Lecturer for their contribution in my degree field of study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Matafwali Beatrice for the tireless assistance, guidance, commitment and encouragement in preparation of this report. I would also like to sincerely thank Dr. Mandyata J.M. for strong foundation and all rounded support rendered as a course coordinator. I would also like to thank the government for the financial support which helped me to accomplish my work without constraints. I would further want to extend my appreciations to the respondents who willingly helped in data collection as they responded to my questionnaires and interviews.

Finally, I would like to earnestly thank my course mate for their advice, assistance and encouragements throughout the preparation of the report. Nevertheless, my deepest acknowledgement is to the almighty God for the wisdom and life I am enjoying.

TABLE OF CONTENT

COPYRIGHT	i
DECLARATION.....	i
APPROVAL	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
DEDICATION.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
TABLE OF CONTENT.....	ii
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF APPENDICES	vi
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	vii
OPERATION DEFINITIONS OF TERMS	viii
 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	 1
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 Background of the Study	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem	4
1.4 Purpose of the study	5
1.5 Research Objectives	5
1.5.1 Specific Objective.....	5
1.6 Research questions	5
1.7 Significance of the study	5
1.8 Theoretical Framework	6
1.9 Delimitation of the study	7
1.10 Summary	7
 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	 8
2.1 Overview	8
2.2 The concept of intellectual disability	8
2.3 Historical approaches to reading instructions.....	9
2.4 The trajectory to the acquisition of reading skills	9
2.4.1 Phonemic awareness	10
2.4.2 Phonics.....	11
2.5 Sight Vocabulary	12
2.6 Fluency	13

2.7 Comprehension.....	13
2.8 Teaching strategies that can be used to teach reading.....	14
2.8.1 Syllable Method.....	14
2.8.2 Phonics method.....	14
2.8.3 Language Experience Approach (LEA)	14
2.8.4 The Whole Language Approach (WLA)	15
2.9 Teaching reading skills at Global Level.....	16
2.10 Teaching reading skills in Africa	18
2.11 Teaching reading skills in Zambia	20
2.12 Challenges of teaching reading to learners with ID	24
2.12 Summary	25
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	27
3.1 Overview	27
3.2 Research design	27
3.3 Population.....	28
3.4 Sample size.....	28
3.4.1 Teacher’s characteristics.....	29
3.5 Sampling procedure.....	29
3.6 Research instruments.....	30
3.6.1 Semi-structured interview.....	30
3.6.2 Observational Checklists	30
3.7 Procedure for data collection.....	30
3.8 Pilot Testing	31
3.9 Data Analysis	31
3.10 Coding of Participants	31
3.11 Limitations of the Study	32
3.12 Ethical Considerations.....	32
3.13 Summary	32
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS.....	33
4.1 Overview	33
4.2 Findings on the teaching strategies used	33
4.3.1 Observations done in classrooms on the reading lessons	35
4.4 Findings on the appropriateness of the teaching strategies teachers used.....	35

4.5 Challenges teachers faced in teaching reading	37
4.5 Summary	41
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	42
5.1 Overview	42
5.2 Teaching strategies used in teaching reading	42
5.3 Relevance and appropriateness of the strategies	49
5.4 Challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with ID.....	51
5.5 Summary	54
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	55
6.1 Overview	55
6.2 Summary	55
6.3 Conclusion.....	56
6.4 Recommendations	56
6.5 Suggestions for Future Studies.....	57
REFERENCES.....	58
APPENDICES	70

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	Teaching experience.....	28
Table 2:	Teaching strategies used in teaching reading.....	34
Table3:	Significance of the teaching strategies.....	36
Table 4:	Challenges teachers faced in teaching reading.....	37
Table 5:	Suggestions on how to teach reading.....	39
Table 6:	How parents could enhance the teaching/learning of reading.....	40

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Informed Consent form	70
Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Teachers	71
Appendix 3: Observation Checklist	73
Appendix:4 Interview guide for school administrators	75
Appendix 5: Permit Letter	76
Appendix 6: Approval Letter	77
Appendix 7: Verdict letter	78

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BTL	Behaviorist Theory of learning
CDC	Curriculum Development Center
ID	Intellectual Disability
LEA	Language Experience Approach
MoGE	Ministry of General Education
UTH	University Teaching Hospital
PR P	Primary Reading Programme
NBTL	New Break Through to Literacy
ROC	Read on Course
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality

OPERATION DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Intellectual disability	Refers to significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behaviour, which covers many everyday social and practical skills.
Learner with disability	A school going child diagnosed with an intellectual disability.
Phonics	Is the study and instruction of how letters and combinations of letters represent the individual sounds in words.
Reading	The ability to decipher meaning from a written text.
Teaching strategies	Refers to techniques that a teacher employs to teach reading.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter presents the background to the study. It consists of the following subtitles: background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives and research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, and limitations of the study, theoretical framework and definition of terms.

1.2 Background of the Study

Reading is one strand of literacy which is vital to the acquisition of language and learning and can lead to better academic performance. According to Pang et al. (2000), reading is about understanding written texts and it is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. In other ways, reading is the cornerstone of instruction for all learners regardless of their ability level because it sets the foundation for future progress and success in virtually all other facets of life (Matafwali, 2005, Mubanga, 2010; Mtonga, 2011; Mwanza, 2011; Kliwer and Landis, 1999). It is therefore important for children to learn how to read in the early grades. It is for this reason that early grade reading interventions have emerged as a common means to attempt to address the problem of poor reading. Mwanza-Kabaghe (2015) adds that early success in reading is a powerful predictor of later literacy achievement which in turn is strongly linked with better performance across a range of academic areas.

Successful early readers usually succeed academically while those who fail to learn to read in elementary school frequently have lifelong difficulties in knowing new information (Matthew effect: education, 2013). Educators have called this the Matthew effect, a term based on the Biblical message found in Matthew 25:29 and which states that “the rich get richer (at reading) and the poor get poorer (poor readers) worse” (Matthew effect: education, 2013). The term describes the phenomenon where students who begin their literacy education successfully continue to do well later in school, while those who begin poorly do worse (stanovich, 1986). However, the situation in many schools especially in developing nations is different as observed by Graham and Kelly (2018) who write that many students fail to read. Additionally, Mwanza-Kabaghe (2015) and Mubanga (2010) report that children

from low-income families are often exposed to fewer words, placing them on average at a disadvantage for building vocabulary and comprehension.

This is worse with children with special education needs such as those with intellectual disability. According to Alnahdi (2015:79) “intellectual disability is the significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adoptive behaviour, which covers many everyday social and practical skills”. For example, Katims (2001) states that 1 in 5 students with intellectual disability reach minimal literacy levels. Ke and Liu (2012) explain that the attention levels of children with intellectual disability is low and narrow, by and large, their memory is poor and they are slow at remembering and have difficulties recalling and their memories are often inaccurate. Slow development of reading skills may affect more than just one academic subject but may also delay language acquisition, general knowledge, vocabulary, and even social acceptance. However, a growing body of research has indicated that children with moderate or severe intellectual disability can be taught academics as a means to gain information, participate in social settings, increase their orientation and mobility, and make choices (Browder et al., 2006).

With regards to learners with intellectual disability, historically the sub skills taught to students with intellectual disability has been sight words with emphasis on functional words used in the home, community, or at work such as danger, poison, men, women, stop, and walk. Reading instruction was sometimes divided into two parts, with one focus on literacy skills and the other on sight words, presumably as a safe-guard in case the student did not learn to read (Erickson et al., 2009). This is supported by the report of Allor et al. (2010) who observe that a review of reading studies focusing on students with intellectual disability noted that although reading itself requires mastery of several related skills, most reading instruction with intellectually disabled students focuses on sub skills of reading

In Zambia, the primary goal of the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) policy is to ensure that all children especially those in the early grades (1-4) including learners with disabilities should be able to read by the time they leave lower primary school ((MESVTEE, 2013). Despite this, many Zambians have been dissatisfied with the reading performance of learners at various levels of education. Various stake holders including parents, teachers and policy makers have expressed their concern on the

poor standards of reading in primary schools as documented by many studies (e.g. Matafwali, g 2010, Mubanga, 2010; Folotiya, 2014; and Mwanza-Kabaghe, 2015).

The components of reading named by (Mubanga, 2010) included: phonemic awareness phonics instruction, fluency, vocabulary instruction, and comprehension. While most of these components are thoroughly described in the current literature about reading instruction, a few points should be explained. First, phonemic awareness is not the same as phonics! Nor is it simply auditory discrimination between sounds, but it is focusing on and manipulating units of sounds (Kabali, 2014). Second, phonics instruction can be systematic or incidental. Incidental instruction occurs when a reader struggles with a word, needs to know a phonics rule for that particular word, and then is able to generalize that rule to other similar words. This usually does not happen for students with intellectual disabilities and phonics instruction for them needs to be explicit and systematic, building on previously learned skills (Erickson et al., 2009). Third, fluency, or reading orally with speed, accuracy and expression, enables children to understand what they read. Fourth, vocabulary comprehension includes two kinds of words; those seen in print and those heard orally, and basically the more words a student knows, whether written or spoken, the more he will comprehend.

A systematic review of the literature related to instructional strategies to improve reading skills for students with intellectual disabilities by Alnahdi (2015), concluded that children with intellectual disabilities are in need to receive very intense practice and instruction to improve their reading skills, and it should be provided explicitly, systematically, and consistently. It is from this standpoint that Graham and Kelly (2018) argue that individuals with severe cognitive disabilities may use nonlinguistic communication and exhibit learning characteristics that require greater time to learn and intensive forms of instructional support.

It is against this development that recent empirical evidence suggests the need for more successful teaching as well as providing effective intervention strategies to address literacy problems in learners (May, 2012; Mubanga, 2010; Folotiya, 2014 Mwanza-Kaubaghe, 2015). However, the poor standard of reading in primary school in Zambia point to the fact that something is lacking in terms of the teaching and learning of reading skills. Paris (2005) explains that the trajectories of reading

development are determined by many factors, including teaching approaches and reading materials, teaching methods that address the sub-skills of letter identification and whole-word recognition. It is for this reason that this study was conducted to establish the teaching strategies used to teach reading by teachers at University Teaching Hospital (UTH) Special School in Lusaka,

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Empirical evidence shows that there are some instructional interventions that have been proven by many studies to be effective in helping children with intellectual disabilities improve their reading performance. Polloway, Patton, and Serna (2001), World Bank (2016) and Graham and Kelly (2018) discussed the following three general approaches: (1)Language Experience Approach (LEA): an alternative to basal series and encourages children to verbalize their experiences and thoughts.(2) Whole Language Approach: reading instructional method with expansion of language experience approach.(3) Basal Reading Approach: a curriculum used in the majority of elementary schools, which contains a number of stories and books written at different levels of difficulties.

According to Martin, Martin and Carvalho (2008) learners who struggle with reading, will struggle in all aspects of school, since reading narrative text compared to reading to learn information text are key components in all subject areas. For students who have a reading disability such as the intellectual disability, learning to read is crucial for school success.

It is not known about the instructional methods or strategies most widely used that create success for learners with intellectual disabilities. Several studies internationally and locally have been conducted on the strategies for reading to learners in schools. However, there seems to be less study conducted on the strategies used to teach reading to learners with intellectual disabilities.

Therefore, a gap exists and this study aims to identify strategies used in teaching reading at a special school Lusaka Zambia.

1.4 Purpose of the study

To establish strategies used in teaching reading skills to learners with intellectual disability at UTH Special School in Lusaka, Zambia

1.5 Research Objectives

To establish strategies teachers used in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability at UTH special school.

1.5.1 Specific Objective

- i. To identify strategies teachers, use in teaching reading to learners with intellectual Disabilities at UTH special school.
- ii. To ascertain the appropriateness of the strategies teachers used in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability at UTH special school.
- iii. To ascertain the challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability at UTH special school.

1.6 Research questions

- i. What strategies do teachers use in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability at UTH special school?
- ii. How appropriate are the strategies teachers used in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability at UTH special school?
- iii. What challenges do teachers face in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disability at UTH special school?

1.7 Significance of the study

The findings of this study may motivate the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) to find better ways of enhancing the teaching of reading because the study has highlighted the challenges teachers face in teaching reading to learners with ID. Policy makers in the Ministry of General Education may benefit from the results of this study by adopting interventional measures through policy formulation to improve teaching of reading to children with intellectual disability. Findings of this study may also help school administrators and special teachers to adopt the better teaching strategies of reading to learners with intellectual disability in schools. Furthermore, the study results may trigger further research on the literacy education

for learners with intellectual disability thereby providing more insights on the subject to enhance teaching and learning.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Behaviorist Theory of Learning Theory (BTL). The BTL is a psychology theory that was founded by John B. Watson in 1913 as a reaction to traditional grammar (Demirezen, 1988). The other notable contributors to this theory according to Ndhlovu (2015) and Seligman (2006) include Edward Thorndike, Pavlov, Skinner, Eyesenk, Dolland, Wolpe, Millerand, Bandura among others. Watson who according to Mcleod (2010) is believed to be the father of Behaviorism used Pavlov's findings on animal responses to stimuli as a basis for his work. For example, Pavlov rang a bell when his dog was going to be fed. The ringing of the bell made Pavlov's dog to salivate, because the dog had been conditioned to feed at particular time. Watson mirrored Pavlov's research findings in his conditioning experiment with a young child who he conditioned to fear a white rabbit by repeatedly pairing it with the loud clang of a metal bar (Dembo, 1994). The child's conditioned fear of a white rabbit was so ingrained in his behavior that he became fearful of other white furry objects such as a Santa mask and Watson's white hair (Watson and Rayner, 1920).

Behaviorists teaching methods tend to rely on so-called "skill and drill" exercises to provide the consistent repetition necessary for effective reinforcement of response patterns (Graduate Student Instructor Teaching and Resource Center, 2016). General classroom applications of behaviorism emphasis are on controlled practices such as imitation, drilling, repetition, memorization, mimicry and constant practice. Other methods include question (stimulus) and answer (response) frameworks in which questions are of gradually increasing difficulty; guided practice; and regular review of material.

Steele (2005) explains that the application of behaviourist theory to the classroom has generally been referred to as explicit or direct instruction. One strategy associated with structured approaches to teaching involves breaking down the tasks into small, manageable segments for teaching (Surgenor, 2010). This is particularly useful for students with learning disability as they become easily frustrated and

overwhelmed when material appears too complex initially and they often give up before even starting a task (Lerner, 2003). Additionally, students with intellectual disability have shortcomings when it comes to remembering things and processing information. Therefore, explicit instruction is the best strategy to ensure that these students remember concepts and process information to make sense of abstract ideas. Furthermore, breaking tasks into small, manageable segments for teaching will not only make it clear, but it will allow a student to remember what they learnt a long time ago.

Modeling is another important component of explicit instructional techniques (Olson and Platt, 2000) advocated by the Behaviorists. Students are more likely to remember a concept taught by use of a model or illustration than when taught without them. This theory therefore is important to the current study because it emphasizes significant skills such as imitation, repetition, reinforcement, drilling, task analysis that can be incorporated in the teaching strategies so as to enhance the teaching/learning of reading skills to learners with intellectual disability.

1.9 Delimitation of the study

Kasonde-Ng'andu (2013) says that delimitation of the study usually addresses how the study is narrowed in scope. This study was limited to school administrators, teachers and learners at UTH special school. The school was chosen because it teaches special education to children with disabilities that include those with intellectual disability.

1.10 Summary

Chapter one has given a clear roadmap of the research study. It starts by giving a background to the study explaining the benefits that a child can derive from knowing how to read. The research problem, purpose and objectives of the study have been outlined. The significance of the study has equally been highlighted. The researcher chose the Behaviourist Learning Theory to guide the study because learners with ID learn well when a lesson is repeated. Study limitations have been pointed out so is the delimitations of the study. Finally, the operational definitions of terms have also been explained. The next chapter reviews the necessary literature.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter presents the reviewed literature related to the study on establishing strategies teachers used in teaching reading skills to learners with intellectual disability. It is made up of the following sub titles: the concept of intellectual disability, historical approaches to reading instructions, the trajectory to the acquisition of reading skills, teaching strategies that can be used to teach reading, teaching reading skills at the global level, teaching reading skills in Africa and teaching reading skills in Zambia.

2.2 The concept of intellectual disability

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD, 2010) defines intellectual disability as significantly, sub average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficit in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Many also have complex communication needs; some many not use speech to communicate, others may not have reliable speech. Some may have reliable speech but their speech may be difficult for others to understand (Duffy, 2014), Rizopoulos and Wolpert (2004) further say students with cognitive disability may have poor short-term memory, low level meta-cognition skills, and poor use of logic and organization and also that some students who are labeled as having mental retardation also have motor difficulties that can affect their handwriting or their ability to hold reading material steadily.

The learning and memory capabilities of people with intellectual disability are significantly below average in comparison to peers without disabilities. Children with intellectual disability develop learning sets at a slower pace than peers without disabilities, and they are deficient in relating information to new situations (Beirne-Smith et al., 2006). To acquire information, children must attend to the learning task for the required length of time and control distractions. Children with intellectual disability may have difficulty distinguishing and attending to relevant questions in both learning and social situations (Saunders, 2001). On the contrary, Joseph and Seery (2004) are of the view that the potential for individuals with intellectual

disability to grasp and generalize literacy skills has been underestimated by many educators and researchers and Polloway et al. (2010) point out that there is limited research on effective teaching of reading to students with intellectual disability.

Learners with intellectual disabilities often face difficulties in education. However, it is not clear on the teaching strategies teachers use to teach reading to learners with intellectual disabilities in Zambia. Therefore, the researcher hopes to establishing strategies used to teach reading to learners with intellectual disabilities.

2.3 Historical approaches to reading instructions

Reading experts advocated various approaches over the years that were believed to be the best methods for teaching children to learn how to read. During the 1930s and 1940s, emphasis was placed on reading to gain meaning, using the 'look and say' method. In the 1960s and 1970s, the emphasis changed to skill development, which meant using tools, such as phonetics and other word decoding skills (Kemba, 2005). The early 1980s introduced the whole language approach, which focused on reading for meaning; this approach expanded on the whole word method by integrating the four components of language with literature: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Today teaching reading encompasses the integration of the four components of language (reading, speaking, writing and listening) into other subjects of the curriculum (Irwin, 1967).

With regards to learners with intellectual disability, historically the sub skill taught to students with intellectual disability has been sight words with emphasis on functional words used in the home, community, or at work such as danger, poison, men, women, stop, and walk. Reading instruction was sometimes divided into two parts, with one focus on literacy skills and one on sight words, presumably as a safe-guard in case the student did not learn to read (Erickson et al., 2009).

2.4 The trajectory to the acquisition of reading skills

Children learn to read by progressing through a number of developmental processes. These are letter and word recognition, decoding, comprehension as well as how fluently the learner engages with the text (Long and Zimmerman, 2009). In the same vein, students with intellectual disability have generally been taught literacy, reading inclusive using curriculum focusing on functional life skills (Katims, 2000). Through

functional skills' curricula, students are frequently taught to recognize and write limited number of sight words so as to support their participation in the community. For example, a student may be taught to recognize the word 'danger' and 'exit for safety purposes' (Duffy, 2014). It is common knowledge that for any child (whether with or without a learning disability) to learn how to read, certain critical elements of reading instruction need to be taught systematically and explicitly. According to the National Reading Panel (NRP, 2000) and Saskatchewan Learning (2004), some of the significant components of reading instruction include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. All elements need to be taught systematically and explicitly through a balanced approach. Only when all the elements are taught in a balanced approach do students have the opportunity to become proficient readers who can gain knowledge from print (Saskatchewan Learning, 2004). However, Allor et al. (2010) observe that a review of reading studies focusing on students with intellectual disability noted that although reading itself requires mastery of several related skills, most reading instruction with intellectually disabled students focuses on sub skills of reading.

2.4.1 Phonemic awareness

Phonemic awareness is the understanding that spoken words can be broken down into individual sounds; these individual sounds in words are called phonemes (Duffy, 2014). For example, the word 'cat' has the following phonemes /c/, /a/, and /t/. When teaching phonemes, Beecher and Childre (2012) advise that it is more beneficial to modify the instruction to be concrete, for instance making use of an object as a visual cue or providing more than one mode of learning such as incorporating sign language in addition to verbal instructions. The authors further provide an example by saying that if for instance when teaching the initial sounds of the word beginning with /p/ such as 'pig', it might be helpful to set out a small toy pig or make the sign for a pig to give the learner a concrete visual reminder of the sound being learned.

Phonemic awareness skills can be defined as learning to identify spoken words beginning with the same sound, identifying the sounds at the beginning and ending of spoken words, and stating the individual sounds in a spoken word. Readers must have phonemic awareness and knowledge of the alphabetic system to engage in this

route to sight word recognition. Once students have achieved this alphabetic stage of word decoding, seeing words in print facilitates learning the meaning of new words (Griffen, 2017).

2.4.2 Phonics

Phonics is the study and instruction of how letters and combinations of letters represent the individual sounds (phonemes) in a word and these sounds are blended together to make words (Duffy, 2014). Phonics instruction focuses on learning the relationship between the written letter and the letter sound in order to recognize familiar words and decoding unfamiliar words. According to Joseph and Seery (2004), phonics is defined as the system by which children learn to make letter-sound correspondences while engaged in word-recognition activities. Studies have shown that for students, who have difficulty learning letter-sound correspondence, explain and systematic phonics instruction is necessary (NRP, 2000). This means that learners are taught specifically about letter-sound correspondences through carefully planned instruction.

Using phonics to decode an unknown word is a complex operation, involving four processes. These are orthography (recognizing the visual shape of the word), phonology (matching the letters in the word to sounds), meaning (sorting through possible meanings for the word), and context (selecting the meaning of the word as it is used) (Erickson et al., 2009). Phonics then should not be taught in a vacuum, especially to students with intellectual disability who may not have adequate skills in all four areas. Furthermore, Scruggs (2008) explains that there are variety of strategies that have been used to teach phonics, these include letter-sound correspondence, phoneme blending, phoneme segmentation and sight word instruction.

2.4.2.1 Phoneme segmentation

In sequence with letter-sound correspondence and phoneme blending, phoneme segmentation is a logical step in phonics instruction (Scruggs, 2008). Phonemic segmentation refers to the ability to identify phonemes of spoken words (Hoogeveen, et al., 1989)

2.4.2.2 Sight word instruction

According to Polloway et al. (2008), sight word instruction is defined as a whole word approach through which students learn to automatically recognize important, high frequency words without decoding (Polloway et al., 2008). According to Browder et al. (2006), the main significance of teaching sight words is to promote reading for functional use in daily living. Additionally, Erickson et al. (2009) reports that the sub skills taught to students with intellectual disability in the past has been sight words with emphasis on functional words used in the home or community.

2.5 Sight Vocabulary

Many studies have shown that good readers have good vocabulary knowledge. In order to understand a text, readers need to know the meanings of individual words (Pang et al, 2000). Sight word instruction has been the most common reading approach for students with severe disabilities in the past. There have been lots of pros and cons associated with teaching sight words, especially in isolation. It is possible that sight words may not be the best approach if that is the only thing that is being taught because it does not give the students strategies to identify words that are not in their sight word vocabulary therefore, they are always limited to only the words that they have been taught. However, sight word instruction is very functional for students in terms of daily living and survival skills if the student is not able to learn phonics or decoding (Browder et al, 2010). Sight word instruction can occur through unlimited strategies such as flash cards multisensory approaches, and time delay. The biggest key to sight word instruction is generalization to other settings so that the student's sight word vocabulary is meaningful and functional.

There are a variety of ways to teach sight words to students with significant cognitive disabilities within the classroom, which will hopefully be generalized to other settings through subsequent instruction. The comprehensive research review done by Browder et al. (2006) found that there was significant evidence for teaching students with significant cognitive disabilities to read sight words using systematic prompting techniques in a repeated (massed) trial format. These techniques may include time delay and using concrete references.

2.6 Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read aloud with expression to demonstrate an understanding of what is written (Department of Education and Training in Western Australia, 2004). In other ways fluency in reading means being able to read a text accurately, quickly and with expression. Fluent readers can do this because they do not have problems with word recognition. As a result, they can focus on the meaning of a text. Recent research shows that fluency also depends on the ability to group words appropriately during reading (Pang et al, 2000). This means fluent readers recognize words quickly, but also know where to place emphasis or pause during reading. Reading fluency is the bridge between decoding and comprehension. When students are able to spend less time and energy decoding, they are able to devote more time and energy to understanding what they read (Saskatchewan Learning, 2004).

Students with limited fluency laboriously sound out words but are so focused on the process of decoding that they cannot comprehend the meaning of words and sentences. These students have difficulty with phonological processing, which is the ability to understand the relationship between words and sentences, words and syllables, and syllables and sounds (Saskatchewan Learning, 2004). However, Pang et al. (2000) warns that word recognition is necessary but not sufficient for fluent reading. The reader must construct meaning from the recognized words. Repeated reading and paired reading (also called buddy reading) are examples of activities that promote fluency through practice (Pang, et al, 2000). Fluency can be taught through oral reading, and an opportunity for feedback as the child reads (Shaywitz, 2003).

2.7 Comprehension

Comprehension skills involve understanding and acquiring meaning from oral and written words, and from the text (Griffen, 2017). Comprehension involves drawing inferences from the words and expressions that a writer uses to communicate information, ideas and viewpoints (Pang et al, 2000). The teaching of reading needs to include a range of comprehension strategies. These strategies need to be explicitly taught towards developing independent readers who engage meaningfully with text (PDST, 2017).

Despite having these trajectories to the acquisition of reading skill outlined above, it is not known which strategies teachers are using in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disabilities in Zambia. Therefore, carrying this research on establishing strategies used to teach reading skills to learners with intellectual disabilities was highly needed.

2.8 Teaching strategies that can be used to teach reading

2.8.1 Syllable Method

A syllable method to teaching reading is a method which uses syllable recognition as the primary word attack skill and is characterized by use of the syllable as the basic building block or unit for decoding words whereby learners learn syllables before reading words and text (SIL International, 1999).

2.8.2 Phonics method

Phonics, as described by Adams (1990), refers to ,a system of teaching reading that builds on the alphabetic principle, a system of which a central component is the teaching of correspondences between letters or groups of letters and their pronunciations. In this method, small units like letters and short words, along with spelling and punctuation rules, are taught in isolation, devoid of meaning. Griggs (2000) contends that the phonic method probably the best known and widely used method to teach reading. The method relies on the learners being taught the alphabet first, and then they learn the names of the letters and the sounds they make. Once that is achieved, the learners begin to blend two letters to make simple sounds. Behaviorists' scholars argue that when children learn to pronounce words correctly, meaning will follow automatically (Weaver, 1994). Systematic phonics instruction, which teaches how the alphabetic system works, eventually helps readers develop larger sight vocabularies as the words they decode become familiar (NICHD, 2000).

2.8.3 Language Experience Approach (LEA)

The Language Experience Approach (LEA) is a comprehensive beginning reading method which integrates children's language and background knowledge (UNESCO, 2004). Students relate an experience and a teacher or a parent writes down what the students say. The transcription is then used as a literacy source. It provides a more natural way in which children understand the features and functions of the written

language. This is an excellent procedure for teaching varying aspects of reading. For example, a teacher tells a child to narrate a short story such as how to water a garden; the teacher writes what the child is saying. Later, the teacher reads by pointing to each written word aloud pronouncing each word naturally. Teacher and the entire class together read the text several times aloud; later the child reads the text. For many pupils, learning to read their own words, in a meaningful context of their own story chart, is easier than grappling with the unfamiliar language and contexts of a published reading programme. Since LEA is based on personal experiences and students tell these experiences, they provide highly meaningful and comprehensible reading materials (Mensah, 2014).

In Kenya, Marima (2016) investigated the approaches used in teaching reading to early childhood classes; the study revealed that majority of pre-unit teachers used the phonics and whole-word method while majority of class 3 teachers used language experience. Phonic method of teaching was the most preferred method of teaching and the most recommended by the heads of departments. Reasons why Phonic method was the most preferred method of teaching reading were that it was easier for pupils to understand, and quickens reading ability and comprehension.

In a study by Rahayu (2013) intended to figure out how Language Experience Approach (LEA) improved students' motivation and comprehension in reading. The results of this study show that the implementation of LEA in teaching reading was quite successful. The data gained from students showed that LEA helped students improve their motivation and reading comprehensions. Most of the students (86%) responded positively towards the use of LEA during the teaching learning process. The data from observation showed that the students actively participated in learning process. The data from questionnaires also revealed that LEA helped the students increase their motivation and confidence in performing language skills. Students also enjoyed the learning process. They were interested and had motivation to learn writing through LEA.

2.8.4 The Whole Language Approach (WLA)

Richard and Schmidt (2002) and Maddox and Feng (2013) say that whole language approach is also called a word method or sight method. It is a method for teaching children to read, commonly used in teaching reading in mother tongue, in which

children are taught to recognize whole words rather than letter names as in phonics. It is usually leading to the sentence method, where whole sentence is used. The whole language proponents claimed that language should not be broken down into letters and combinations of letters and decoded (Stahl and Miller, 1989). Instead, they believe that language is a complete system of making meaning, with words functioning in relation to each other in context (Moats, 2007). The premise is that teaching is child-centered and language is acquired implicitly through the use of content rich literature and a print rich environment (Maddox and Feng, 2013).

However, the Australia Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) explain that there is no one correct or best method/approach for teaching reading. Findings from the research done by the Australian government found that learners learn reading well when an integrated approach is adopted to teach reading that explicitly teaches phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary knowledge and comprehension. Despite having the teaching strategies meant to teach reading, it is not known as to which strategies are best to teach reading to learners with intellectual disability. Hence, this study sought to establish strategies used in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disabilities.

2.9 Teaching reading skills at Global Level

Teaching reading for students with intellectual disability is a complex and difficult task. In America, Browder et al. (2006) examined the results of a comprehensive review of 128 studies that focused on teaching reading to individuals with significant cognitive disabilities.

The results indicated that students with significant developmental disabilities can gain early reading skills through intensive instruction. Another related study was conducted by Allor et al. (2010). The study was aimed at examining the effectiveness of comprehensive reading instruction on improving performance on standardized tests of reading. They assigned the 59 participants randomly to either treatment or control group. The participants IQs ranged from 40 to 69. The treatment group received comprehensive reading instruction on daily basis for 40 to 50minutes per session. They collected the data through different types of tests such as: The Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing; The Expressive Vocabulary Test; Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III; Test of Word Reading Efficiency. Factorial

ANOVA was used to analyse the collected data. The study revealed that there were significant differences between the groups. Moreover, they concluded that students with intellectual disability need to have explicit, consistent, and comprehensive reading instruction for long period of time in order to learn basic reading skills.

Similarly, Alnahdi (2015) study on teaching reading for students with intellectual disability revealed that students needed to receive very intense practice and instruction to improve their reading skills, and it should be provided explicitly, systematically, and consistently.

Fox (2015) in a study of research-based strategies for students with learning disabilities whose focus was on phonics and fluency has shown that using research-based strategies for teaching phonics and fluency improve outcomes for children with learning disabilities. The purpose of this study was a two-fold; investigating teachers' understanding and uses of research-based strategies in phonics and fluency for students with learning disabilities and creating a handbook for teachers to use to better educate students with learning disabilities struggling in the areas of phonics and fluency. The study found that half of the teachers had a good understanding of research-based strategies. The study also showed that most teachers used certain research-based strategies for phonics and fluency instruction. The perception of the availability and usability of research-based strategies among teachers was mixed. Sources of information for research-based strategies ranged from colleagues and professional development conferences to the school psychologist and the internet. The findings of this study helped develop a desktop resource for teachers highlighting research-based strategies for teaching phonics and fluency to students with and without learning disabilities.

May (2012) in the study of the effects of reading interventions on students with learning disabilities in upper elementary and middle school in Michigan, explored whether different, and readily implementable, support modalities had greater efficacy for individual student deficits. The literature suggests that greatest student benefit can be found in three interventions: Repeated Readings with Phrase Drill Error Correction; Experimental analysis study with tape preview, error correction, and choral reading; and Reciprocal Teaching. Additionally, certain reading strategies have a higher likelihood of providing greater comprehension, including: The

Component Model of Reading to pinpoint specific reading deficits; using Peer Tutoring; using the Reading Comprehension Strategy (RCS) with or without Attribution Retraining; and using both the Standardized and Individualized interventions to improve specific reading deficits.

It is clear from the reviewed literature on strategies meant to teach reading skills to learners with intellectual disabilities in other countries, it revealed that learners with intellectual disabilities need to have explicitly, consistent comprehensive reading instruction for long period of time in order to learn basic reading skills. Therefore, carrying this research on establishing strategies used to teach reading skills to learners with intellectual disabilities in Zambia is unavoidable.

2.10 Teaching reading skills in Africa

Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2014) carried out a study which sought to assess the reading habits among students and their effects on their academic performance in the eastern region of Ghana. The study confirmed that the reading habits have influence on academic performance and there was a relationship between reading habit and academic performance. The study however is not clear on whether the influence on academic performance was positive or not and it has not explained what level of reading habits influences academic performance.

Ngaka and Masaazi (2015) conducted a study of the participatory literacy learning in an African Context in Arua district, Uganda and the findings show that although pupils, parents, and community members engaged in informal literacy practices and interacted with cultural resources and written texts including information and communication technology (ICT) literacy on an everyday basis, such cultural resources, informal practices, and written texts outside the classrooms have not been adequately used to enhance participatory teaching and learning of literacy. Further, local materials development in the implementation of Uganda's current language policy was characterized by lack of local reading materials and declining literacy levels among pupils. The study however has not clearly specified the literacy strand that the study focused on and the study is equally silent on how the parents and members of the community were engaged in literacy practices.

Salvador (2011) conducted a study to ascertain teachers' views on factors contributing to low reading levels among Mozambican primary school pupils. The

findings of this study revealed that the key factors that contributed to low reading levels among primary school pupils were the automatic transitions which allowed pupils to proceed from one grade to another without being subjected to an examination; the three shift system used in suburbs as an attempt to respond to the parents demand for school vacancies; the language policy which establishes Portuguese, a foreign language, as the only medium of instruction and language of initial literacy; the short duration of the teacher training programme for primary school teachers and high teacher-pupil ratio. Other factors revealed by the study included lack of exposure to pre-schools for most children, inadequate libraries, poor school/parents' collaboration and lack of motivation on the part of the pupils.

A study conducted by Wentzel (2016) on the teachers' experiences of providing learning support for learners with mild intellectual disability revealed that all the participants agreed that reading remained a huge challenge at their respective schools, the learners were poor at reading. Other challenges were severe difficulties in comprehension and low concentration span.

Learners with ID tend to acquire more skills when a lesson is repeated for several times. Studies with the longest durations tended to report the higher reading gains (Allor et al., 2010). For example, a study conducted by Finnegan (2012), implemented two interventions within her experimental design which include synthetic phonics and the analogy phonics. The synthetic phonics intervention consisted of participants learning individual letter sounds and how to blend them to make words. The analogy phonics consisted of participants learning sounds of common consonants and common "rimes" and combining both to read words. Each treatment group received 12 phonics instruction sessions for 15-20 minutes that consisted of letter-sounds and words being presented on printed cards. Participants were asked to practice reading the words and saying the letter sounds before attempting to match pictures with the sounds/words.

Additionally, Joseph (2012) examined the use of a word box method of reading instruction that consisted of three steps. First, a rectangle on magnetic boards separated into three connected boxes was constructed prior to intervention. The instructor slowly read a single word to the student and placed a counter under each box as each sound of the word was said. The student was then prompted to place the

counters under the correct boxes as the word was spoken. Next, the student was presented with individual letters of the word and was prompted to say the sound of each letter as he or she placed the letters in the appropriate boxes. The final step in the intervention consisted of the student writing the appropriate letter in each box as he or she said the sound. All the two studies included in this review reported varying levels of successful reading outcomes with participants. Studies with the longest durations tended to report the higher reading gains. However, the impact of each intervention on the dependent variables varied from study to study. Although all the reviewed work done in Africa agree with those in western countries, it is not clear on the appropriateness of the teaching strategies used to teach reading skills to learners with intellectual disabilities. Therefore, the researcher hopes to ascertain the appropriateness of the teaching strategies used to teach reading to learners with intellectual disabilities.

2.11 Teaching reading skills in Zambia

For quite some time now, Zambia has been concerned with unsatisfactory levels of reading ability among primary school pupils in both English and Zambian Language (Kachenga, 2008).

The shared concern about low literacy levels in Zambia were confirmed by a 1995 study which was conducted under the auspices of the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ). this study found out that only 25% of Grade 6 pupils could read at the minimum level of proficiency and only 3% read at a specified desirable level (MOE; 1995). To explain and justify these literacy levels, the same study cited a number of reasons, one which was the use of unfamiliar language (English) when teaching literacy. This language factor was seen to be the major reason for most Zambian children backwardness (MOE, 1996; sample 2003).

As the measure to improve the quality of education being offered at primary school level in Zambia, a new language policy provides for introducing reading and writing in grade one in a local language (MOE, 1996) while English remains the medium of instruction for other subjects.

The scenarios cited above were part of basis for the Primary Reading Programme (PRP) which was first piloted in Northern Province in 1999, and a year later, the programme spread onto other eight provinces throughout the country.

The PRP segmented into the three coordinated approaches or literacy teaching courses, namely; the New Break through Literacy (NBTL). In grade one the Step into English (SITE) in grade two and Read On Course (ROC) from grade three to seven. When pupils enter grade one, initial literacy is introduced in a local or familiar language while literacy in English is only introduced in grade two. However, earlier in the first grade, pupils are introduced to some oral English through a course called the pathway to English and this oral English course continues in the second grade. Since its inception in 2000, the primary reading programme recorded notable success, the major one being grade one child's accelerated reading and writing in a familiar language with an improvement rate from 23% to over 60% (MOE 2002). This achievement has somehow been received with mixed feelings by some stakeholders.

However, the current policy on low literacy level takes much firmer stand for the use of Zambian language as the medium of instruction in grade 1 to 4 in all primary schools (MoE SVTEE, 2013).

This dramatic policy change is based on the advocacy of Zambian linguists who argued that the use of English instruction was not serving the nation well, for example sampa, (20005), Muyebaa, (2009), Mwila, (2011) and Tambulukani and Bus, (2011). The National Guide also finds fault with the accepted use of the seven Zonal languages in Education. However, with evidence that some school catchment areas have been found to be disadvantaged because their familiar language or language of play is not any of these seven, it has become imperative that other dialects be brought on board (MOESVTEE, 2013). The process by which this was to happen, each local community was to agree on which Zambian language would be used as medium of instruction in the first four grades.

In 2012 the policy framework was developed by means of "a consultative and participatory process", which piloted in three districts of the ten provinces (Chusa, 2013). Also, in 2013 the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) published a national literacy framework that gives a central place to Zambian language as

medium of institution. The national literacy framework bases these radical methodology changes on the unsatisfactory learning and assessment data gathered in the last eight years (CDC, 2013).

As noted above, scholars have taken keen interest in trying to offer empirical evidence on the low reading situation in Zambia. For example

Matafwali (2005) investigated the nature and prevalence of reading difficulties in the third grades of Lusaka rural and urban schools. The study utilized a number of instruments that were used to measure requisites and correlates of reading skills such as Basic Skill Assessment Tool (BASAT) and the Panga-Munthu Test (PMT). Results showed that, only a small proportion of children were able to read at a comfortable grade level. Performance was found to be generally poor with no significant difference between the rural and urban schools. The study also revealed that children showed significant weaknesses in phonological awareness, word reading, reading comprehension and spelling skills.

Msango (2010) investigated the impact of teaching and learning environments on standard four learners' literacy skills acquisition in selected primary schools in Mzuzu City in Malawi. The objectives of the study were to determine the impact of school factors, classroom factors and teacher factors on learners' literacy skills acquisition. Findings from the study revealed that the learning environment impacted on learners' literacy skills acquisition and that the impact was either positive or negative depending on the school being studied. However, how the learning environment impacted on learners' literacy acquisition hasn't been explained. The findings also revealed that school factors, classroom factors and teacher factors contribute towards the total sum of the learning environment and have a bearing on how learners acquire initial literacy skills.

Massanzi (2011) study sought to find out whether the numerous child centered methods with particular attention to Read on Literacy Course (ROC), were effective in enhancing learner performance. The findings of the study revealed among others that the one hour allocated for teaching ROC was inadequate. The study also showed that not all the teachers handling ROC were trained to teach it. Although the findings of the study revealed that schools had enough materials for teaching ROC, these

were in most cases locked in cupboards in the school manager's office. Further the study showed that most of the materials, though available, were either outdated or worn out. Furthermore, the findings revealed that teachers' responses became more objective after the administering of test items to the learners. However, learner's performance still remained generally poor. In conclusion, the study has demonstrated that ROC, as a learner-centered pedagogy is not as effective as the educational expectations would like it to reflect. There was overwhelming evidence from the findings that indicated that the levels of literacy among the learners were not improving. The performance of the learners was in great contradiction to what the teachers stated.

Mulonda (2015) conducted a study in Mongu. The findings of his study were that teachers indicated that they either 'usually' or 'always' assigned homework to learners with reading difficulties. The findings further indicated that teachers did not constantly cater for learners with difficulties when assigning homework and those teachers did not constantly involve parents in the homework of their children with reading difficulties. Finally, it was discovered that majority of teachers either 'usually' or 'always' gave feedback to learners with reading difficulties that was more teacher centered than learner centered. Teachers' homework practices were attributed to over enrolment, huge number of children with reading difficulties, inadequate time, cheating by learners, illiterate parents and parents not staying with their children.

Mwanamukubi (2013) in a study of the reading difficulties for grade six learners found that most of the grade six pupils were not able to read fluently as expected of their grade level. As they read, they committed errors such as mispronouncing, substituting, adding and omitting some words. The teachers had their own perceptions of the causes of reading difficulties and these included; language and communication problems, psychological factors and others. There was also a significant correlation between teachers' ability to identify specific reading errors and actual performance of learners. The study further revealed that teachers faced a number of challenges in teaching reading to these learners. These challenges included, inadequate teaching and learning materials, high teacher-pupil ratio and others.

It is clear from the reviewed literature above that most cited studies focused on challenges ordinary learners faced in reading and not on establishing strategies used in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disabilities. Therefore, carrying this study is necessary.

2.12 Challenges of teaching reading to learners with ID

Tandika and Kumburu (2018) conducted a study in Dodoma, Tanzania. One of the objectives of the study was to examine the challenges teachers faced in teaching reading skills among grade one and two pupils. The study revealed that inadequate supply of instructional materials (71.4%) and overcrowded classrooms (66.7%) were the major challenges that teachers in the sampled schools faced for them to provide effective classroom instruction. The authors further said that in such conditions, teachers argued that it would be difficult for instructors to achieve the lesson objectives, hence continue having a great number of pupils unable to develop sufficient reading skills. The other challenge was that of poor pupil's attendance to school and class in particular, hence this affected progressive learning and gaining continuity of reading skills.

Chuunga (2013) study focused on the teachers' practices in the teaching of reading and writing towards supporting learners with reading difficulties at lower primary schools in Monze district. The findings revealed that there were differences in the backgrounds and realities of the teachers but with similar patterns in the three types of schools. It was also evident that the teachers tried their best to teach reading but under very difficult conditions. Major among the conditions were over enrollment, teacher-pupil ratio and lack of teaching and reading materials. The results further showed that the assessment procedures that were used to identify learners with reading difficulties only worked to widen the gap between the so called 'slow learners' and 'fast learners'. There was evidence to show that the teachers' planning before teaching was affected by the challenges of over enrollment, teacher-pupil ratio and lack of teaching and learning materials. This made it difficult for teachers to consequently teach reading and support learners with reading difficulties leading to poor classroom practice

In Uganda, Medandi (2014) notes that the challenges related to reading are not only faced by learners but also by some teachers. In the 2011 assessment by the Uganda

National Examinations Board (UNEB), teachers' reading skills were also assessed. UNEB (2011) found that pupils' weak performance in literacy could have been due to the deficiency in the teachers' skills to teach, particularly reading, reflected by the teachers' weak performance in oral reading; implying that they themselves might not have been taught reading skills. This remarks implies that there are teachers in Uganda who are not fully prepared to handle the challenges involved in the teaching of reading.

A study by Hlaethwa (2013) done in inclusive schools in *Makapanstad*, South Africa, concluded that reading difficulties were exacerbated by various factors such as socio-economic factors, neurological factors, educational factors and many more. The author further mentions that most teachers were not sure what methods to use when teaching learners to read, with the majority sticking to the one-way approach to teaching reading, which hampered learners' reading abilities and encouraged low reading levels. Lack of resources also contributes immensely to learners' reading difficulties. This study however does not explain in details the socio-economic and educational factors that worsened reading, equally, the resources had not been mentioned. However, it is not clear as to what extent challenges teachers face when teaching reading to learners with intellectual disabilities. The need to undertake this study is necessary.

2.12 Summary

This chapter covered the following sub-topics: the concept of intellectual disability, historical approaches to reading instructions. It also explains the trajectory to the acquisition to reading skills which includes phonemic awareness, phonics, sight vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. Literature on teaching strategies has been reviewed and included syllabic, phonic, Language Experience Approach and Whole Language Approach. The reviewed literature from all parts of the world including Zambia has indicated that learners with ID perform poorly on reading activities and therefore need reading lessons that are consistent and systematic. Among the identifiable gaps in the reviewed literature include; few studies have been done on teaching strategies used to teach reading for learners with ID in Zambia, one study did not clearly specify the literacy strand that the study focused on and the study was equally silent on how the parents and members of the community were engaged in

literacy practices. Another study conducted in Zambia did not elaborate how the learning environment impacted on learners' performance in literacy and another study did not mention how socio-economic and educational factors worsened reading. These and many other gaps are what the present study sort to address. The next chapter explains the methodology that was used in the study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

The previous chapter gave an insight of what different researchers found in their studies, their conclusions and their recommendations. This chapter discusses the research methodology used in the study. The chapter is made of the following sub titles: research design, research size, target population, sample, sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection procedures, methods of data analysis, coding of participants and ethical issues.

3.2 Research design

The study used a qualitative descriptive design. Crotty (2005) writes that a research design is a method used to gather information from various sources in order to generate answers to research problems. On one hand, a research design according to Kasonde-Ng'andu (2013) is a structure of research that holds the elements in a research project together. In essence, a research design locates the researcher in the frame of mind to get to places where to find information that was relevant to the question in mind. A descriptive research design was employed in order to obtain extensive results on the teaching strategies used to teach reading to learners with ID. Dawson (2013) defines qualitative research as a research that explores attitudes, behaviour and experiences through such methods as interviews or focus groups in order to get an in-depth opinion from participants. According to Creswell (2009), descriptive research is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. This design allowed the researcher to bring out the participant's views and opinions on the subject in a more elaborate manner in order to provide concrete solutions to the study. This study employed a research approach with an orientation to the phenomenological research perspective. Interview guides and observations checklist were used as the method for data collection to answer the research question "strategies used to teach reading to learners with intellectual disabilities at a special school."

Dowson (2013:14) defines qualitative research as "exploring attitudes, behaviour and experiences through such methods as interview or focus groups in order to get an in – depth opinion from participants." In other words, the qualitative approach was

employed as it need in-depth views, ideas and knowledge from the participants' own perception and not researcher's fixed responses on intellectual disabilities.

3.3 Population

Kombo and Tromp (2006), Creswell (2009) and Kasonde-Ng'andu (2013) write that a target population in the research study is a set of cases, objects or events of interest to the researcher from which a sample is drawn and to which the research findings would be generalizable. In the current study, the target population comprised 43 special education teachers and 3 administrators from a selected special school of Lusaka district.

3.4 Sample size

A sample can be said to be a smaller group or subject of the accessible target population. It has the characteristics Of a larger group or population (Kombo and Tromb, 2006). It is carefully selected in order to be representative of the whole entire population. Kasonde Ng'andu (2013) says a sample is a subset of the population taken to be representative of the whole study population. Sampling itself is a process of drawing a sample from a population. It is done in order to reduce the cost and time of doing a research. A sample also helps to reduce on the number of participants in the research by making it manageable as well as controllable on the part of the researcher (Mugenda and Mugenda,2003).

In this study the sample was made of 10 participants consisting of 8 special teachers who were teaching learners with intellectual disability. One head teacher and 1 deputy head teacher. Below is table 1 showing the number of teachers who participated in the study and their teaching experience.

Table 1: Teaching experience

Number of years taught	Number of teachers
1-3 years	1
4-7 years	3
8-11 years	2
12 years and more	2
Total	8

The table indicates that 8 teachers were interviewed. They all at one time taught the learners with intellectual disabilities. 1 teacher taught between 1-3 years, 3 teachers taught between 4-7 years, 2 teachers taught between 8-11 years and 2 taught for more than 12 years. Majority of teachers had taught for 4-12 years implying they were expected to have adequate information pertaining to the teaching strategies that were used to teach reading to learners with ID.

With regards to the school administration, two of them said they had been in administration for 6 years.

3.4.1 Teacher's characteristics

Eight teachers were interviewed. They all at one time taught learners with intellectual disabilities. Class teacher E (T E) is a special education diploma holder worked for more than 12 years teaching early childhood. Class teacher 1 (T1) is diploma holder. She has worked for 3 years. Class teacher 2 (T2) is a diploma holder from ZAMISE and worked for 4 years. Class teacher 3 (T3) has worked for more than 12 years. She has a master of education in special education from Oslo's university. Class teacher 4 (T4) has a bachelor of degree in special education from the university of Zambia and she has worked for 7 years. Class teacher 5 (T5) has a diploma in special education from ZAMISE and he has worked for 2 years. Class teacher 6 (T6) has a primary teacher's certificate and has worked for 12 years. Class teacher 7 (T 7) worked for 4 years and has a diploma in special education from ZAMISE and still upgrading from the university of Zambia in the same field.

3.5 Sampling procedure

Johnson and Christensen (2008) describe sampling as a process of selecting a sample from a population. The authors further say that sampling allows one to study the characteristics of a subset (called the sample) selected from a larger group (called population) to understand the characteristics of the larger group. Purposive sampling was used to select all the participants. In purposeful sampling, a researcher selects participants because they have some defining characteristics that make them the holders of data needed in the study (Creswell, 2011). Whereas Gall et al. (2007) postulate that the goal of purposive sampling is to select cases that are likely to be information rich.

3.6 Research instruments

Research instruments are tools for data collection. This study used two research tools; semi structured interviews and observation checklists.

3.6.1 Semi-structured interview

Face to face semi- structured interview were used for the special teachers and administrators. Ghosh (2011) defines interviews as a systematic way in which a researcher enters imaginatively into a life of a comparative stranger who had data that the researcher requires. Interviews provided flexibility and the ability to probe and clarify responses and they provided high response rates. Even though interview were costly and time consuming, they were used in this study because they allowed for direct interaction with the participants and the collection of in-depth information that other instruments such as questionnaires may not gather. The study utilized semi- structured interviews to get responses from the teachers and administrators in a more probing manner on issues relating to the teaching strategies employed to teach reading to learners with ID.

3.6.2 Observational Checklists

Observation checklists were very important as they helped in assessing the strategies and materials used in the achievement of reading skills by the learners with intellectual disability. Observation allows the researcher to formulate their own version of what is occurring independent of the participants (Gall et al., 2007; Robson, 2002).

The current study adopted the checklist that was devised by Mubanga (2010). Even though the observation checklist was not meant to be used for learners with intellectual disability, the current researcher finds this observation checklist useful in assessing the teaching strategies used by teachers to teach reading skills to learners with ID. The checklist was adjusted to suit this study by including teaching strategies used, learner engagement and use of concrete objects on the methodology section.

3.7 Procedure for data collection

Data collection can simply be defined as gathering of information in order to prove or refute some facts. Kombo and Tromp (2006) argue that researchers collect data to

help policy makers plan properly and effectively by influencing progressive and legislative policies and regulations. Before going to collect data, the researcher collected an introductory letter from the Assistant Dean for Postgraduate (School of Education) and took it to District Education Board Secretary's (DEBS, Lusaka district) to seek permission to conduct the study in the district. At the school level, permission was sought from head teacher who linked the researcher to the teachers. The data collected during the interviews was recorded and later transcribed in a note book to allow for member checking and facilitate data analysis. The researcher sought consent from the participating special teachers before interviewing them.

3.8 Pilot Testing

The instruments (especially the interview guides) were piloted and tested in two special schools in Lusaka District. The two schools that were used in pilot testing did not take part in the main study. The rationale behind this was to ensure the instruments were clear to the respondents so as to enhance the reliability of the study. Questions that were not clear to the respondents were corrected. For example, after interviews with teachers, deputy head teacher and Head teacher a number of findings emerged. It was observed that certain questions needed to be adjusted. There was need to include a question on teacher's experiences in teaching learners with intellectual disabilities at the study site.

3.9 Data Analysis

Gall et al. (2007) state that interpretational analysis of data is a process of examining case study data closely in order to find constructs, themes and patterns that can be used to describe and explain the phenomenon under study. Data from interview guides were first thoroughly read by the researcher to gain familiarity of the responses. These were then sorted out, classified and categorized under major themes which included teaching strategies, appropriateness of the teaching strategies and the challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with ID. The data was presented using tables and verbatim.

3.10 Coding of Participants

For easy identification, participants and their contributions to the study, codes were assigned as follows: class teacher E (CTE), class teacher 1(CT1), class teacher 2

(CT2), class teacher 3(CT3), class teacher 4(CT4), class teacher 5(CT5), class teacher 6(CT6), and class teacher 7(CT7),

3.11 Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted on a small sample in the selected special school of Lusaka district in Lusaka province. The restriction of the study to selected special school of Lusaka makes the findings applicable to the study school only and may not be generalised to other schools in Zambia that may have similar learners.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that the purpose of this study was fully and clearly explained to the participants before conducting the study. No respondent was forced to participate in the present study. Confidentiality was observed by ensuring anonymity for all the respondents. The researcher was open and honest in dealing with respondents. Respect and dignity for human respondents was highly upheld. Findings of the study were reported with the highest possible objectivity and honesty. No name of study participants was recorded in this study instead characteristics were used in the published results. This was done in order to protect the subjects' privacy, frictions, names and sometimes changes in subjects. All the participants were assured that the information they provided was solely for academic use and would be treated with the confidentiality it deserved.

3.13 Summary

The study used the descriptive research design. The population comprised all the teachers and school administration of U.T.H Special School. The sample comprised 8 teachers and 2 school administrators. The sampling techniques used were purposive and the semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and observation checklist were used to collect data. Data was analyzed using themes and ethical issues were considered. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

The previous chapter presented the methodology used in this study. This chapter presents the findings according to themes that emerged in interviews and observation checklist. The findings were presented according to the research objectives which include the teaching strategies, appropriateness of the teaching strategies, and the challenges teachers faced when teaching reading to learners with intellectual disabilities.

4.2 Findings on the teaching strategies used

The first objective was aimed at establishing the strategies teachers used in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability. The participants were initially asked to explain the specific training that equipped them to teach reading to learners with intellectual disability, all the teachers said they did not undergo any special training. They further explained that they were using the knowledge they acquired from the colleges/universities and from experience. One teacher (T1) explained:

'We do not have any training as a district or school on how best literacy can be taught to these learners.'

Teachers were asked how often they were monitored by the school head teacher to verify on the general teaching of literacy particularly reading in school to learners with intellectual disability. The respondents indicated that they were monitored one to three times in a term. They equally said external monitors rarely visited the school for monitoring the teaching of reading in the school. One teacher (T2) said the following:

'My head teacher or the deputy observes me once in a term; the only time they observe us twice is at the time of filling in appraisal forms. Hence some teachers do not even mind what they teach as they know no one questions them on the performance of the children in reading.'

The other question required the teachers to mention the specific teaching strategies that they employed when teaching reading. The responses are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Teaching strategies used in teaching reading

Response	Frequency
Word card/picture	3
Dictation	2
Syllabic method	2
Individual reading	2
Pair reading	3
Group reading	2
Question and answer method	2
Language Experience Approach (LEA)	1
Phonic	5
Total	22

Majority of the respondents (5) indicated that phonic method was the most preferably strategy used to teach reading. One male teacher (T5) had this to say when asked about the teaching strategies he was using:

‘Sometimes I get a chart containing letters of the alphabet then I make sure I put the letters in order and ask the children one by one to read the letters of the alphabet.’

On the other hand, 3 respondents, that is teachers (T3), (T4), and (T5) indicated that they used word card/picture method to teach reading. Other methods such as dictation, syllabic, individual reading, pair reading, group reading, question and answers all had the same response and use of LEA was the least strategy used with 1 teacher indicating that she used the method. Generally, the most used teaching strategy was phonics and word card/picture.

A grade two teacher (T2) said the following:

‘I also use look and say method where a child looks at the picture and says what he/she thinks it is.’

4.3.1 Observations done in classrooms on the reading lessons

Reading lessons were observed in eight classes (early grade, level 1, grade 2, 3, 4, 5 and grade 6). Five aspects which included; classroom environment, lesson procedures, teaching aids/other resources, assessment and feedback and methodology were considered in the checklist and these were scored as available and good, available but poor and not available. As for classroom organizations, all of them were generally rated as being good; similarly, all the classrooms had good furniture.

Lesson preparation was poorly done. Nevertheless, lessons delivery was generally good and the teachers managed their time well. In terms of teaching aids, the researcher found that four teachers used teaching aids well; all the other four did not use teaching aids. With regards to usage of concrete objects, only three teachers used them but they were poorly used.

Four teachers used question and answer method very well to enhance understanding among the learners; four however used question and answer but they were rated poor. In terms of motivation, all the teachers motivated their learners through clapping and saying *‘good boy, good girl’* after a learner answered correctly. Teachers generally did not attend to each individual learner. Assessment was done in five classes but was poorly done, in the three classes; teachers did not assess the learners due to time factor. Overall, the assessments were poorly done.

Six teachers used phonics in teaching literacy and the method was rated good. The other two teachers used question and answer method and they used the methods very well as well hence were rated good.

4.4 Findings on the appropriateness of the teaching strategies teachers used

The second objective was to ascertain the appropriateness of the strategies teachers used in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability at a special school.

The teachers were asked to state the relevance/appropriateness of the teaching strategies used by teaches in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disability. The responses were as shown in table 3:

Table 3: Relevance/appropriateness of the teaching strategies

Teaching strategy	Appropriateness
Paired reading	- Teachers were able to respond to children's reading more effectively - Learners were able to share ideas
Question and answer method	- Encouraged learners to think - It motivated learners - Increased attention span
Word picture	- Helps children to know words easily
Phonic	- learners develop the understanding of letter-sound relationships
Dictation	- enabled learners to learn the word spellings
Syllabic method	- Helps learners to understand that words are made of different sounds
Group reading	- Those who knew helped those who did not know - It was easier for the teacher to attend to a small group

Contributing on the relevance and appropriateness of the teaching strategies used by the teachers, one teacher (T5) explained that:

‘Using phonemes to teach reading is very important because it enables learners to learn the letter-sound relationship.’

A teacher (T6) explained the following on the relevance of group work teaching strategy:

‘Group reading is very important to learners because the learners will be able to share ideas, this one may be able to understand the first step and the other understood the last step, so they will be able to share ideas, doing so will make them learn better.’

When the deputy head and the head teacher were asked to state the relevance of the teaching strategies used by teachers in teaching reading, they responded that the strategies were not relevant and effective since the curriculum that was used was for the so called ‘normal children’. The deputy head further suggested that there was need for government to develop a curriculum for learners with intellectual disability. She said there was need to design work according to the attention span of the learners with intellectual disability

The other question was the problems learners faced when learning reading. All the teacher participants confirmed that the learners faced problems such as difficulties in single word reading, sounding out words/letters, reading sight words, comprehension, poor attention span, inadequate phonological processing, for instance, they could not understand that sentences are made of words.

4.5 Challenges teachers faced in teaching reading

The third objective was aimed at ascertaining the challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability at a special school.

Further, teachers were asked to mention the challenges they faced when teaching reading skills to learners with ID. The responses are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4: Challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with ID

Response	Frequency
Difficult to recall what they had learnt	5
Learners find difficulties to pronounce words	3
Inadequate teaching and learning resources	7
Absenteeism	4
Short attention span	3
Teachers take more time to modify teaching/learning materials	2
Parents do not help in home work	2
Total	29

The table indicated that the major challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading were inadequate teaching/learning resources. One teacher (T7) elaborated:

'It's not easy to teach literacy to learners with intellectual disability bearing in mind that we do not have specific literacy books meant for such learners and the pupils' books in most cases are in short supply.'

The second challenge according to the teachers was that learners with intellectual disability had problems to recall what they had learnt. A male teacher (T 5) said the following:

'These learners have problems in remembering what you teach them, what they learn today, come the following day, they will have forgotten almost everything, this is why we advocate for their own curriculum.'

Absenteeism due to various reasons such as illness was another challenge with 4 responses. A grade two female teacher (T 2) said:

'Absenteeism is a major factor due to illness and others do not come to school because of lack of transport.'

Some respondents said learners had difficulties in pronouncing words. Other challenges on the part of the learners included short attention span and speech problems. A grade four female teacher (T 4) explained:

'Challenges are that these children it is not easy for them to grasp any content, they cannot store information for a longer time.'

Additionally, all the teacher participants confirmed that the learners faced problems such as difficulties in single word reading, sounding out words/letters, reading sight words, comprehension, inadequate phonological processing, for instance, they could not understand that sentences are made of words.

Other teachers indicated that they took a lot of time to modify teaching aids and others said parents were not helping their children to answer the homework.

Having identified the challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with ID, the follow up question was on what should be done to solve the identified problems. The teachers suggested that government through the Curriculum

Development Centre (CDC) must develop a curriculum specifically for learners with intellectual disability. A grade six teacher (T 6) suggested that:

‘The ministry should modify the curriculum to make it simple for children with intellectual disability to understand.’

When teachers were asked to suggest how best reading could be taught, their responses were as follows in the Table 5 below.

Table 5: Suggestions on how to teach reading to learners with ID

Response	Frequency
Task analysis	5
Use of small groups when teaching	4
Use of concrete teaching/learning aids	5
Use of music	1
Total	15

Many responses from the teachers indicated that task analysis and use of concrete teaching/learning aids were the good techniques that could be incorporated in the teaching strategies to teach reading. Others preferred the use of small groups. Apart from the above, one teacher (T 1) observed:

‘Teachers must know the strategies to use the individual learner for example they are those who get settled only when you play music.’

They also recommended that government must procure enough teaching and learning materials such as teacher guide books and readers for the learners with intellectual disability. A grade three teacher (T 3) said:

‘The teaching and learning materials should be available so that we teach the learners things that they are able to see not abstract.’

With regards to assessment, the teachers said there must be an assessment tool specifically made for the intellectual disabled learners. Learners must be assessed regularly so as to ascertain their level of understanding.

The head teacher and the deputy head were asked to state their views on the relevance of the teaching strategies used, both said the strategies were not relevant effective since the curriculum that was used was for the so called ‘normal children’. The deputy head further suggested that there was need for government to develop a special adopted curriculum for learners with intellectual disability. She said there was need to design work according to the attention span of the learners with intellectual disability.

When a follow up question was asked to teachers how best they think parents could help in the teaching reading to learners with intellectual disability, their responses are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: How parents could enhance the teaching/learning of reading

Response	Frequency
Home work to be given regularly	3
Parents to rehearse with teachers on how to handle home work	5
Parents to be signing in the excise books	2
Total	10

Many teachers felt that parents needed to agree with teachers on how to handle homework. Three responses indicated that homework must be given regularly and two responses indicated that parents should be signing in the exercise books of their children.

A teacher (T E) elaborated when asked about remedial work:

‘As you know these children, one lesson plan can be used for the whole week because the learners take time to understand, they are different from the so called ‘normal’ so they need to have more time for remedial work until they are able to understand.’

The last question was whether parents were involved in ensuring learners with intellectual disability acquire literacy skills. The respondents said that most parents had negative attitude towards homework. For example, learners' books were returned to teachers without being signed by the parents. One teacher (T 7) made the following suggestion:

'Parents should make sure they help their children in homework, it is very important for parents to check books for their children so that they can see how they are performing.'

4.5 Summary

The chapter has presented the teaching strategies that teachers were using to teach reading which are phonics, individual method, dictation, syllabic, pair and group reading, word card/picture, LEA, and question and answer. The appropriateness of the teaching strategies has also been presented. The major challenges teachers faced included inadequate teaching/learning materials, absenteeism, learners had difficulties to recall what they learnt and most learners had speech problems. Further it has been suggested that teachers need to adjust instruction, learning environment and materials in order to accommodate pupils' diversity and help all the learners acquire reading skills. The next chapter discusses the presented findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Overview

The previous chapter presented the findings of the study. In this chapter the findings of the study on strategies used to teach reading to learners with intellectual disabilities have been discussed. The discussion has been guided by the following research objectives of the study.

- i. To establish strategies used in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disabilities
- ii. To ascertain the appropriateness of the strategies used in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disabilities.
- iii. To ascertain the challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disabilities.

5.2 Teaching strategies used in teaching reading

When asked if teachers were trained specifically in teaching reading to learners with ID, the findings showed that all the teachers did not undergo any special training. These findings agree with the assertions of Katims (2000) that one factor contributing to the low numbers of who are able to read is that typically teachers who teach such learners are provided very little training on how to teach reading. The author further says that the focus of college courses often include very limited information on how to teach reading or no information at all. Ghaleb (2015) is of the opinion that special education teachers need to be aware of the effective instructional strategies to teach reading to students with intellectual disability. This is because classroom effectiveness of teachers heavily depends on their knowledge of the subject matter and their pedagogical skills. Unfortunately, most teachers are not oriented towards helping poor readers in their classes. In their training, they are not adequately prepared to teach all children according to their needs. Therefore, even if the reading materials were provided, the reading skills of the learners would not improve because the educator who happens to be the teacher in this case does not have knowledge on how to help the learners acquire reading skills (Kalindi, 2005). There is need therefore for the school administration to organize workshops where

teachers handling learners with ID gather to share knowledge on how teach reading to these learners.

On how often the school administrators monitored teachers in each term. The teachers confirmed that they were monitored twice in term. This was done in order to see if teachers were on track with the school policy as well as the policy guidelines of the MoGE concerning the implementation of reading program. Monitoring of schools is an important aspect of ensuring that teaching/learning is enhanced according to the set standards. This is line with the Ministry of Education (1997) policy that argues that the co-business of the Standards Department is to ensure that quality learning and teaching comes first in all teaching institutions. The school administration are key in ensuring the teachers give reading the seriousness it deserves as this reading strand is vital in the lives of learners with ID. They should as well acquit themselves with skills/strategies on how to teach reading, doing so will enable them help the teachers teach reading skills effectively.

Pertaining to the main teaching strategies that teachers used to teach reading, the presented findings have clearly shown that majority of the respondents indicated that phonic method was the most preferably strategy used to teach literacy to learners with ID. One teacher said that sometimes she got a chart containing letters of the alphabet then put the letters in order and ask the children one by one to read the letters of the alphabet. This was in line with Lemons et al. (2016) who said that phonics has been a reading strategy that has been used for many years, died down and then returned to again.

Another aspect of phonics instruction observed was phoneme blending, which typically follows the training of letter-sound correspondences. Since the student had difficulties in producing speech, teachers used pictures to which the student could point. Some teachers used picture cards to model how phonemes could be blended into words. This was done by beginning to show the child a picture, for example, a male teacher who taught on domestic animals and birds whose names start with letter 'd' used some pictures such that of a dog and a duck. Research has shown that in order for students to learn to read they need "explicit phonics instruction" and "some evidence exist that students with moderate intellectual disability can acquire phonics skills. Ideally, phonics instruction includes both phonemic awareness (sounds in

words) and phonics (how sounds are represented by letters and combinations of letters).

In the same vein, another instruction under phonic method also observed was sight word instructions as a whole word approach through which students learnt to automatically recognize important words. This was done by displaying the following sight words *want, can and should on a flash card*. The teacher displayed each word on a flash card and taught each word at a time. For example, the word ‘*want*’ was displayed on a flashcard which was shown to the learners. The teacher read the word several times to enhance understanding, later, the teacher told the three learners to say the letters in the word, the teacher asked the learners to say the vowels that were in the word, she asked them to later trace the letters. The learners were also told to write the word on a chalkboard. At the end of the lesson, the learners’ performance was much better. This finding is in line with Beecher and Children (2012) commendation that employing a direct instruction such as flashcard procedure increase important and functional academic skills for students with wide-range of disabilities. It was also observed that students with intellectual disability need a longer amount of time to acquire phonemic awareness skills.

According to Browder et al. (2009), one of the rationales for teaching sight words is to promote reading for functional use in daily living. Sight word instruction has been the most common reading approach for students with severe disabilities in the past. However, sight word instruction is very functional for students in terms of daily living and survival skills if the student is not able to learn phonics or decoding. Sight word instruction can occur through unlimited strategies such as flash cards, multisensory approaches, and time delay. The biggest key to sight word instruction is generalization to other settings so that the student’s sight word vocabulary is meaningful and functional.

On group reading, one teacher explained that at times the learners were divided into groups of three members per group comprising members of different abilities, once they are in groups, a short passage to read is given to each group, then each learner will read in a rotational form, in the process those with reading problems were assisted by their peers in the group. In support, Mwanamukubi (2013) states that the other way to work with students who are learning to read is to get students actively

involved in conversations around text that they have read. When providing instruction in groups, learners get motivated to participate and increase their attention to know in order to reach at the same level like others. However, how a teacher sets up small groups is critical to ensure that all children succeed. In developing the small group, teachers should keep in mind group size and children's abilities (Tara et al, 2012).

The other teaching strategy used was dictation. Dictation as a teaching method was used by one male teacher. After the teacher taught the names of the domestic animals and birds whose names start with the letter d' he used spelling dictation so as to give the learners an opportunity to practice the learnt words. The teacher told the class:

'I am going to say the word 'dog' three times then I want you to write the spelling correctly.'

After the learners wrote the word, the teacher went around to see what they had written. Only two learners out of six answered correctly. After all the learners were helped to write the word correctly, they were told to read the word loudly one by one of which most of the learners managed to decode the word.

In an early grade, a teacher demonstrated how to use the syllabic method to teach reading. The teacher was teaching vocabulary about the different types of furniture found in class such as table and chair. As for the word 'table', she said the word *table* slowly whilst pointing at the table. After pronouncing the word for several times, the teacher asked the learners one by one to say the first syllable (*ta*) and later they were asked to say the last syllable (*-ble*). Some learners were able to say the two syllables correctly. Anita et al. (2008) assert that teachers should start teaching by giving simple assignments to the pupils before moving to more complexes as this will assist the teacher to note the pupil's progress on reading and writing.

The use of Language Experience Approach (LEA) was the least strategy used with 4.5% responses. A lesson where a teacher utilized this method was observed. A pupil was told to narrate a short story of interest and the pupil narrated the story. The teacher transcribed what the pupil said thereafter the teacher wrote the short story on the chalkboard and he told the pupils in the class to read the story using choral reading. According to Paige (2011) and Paige et al. (2012), choral reading provides

flexibility for the instructor as well as anonymity for struggling readers as they are concealed within a group of voices. The learners struggled to read the story as a group and the teacher read for them and told them to repeat after her. Performance however was not good even when it came to individual reading, even the child who narrated the story found it hard to read what he said. This finding is in tandem with the observations made by Caffrey and Fuchs (2007) that students with intellectual disability demonstrate lower levels of reading achievement than students with other disabilities.

The question and answer method was used by teachers as well to teach literacy reading skills. For example, a teacher used a chart of a drawing of a picture of boy who was sleeping on a mat under a tree. The teacher displayed the chart on the wall and asked the learners to say what the boy was doing. The learners gave variety of answers which were not answering the questions;

the teacher continued asking questions as she explained so as to make them understand what the boy was doing and finally one boy gave the correct answer. The teacher wrote the sentence on the chalkboard that described what the boy was doing and told the learners to read the same sentence. One advantage of the teaching strategy was that learners showed some concentration on the lesson.

The study also revealed that most of the teaching strategies were not taught in isolation. One lesson incorporated two to three teaching strategies. For example, individual reading, group reading and question and answer were used when the teacher used syllabic method to teach reading. Generally, the study has revealed that majority of the learners were not able to read. It was found that majority of the learners with ID were in the red level (meaning most of them were not able to read) because of their disability. This finding agrees with Erickson, (2009) who observed that students with intellectual disability often struggle in many areas related to reading, including comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and more.

It was found that learning to read is a gradual process; children learn to read letters in the alphabet, the next day the child will be able to read words, then sentences and so on. Guppy and Hughes (1998) argue that breaking the topic according to pupils' level is not enough, teachers are supposed to walk the pupil through the broken tasks

by reading with them and for the pupil before letting him/her read on his own as this helps in capturing the pupil's attention as his/her peers read independently.

It can be said that teachers should create an accepting classroom environment that accommodates all pupils by giving opportunities through cooperative learning, peer tutoring, play times and after-school team sports which makes the pupils feel that they are equal and belong to the same group hence this will raise their self-esteem. Fostering an enjoyment of reading can be achieved in a variety of ways by ensuring a print rich environment which provides a broad range of reading material matched to children's stages of development and interests (Lipson et al., 2004)

Apart from observing the lesson delivery so as to assess the teaching strategies that teachers were using, observations were also done on other aspects such as the learning environment and the use of concrete teaching aids. The findings were that the classroom environments were conducive for reading. Kemba (2005) posits that the classroom environments are one of the key elements in enhancing children's progress in learning to read and therefore proposes that the environment should be one that provides opportunities for the integration of literacy with other areas of the curriculum and with all aspects of language arts: reading, speaking, writing, viewing and listening. However, there was a danger of having talking walls. This is because learners with ID normally do have other associated disabilities such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (ADHD), hence having walls full of writing could distract the learners. This is why Piffner (2011) says the culture of the classroom can literacy lesson

As for classroom organizations, all of them were generally rated as being good and the classrooms generally had good furniture. UNESCO (2004) note that an appropriate physical arrangement of furniture, material selection, and the attractive, informative appearance of the classroom offer a setting that contributes to teaching and learning. With regards to lesson preparation, generally the teachers did not do a good job because some teachers taught literacy lesson minus a lesson plans and others had their lesson plans incomplete. Nevertheless, lesson delivery was generally fine. It was found that teachers followed the steps well in a literacy lesson. That is from introduction to conclusion. In terms of teaching aids, the researcher found that four teachers used teaching aids well; all the other four did not use teaching aids. With

regards to usage of concrete objects, few used them and those who made use of the concrete teaching aids did not use them correctly. It is for this reason that some respondents emphasized the use of more concrete objects always to enhance understanding. They said the teaching and learning materials should be available so that teachers can teach the learners things that they are able to see not abstract.

In the same vein, the respondents suggested that every teacher teaching reading to learners with intellectual disability must find time to administer remedial work every after a lesson. They further suggested that remedial work should be done on a daily basis to improve performance. Some teachers used question and answer method very well to enhance understanding among the learners. In terms of motivation, all the teachers motivated their learners through clapping and saying 'good boy, good girl after a learner answered correctly. Motivation is very critical to ensuring children develop both the skill and the will to engage in literacy activities. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (2011), states that positive attitude and motivation are vital for progression in literacy.

In terms of parents helping in homework, the study found that the parents were not helping. The respondents said that most parents had negative attitude towards homework. Some teachers therefore suggested that parents should rehearse with teachers on how to handle home work. On the other hand, teachers said some parents were not helping in the homework because they did not know how to read and write and others said they were too busy to have time to help their children in home work. The National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS, 2012) explains that in schools that are situated in areas of economic and social disadvantage, some parents may feel unable to become actively involved due to their own lack of reading confidence and/or reading competence, hence it is suggested that one way to increase parent involvement in reading instruction is to train parents to tutor/help their children and implement effective reading interventions. Similarly, Kemba (2005) is of the view that an effective reading programme must be planned to deal with many other obstacles in and around the school system. They include very large classes, frequent absences, illiterate parents, and few opportunities for reading out of school, since it is not a pastime for some communities.

5.3 Relevance and appropriateness of the strategies

With regards to the second objective which was aimed at assessing how significant the teaching strategies were. Some respondents such as the head teacher said the strategies were not effective since the curriculum that was used was for the so called 'normal children'. Contrary, the teachers said that most of the methods used in teaching reading to children with intellectual disability were effective and appropriate. For example, the use of group reading is one of the strategies recommended by the NRP (NICHD, 2000) because they enable learners to work together and learn from one another. The respondents said the strategy enabled the teachers to attend to each group member thereby helping the learners to understand.

Ford and Opitz (2008) similarly add that small groups allow the teacher to model to learners what they are learning. The teachers explained also that group reading enabled the learners especially those who were able to communicate verbally to share ideas. Shared reading allows students to enjoy and learn from texts that they may not yet be able to read independently (Schnorr and Fenton, 2008). In one observation, a teacher divided the learners in groups of three and gave them a short paragraph to read as a group. Research shows that beginning readers benefit most from being taught explicit skills during intensive small group instruction. The small-group, differentiated reading model enables teachers to focus on specific skills needed by varied groups of children (Tyner, 2003). They further said the method helped to strengthen the relationship and build a positive relation between the teacher and the learners, which are necessary ingredients in the learning process. It also allows learners to see the teacher's mouth and how sounds are produced since they are seating near the teacher. Additionally, Amendment al. (2009) summaries the importance of using group work when they point out that small-group instruction is more effective than whole-group instruction because teachers can differentiate instruction to meet each student's needs, better match instruction to each student's level, and respond to children's reading more effectively.

With regards to paired reading, the respondents said the method was advantageous because it enabled learners to share ideas and also that the teachers were able to respond to the learners more effectively. Bercikova (2007) also writes that one merit

of paired reading is that pair work activities encourage co-operation between students since, in order to complete a task successfully, they have to work together and help create a very positive learning atmosphere in class. However, Shanahan (2006) is of the opinion that when learners with reading difficulties are doing paired or group reading, they need the teacher to monitor what they are doing. The author further says paired reading is a very good strategy to use in classrooms where there are no teaching assistants. On one hand, one disadvantage of using this method is that teachers sometimes do not want to use pair work because using pair work means that many learners are speaking at the same time, hence it becomes a daunting task for the teacher to control all students and to notice what they are saying (Bercikova, 2007).

As for the use of phonic method, respondents said it was the best method that enabled learners to develop the understanding of letter-sound relationships. This is in line with Marima (2016) who also is of the view that phonics method is probably the best known and widely used method in teaching of reading as it relies on children being taught the alphabet first. They learn the names of the letters and the sounds they make, once they have learnt the letter sounds, they begin to blend two letters to make simple words then three letters. Browder et al. (2009) also concluded that students who master phonemic awareness skills in their early grades are more likely to become effective readers than students who do not have these skills. Providing phonemic awareness instruction in early grades is vital for the reading development among learners with ID because they do not easily develop phonemic awareness skills.

Pertaining to syllabic method, the respondents said it assisted learners to understand that words are made up of different syllables in which a word is separated when it is spoken or written. SIL International (2000) notes that a syllable method to teaching reading is a method which uses syllable recognition as the primary word attack skill and is characterized by use of the syllable as the basic building block or unit for decoding words whereby learners learn syllables before reading words and text.

The question and answer method encouraged learners to think in a way it made learners to concentrate on the lesson. Adams (1990) cited in Ellis (2003) argues that the core principle of the Socratic method of teaching is the idea that it is essential to develop students' critical thinking skills instead of teachers simply providing them

with prescriptive answers. Another way to put this is to say that the method encourages divergent rather than convergent thinking.

5.4 Challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with ID

The study revealed that the major challenges teachers encountered in teaching literacy to learners with ID were lack of teaching and learning materials. The teachers said there were no specific books to use to teach reading to learners with ID. They further said they were left with no option but to use the ordinary books meant for learners without disabilities. Hence, this created a lot of problems for the teachers. In the quest to try to differentiate the materials to the level of the learner with ID, the study found that teachers spent more time to modify the materials at the expense of teaching. Related findings were reported by Chuunga (2013) whose study revealed that the teaching of reading to learners with reading difficulties were hampered by many challenges that included lack of teaching and learning resources. In the same line, Kemba (2005) writes that the consequence of such a situation is that it is difficult to create an effective learning environment. The author goes on to suggest that all pupils should be provided with all the books and materials they need to create interest and stimulate the desire to read. The respondents therefore suggested that the government must procure enough teaching and learning materials such as teacher guide books and readers for the learners with intellectual disability. They equally said the use of computer technology as a teaching material can help learners with intellectual disability in reading. Singleton (2009) reported that computers can be used to enhance motivation and that carefully targeted programme, particularly those with speech-feedback, can have a significant impact on making learners with reading problems as long as they are used judiciously. Therefore, it is important for the school administration to look for avenues to ensure computers with software accessible to learners with ID are procured to enhance the reading skills of the learners with ID.

Also, there must be an assessment tool specifically for the intellectually disabled learners. Learners must be assessed regularly so as to ascertain their level of understanding and reading level for the teacher to know the correct teaching approaches to use. The assessment tools must be modified to suit the learners' capacity. NEPS (2012) advises that in selecting an appropriate intervention for a

student, teachers need to be aware of the student's key areas of deficit and select an intervention accordingly. A first step in assessment is discriminating between word reading and reading comprehension difficulties. It is suggested here that all struggling readers should be assessed on both measures,

The teachers also suggested that government through the Curriculum Development Centre must develop a specific curriculum for learners with intellectual disability. This means that there is need to design work according to the attention span of the learners with intellectual disability and the MoGE should also modify the curriculum by making it simple for learners with intellectual disability to understand easily. Bloom, (1987) further asserts that pupils with reading and writing problem face many challenges in a school setting every-day and that adapted education can reduce these challenges. He further argues that these pupils do not necessarily require a modified or different program but they need adaptations to the regular curriculum that meets their needs, interests and strengths. Furthermore, Tomlinson (2001), distinguishes three elements of instruction that can be differentiated, namely; content, process and product. Differentiated instruction is designed to engage all students in learning by altering the process by which students are taught and allowing choices in the content and product (Choate, 2000).

The other challenge that came out from the study was that the learners had problems in remembering what they learnt. The respondents said it was very difficult for the learners to remember what they learnt even an hour ago. Some teachers said because of this problem, one topic could be taught for the entire week so as to try to make them understand. These findings are in line with those of Ke and Liu (2012) who explained that learners with ID are slow at remembering and have difficulties recalling and their memories are often inaccurate. In order to solve the problem of poor memory, Alnahdi (2015) propose that students with intellectual disability are in need to receive very intense practice and instruction to improve their reading skills, and it should be provided explicitly, systematically, and consistently.

Moreover, apart from failure to remember what they learnt, the other identified problem was that of short attention span. The respondents said it is difficult for the learners to concentrate during lessons. Some learners could barely sit for five minutes. This finding is similar to the finding of Wentzel (2016) who observed

that learners with mild intellectual disability had low concentration span and they were poor at reading and had challenges in comprehension. Attention and concentration difficulties may reduce reading rate. If a student does not attend to new information, there is little chance of remembering it later (Saskatchewan Learning, 2004). In the same vein, attentiveness and appropriate classroom behavior are prerequisites for learning; therefore, interventions that promote these behaviors should be an integral part of the teaching process for all students (William and Mary, 2017).

Absenteeism was also mentioned by teachers as one of the factors that affected the pupils' reading performance. Most of the teachers interviewed indicated that pupils who were frequently absent from school lacked reading skills compared to those who attended classes regularly. Absenteeism affects learner performance because of poor class participation which leads the learners miss the chance to learn new sounds in reading lessons. Absenteeism also hindered progression of learners. Irregular attendance of lessons by learners negatively affected the progression of lesson because teachers were forced to repeat previous lessons in order to accommodate every learner for new reading lessons. The teachers explained that the major reason for absenteeism was because of illness and that most of the learners came from homes that were distant from the school. They said the learners who were perpetual absent from school missed a lot of lessons including those to do with reading, hence the poor performance in reading. Only parents who had resources were able to take their children to school every day. Parents/guardians who could not afford a daily bus fare opted to have their children remain home. Those who managed to go to school on foot reached the school very tired hence they could not concentrate in class during learning time. Keitheile and Mokubung (2005) findings on Botswana corroborate with the findings in this present study which revealed that absenteeism was one of the factors that contributed to pupils' low achievement in reading. The school is facing the challenge of transport as its school bus had broken down. The school needs to find ways of helping learners who lived far from the school so as to enable them attend classes regularly.

The other challenge revealed by the present study was that because of lack of a curriculum tailored for learners with ID, teachers spent a lot of time to try to modify

the curriculum so as to cater for all the learners. For example, they explained that when teaching comprehension, they were compelled to write a passage and formulate simple questions for learners with ID to read. Consequently, most of them said they spend so much time to prepare the teaching aids as compared to the time spent on teaching and learning processes.

5.5 Summary

The chapter presented the findings of the study. The results from the respondents have indicated that the teachers taught reading without any special training. On teaching strategies, the respondents indicated that they used word pictures, phonics, dictation, question and answers, use of syllabic and group reading among others. The strategies were appropriate in enhancing reading skills among learners with intellectual disability for instance learners developed the understanding of letter-sound relationship through phonics and word picture helped learners to know words easily. These methods make learners develop the understanding of letter-sound relationship, syllable method made learners know that words are made of different sounds and group reading enabled those who knew to help others who did not know. The major challenges were inadequate teaching and learning materials, short attention span and absenteeism among many learners. It was also found that learners faced difficulties in single word reading, sounding out words/letters, reading sight words. Further it has been suggested that teachers need to adjust instruction, learning environment and materials in order to accommodate pupils' diversity and help all of them to acquire reading skills. Equally suggestions were made on how best to improve reading and the results show that there was need for the government to consider having a curriculum specifically for learners with intellectual disability and to provide teaching/learning resources. The next chapter concludes the findings of the study and based on the findings, recommendations are also made.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

The previous chapter discussed the findings of the study. This chapter therefore presents the summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Also makes and suggests areas of further research based on the findings of the study. The study was guided by the following research objectives:

- i. To establish strategies teachers used in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disability.
- ii. To ascertain the appropriateness of the strategies teachers used in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disability.
- iii. To ascertain the challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disability.

6.2 Summary

The study has found that the strategies teachers used to teach reading to learners with intellectual disability at the study site were phonic, word card/picture method, pair reading dictation, syllabic, group reading and question and answer instructions. The major strategies used were phonic and word card and picture methods. The study also revealed that no single teaching strategy was used in the classes that the researcher observed. Teachers used eclectic instructions, which meant a mixture of a number of strategies. For example, syllabic instructions could be combined with phonic and question and answer, and dictation.

With regards to the appropriate of the teaching strategies, the findings are that the major appropriate of the teaching strategies used were that the phonics instruction enabled learners to develop the understanding of letter-sound relationships, syllabic method helped learners to understand that words are made up of syllables and different sounds, dictation enabled learners to learn word spelling, group reading enabled learners to share ideas, word picture made learners learn sight words easily, and the question and answer instruction encouraged learners to think thereby increasing their attention span as well.

The challenges teachers faced in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability at the study site were two-fold. The first category had to do with teachers and the other category was learner related. The major challenges teachers faced were lack of teaching/learning materials. Teachers also spent much time modifying the teaching/learning materials. On the part of the learners, there were too much absenteeism among learners due to illness and lack of transport. Learners had problems in remembering what they had learnt

6.3 Conclusion

Based on the research, several things must happen in the classroom to improve the reading skills of learners with intellectual disabilities. Teachers were experienced in teaching reading but they felt incompetent since they had not gone through any formal training of teaching reading to learners with intellectual disability. First, teachers must take the time to model strategies repeatedly. Phonics based, direct instruction reading programs were the effective in teaching reading skills to students with intellectual disability. Teachers used to break the strategy down into small steps and gradually build on those steps. The teachers were faced with lack of learning and teaching materials. These are in line with the findings of this study. Teaching and learning materials are cardinal if effective learning is to take place. In addition, teaching pronunciations was a challenge for teachers. Most of the learners tend to pronounce English words according to the way they pronounce vernacular words. Parental support was also seen to be very important since they also spend part of the day and evening with their children so should take a keen interest in what their children do at school. Another way could be ensuring that each classroom has adequate resource provision to support explicit, intensive and supportive teaching of reading. If teachers are not provided with necessary and appropriate support such as supervision, teaching assistants and teaching/learning aids, the teaching of reading may remain a challenge for a long time.

6.4 Recommendations

The current study recommends several actions to improving the teaching/learning of reading skills among learners with intellectual disability.

1. A special curriculum for learners with intellectual disability should be developed by specialists from the Curriculum Development Center (CDC).
2. Classroom teachers should have knowledge on phonological awareness. This can assist them to apply intervention measures at an early stage so as to help learners with ID to acquire the necessary reading skills at an early age.
3. Ministry of General Education should ensure that there is adequate provision of teaching/learning materials to enhance the teaching of reading skills to learners with intellectual disability.

6.5 Suggestions for Future Studies

There is need to do extensive research in many other areas apart from establishing strategies used in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disabilities. The following recommendations are made:

1. Researchers should look out to a quantitative study to measure the extent to which strategies increase the reading skills among learners with intellectual disabilities.
2. Doing a survey in order to involve all integrative special schools throughout Zambia as a country.
3. Examine parental involvement in the teaching of reading skills to learners with intellectual disabilities.

REFERENCES

- Adams, M. (1990). *Beginning to read: thinking and leading about print*. Cambridge, MA: MIT press.
- Allor, J. H., Mathes, P. G., Roberts, J. K., Jones, F. G. and Champlin, T. M. (2010). Teaching students with moderate intellectual disability to read: An experimental examination of a comprehensive reading intervention. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, 45, 3-22.
- Alnahdi, G. H. (2015). Teaching Reading for Students with Intellectual disability: A Systematic Review International Education Studies; Vol. 8, No. 9; 2015, ISSN 1913-9020 E-ISSN 1913-9039
- Ary, D, Jacobs, L. C. and Razavieh, A. (2006). *Introduction to Research in Education, 7th Edition*. California: Wadsworth / Thomson Learning.
- Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. (2010). *Definition of Intellectual Disability*. Retrieved from: <http://aaidd.org/intellectual-disability/definition#.V3T8YDVa8ZM>
- Beecher, L., and Childre, A. (2012). Increasing literacy skills for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Effects of integrating comprehensive reading instruction with sign language. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, 47, 487-501.
- Bernie-Smith, M., Patton, J. R., and Kim, S. (2006). *Mental retardation* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Browder, D. M., Ahlgrim-Delzell, L. A., Courtade-Little, G., and Snell, M. (2006). General curriculum access. In M. E. Snell and F. Brown (Eds.), *Introduction to students with severe disabilities* (6th ed., p. 489-525). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Browder, D. M., Trela, K., & Jimenez, B. (2007). Training teachers to follow a task analysis to engage middle school students with moderate and severe developmental disabilities in grade-appropriate literature. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 22, 206–219.

- Browder, D. M., Wakeman, S. Y., Spooner, F., Ahlgrim-Dezell, L., and Algozzine, B. (2006). Research on reading instruction for individuals with significant cognitive disabilities. *Exceptional children*, 72(4), 392-408.
- Bulgren, J. A et al, (2013). *Literacy Challenges and Opportunities for Students with Learning Disabilities in Social Studies and History*; Kansas, University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning
- Bulgren, J. A, Graner P S and Deshler, D. D. (2013). Literacy Challenges and Opportunities for Students with Learning Disabilities in Social Studies and History: *University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning*
- Chilisa, B. and Preece, H. (2005). *Research Methods for Adult Education Africa*: Hamburg, UNESCO, Institute for Education.
- Chusa, (2013). *Language of education planning in Zambia, unguistic portfolios Vol. 3*. Article 6
- Chuunga, M. S (2013). *Teachers' Practices in the Teaching of Reading and Writing towards supporting learners with reading difficulties at Lower Primary: A Case Study of teachers for fourth-graders in Monze District-Zambia*: UNIVERSITY OF OSLO
- Cohen, L. and Manion, L. (1994). *Research Methods in Education (4th ed.)*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Collins, A. (2010). Design-based Research Method adapted from. Learning theories Knowledgebase (2012, April). *Design-Based Research Methods (DBR) at Learning-Theories.com*. Retrieved April 3rd, 2017 from <http://www.learning-theories.com/design-based-research-methods.html>.
- Creswell, J.W(2009). *Research Design Qualitative and mixed methods*, los Angeles sage
- Denzin, N. K and Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.,

Department of Education and training in Western Australia (2004) ISI Royal Street.

Www. Det. Wa. edu. au/

Duffy, (2014). *Handbook of Research on reading comprehension saura ALF –*
Academia edu.

Erickson's, et al (2009). *Informal mentors and education: Complement or*
compensatory resource? Pubmed. Bright is young university.

Finnegan, R.(2012). *Oral literature in African, open book publishers, Cambridge.*

Flores, M. M., and Ganz, J. B. (2009). Effects of direct instruction on the reading
comprehension of students with autism and developmental disabilities.
Education and Training in Developmental Disabilities, 44(1), 39-53.

Fountas, I. C. and Pinnell, G. S. (2001). *Guiding Readers and Writers (Grades 3-6):*
Teaching Comprehension, Genre, and Content Literacy. Portsmouth NH:
Heinemann. 22

Fox, R. (2015). *Research-based strategies for students with learning disabilities: a*
focus on phonics and fluency: Indiana University - Purdue University Fort
Wayne Opus: Research and Creativity at IPFW

Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P. and Borg, W. R. (2007). *Educational Research: An*
Introduction (7th Ed.). New York: Pearson Education, Inc.

Graham, and Kelly. (2018). *How effective are early grade reading intervention.: A*
review of the evidence. Police research working paper, No. 8292 world
bank, washing ton, DR

Griffen, A.K. (2017). Special education teachers, literacy and students with moderate
and severe intellectual disability: A survey. Early childhood, Special
education, and Rehabilitation Counseling. Thesis, Kentucky.

Griffin, S. M. and Appel, K. L. (2009). *Reading Fluency Strategies.* Retrieved from
Reading Resource: <http://www.readingresource.net/readingfluency.html>

Griggs, D. (2000). *Praticle Approaches to using learning styles/ in higher Education*
/learning styles / intellectual. [https://www.scribd.com > document >Du](https://www.scribd.com/document/Du)

- Hlalethwa B, D (2013). *Reading difficulties Experienced by learners in the foundation phase in Inclusive Schools in Makapanstad: South Africa*, University of South Africa.
- Hoadley, U. (2010). *What do we know about teaching and learning in primary schools in South Africa? A review of the classroom-based research literature* South Africa, University of Cape Town.
- Irwin. M.I. (1967). *Guide to teaching of reading at the primary school level*. University of the West Indies.
- Isaacs, B. (2012). *Understanding the Montessori approach, early years education in practice*. London: Routledge.
- Jere-Folotiya, J. (2014). *Influence of Grade one Zambian Teachers and GraphoGame on initial Literacy Acquisition: Lusaka District*: Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Joseph, L. M. and McCachran, M. (2003). Comparison of a word study phonics techniques.
- Joseph, L.M. and Seery, M.E. (2004). Where is the phonics? A review of literature on the use of phonetic analysis with students with mental retardation. *Remedial and Special Education*, 25, 88-94.
- Kabali, T, (2014). *The acquisition of early reading skills: The influence of the home environment in Lusaka, Zambia* university of Jyvaskyla: Jyvaskyla
- Kachenga, G.M. (2008). The effect of using Computer Literacy skills in Zambia. Dissertation, university of jyviisky. Dept of psychology.
- Kalindi, S.C. (2006). *The impact of the view primary reading programmed on the poor headers*. University of Zambia. Unpublished M.Ed. Dissertation.
- Kasonde-Ng'andu, S. (2013). *Writing a Research Proposal in Educational Research*, Lusaka: University of Zambia Press.

- Katims, (2001). *Increasing literacy skills for student's effect of integrating comprehensive reading instruction with sign language*. Georgia college and state university.
- Ke and liu. (2012). *The effect of the integrating mobile devices with teacher and learning on students' learning synthesis*. Journal article computer and education vol 94, march 2016, 252 – 275
- Kemba, A. (2005). *Exploring the teaching of reading skills in Nigerian secondary school* – 10SR Journals, www. Losrjournals. Org
- Kitzinger, J. (1994). *The methodology of focus groups: the importance of interactions between research participants*. Sociology of Health and Illness 16, 103–121.
- Kliewer, C. and Landis, D. (1999). Individualizing literacy instruction for young children with moderate to severe disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 66, 85-100. Retrieved September 24, 2007 from Wilson
- Kombo, D and Tromp, D. (2009). *Proposal and Thesis Writing: An Introduction*. Nairobi, Kenya: Pauline Publications Africa.
- Krueger, R. A and Casey, M. A (2000). *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Krueger, R. A. (1994). *Focus groups: the practical guide goes applied research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Learning Theories Knowledgebase (2011). *Design-Based Research Methods (DBR) at Learning-Theories.com*. <http://www.learning-theories.com/design-based-research-methods.html>
- Lemons, C. J., Allor, J. H., Al Otaiba, S. and LeJeune, L. M. (2016). 10 Research-Based Tips for Enhancing Literacy Instruction for Students with Intellectual Disability. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 49, 18-30
- Lincoln, Y. and Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, California: Sage.

- Long and Zimmernan (2009). *Research into practice: strategies for teaching and learning vocabulary*. [https://www. Academia. edu](https://www.Academia.edu).
- Lundberg, I., and Reichenberg, M. (2013). Developing reading comprehension among students with mild intellectual disability—an intervention study. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 87, 89–100
- Maddox and fang. (2013). *Whole language and phonics approaches: effect on reading fluency and spelling*. [https://public asilmiah. Ums. ac. Id](https://public.asilmiah.Ums.ac.Id).
- Mahlburg, R and Lynchburg, V. A (2013). *Reading and Students with Intellectual disability: Using the Readers Workshop Model to Provide Balanced Literacy Instruction*
- Marima, E.W. (2016). *Instructional constraints in teaching of reading in early childhood classes* Nairobi, Kenya. Vol 7, No 30,
- Martin, D., Martin, M., and Carvalho, K. (2008). *Reading and learning-disabled children: Understanding the problem. The Clearing House*, 81, 113-118. doi:10.3200/TCHS.81.3.113-118
- Massanzi, A. F. (2011). *The Effectiveness of read on literacy Course on academic Performance: The Case of selected Basic Schools in Mufulira District*. Lusaka: University of Zambia.
- Matafwali, B. (2005). *Nature and prevalence of reading difficulties in the third grade: Lusaka rural and urban schools*. Dissertation, University of Zambia.
- Matthew effect (education). (2012). Wikipedia. Retrieved on 22/10/2018 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_effect_%28education%29.
- May L. M. (2012). *Effects of reading interventions on students with learning disabilities in upper elementary and middle school: Michigan, Northern Michigan University*
- Medandi, E.S. (2014). The challenges of teaching reading in Uganda: Curriculum guidelines and language policy viewed from the classroom. *Journal of Applied Language Studies*, volume 8.2 – 22.

- Mensah, A.A. (2014). *Reflective practice in teaching education in Ghana*. International journal of Education and Practice. Conscientious Bean Vol 2(3) pages 42 – 50
- Merriam S. B. (2001). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Research; Design and Methods* (2nded.). Thousand Oaks, California. Sage.
- Mims, P., Browder, D., Baker, J., Lee, A., and Spooner, F. (2009). Increasing comprehension of students with significant intellectual disability and visual impairments during shared stories. *Educational and Training in Developmental Disabilities* 44(3), 409-420. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.
- Ministry of education, (1996). *Educating our future national policy on education*. Lusaka: Zambia education publishing house.
- Ministry of education, science vocational training and early Education, (2012). *The Zambian education curriculum framework*. Curriculum development center.
- Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Education, (2013). *Zambia education curriculum framework*: Lusaka: Zambia Education printing House(ZEPH).
- Moats, L. (2009). *Knowledge foundations for teaching reading and Spelling, Reading and Writing*, 22, 379-399. doi:10.1007/s11145-009-9162-1
- Msango, A. S. J. (2010). *The impact of the teaching and learning environment on learners' literacy skills acquisition: the case of Grade for learners in selected primary schools in Mzuzu district in northern Malawi*. Dissertation, University of Zambia.
- Mtonga, T (2011). *The nature prevalence, causes and method used by teacher to correct the reading difficulties experienced by middle basic school learners with visual impairment in Zambia. A case of magwero and ndola lions 'schools for the blind*. Dissertation, university of Zambia.

- Mubanga, E. (2010). *The Nature and prevalence of reading and writing difficulties in grade two (2) under the primary reading programming. The case of twelve basic schools in the Northern province of Zambia*. Dissertation, university of Zambia.
- Mugenda, O.M. and Mugernda, A.G. (2008). *Research methods Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Nairobi Acts press.
- Mulonda, M. (2015). *Teachers' homework practices towards learners with reading difficulties in Sefula Zone ordinary Primary Schools, Mongu District*. Dissertation, University of Zambia.
- Mwanamukubi, L. (2013). *Reading difficulties in grade six learners and challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading: A case of Chadiza and Chipata districts, Zambia*. Dissertation, University of Zambia
- Mwanza, D., S. (2012). *The language of initial literacy in a cosmopolitan environment: case of Cinyanja in Lusaka district*: Dissertation, University of Zambia.
- Mwanza, S.K (2015). *Preschool, executive functions and over language as predictors of literacy and numeracy skills in fact grade*. Thesis university of Zambia.
- Mwanza. S. (2011). *A comparative study in reading performance of pupils with preschool and non – preschool in relation to the new break though to literacy*. University of Zambia. Unpublished master's dissertation
- National reading programmed (2000). *Teaching children to Read: Evidence Based Assessment of the scientific Research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*.
- Ngaka, W. and Masaazi, F.M. (2015). Participatory Literacy Learning in an African Context: Perspectives from the Ombaderuku Primary School in the Arua District, Uganda: *Journal of Language and Literacy Education* Vol. 11 Issue 1—Spring 2015

- O'Connor, R. and Vadasy, P, (2011). *Handbook of reading interventions*. New York: The Guildford press.
- Orodho, A. J and Kombo, D. K (2002). *Research Methods*, Nairobi, Kenyatta University, Institute of Open Learning.
- Owusu-Acheaw, M and Larson, A.G (2014). "Reading Habits among Students and its Effect on Academic Performance: A Study of Students of KoforiduaPolytechnic". *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. Paper 1130.<http://digitalcommons.unl./libphilprac/1130>
- Paris. S.G. (2005). *Reinterpreting the Development of Reading Skills. Reading Research Quarterly, V40 n 2. P184 – 202. Graduate student instructor teaching and resource center* (2016). University of Texas at Austin.
- Polit, D. F and Hungler, B.P. (1999). *Nursing Research: Principles and Methods 6th ed*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott.
- Polloway, E. A., Patton, J. R., Serna, L., and Bailey, J. W. (2013). *Strategies for teaching learners with special needs* (10th Ed.). Columbus, OH: Pearson.
- Professional Development Service for teachers* (2017). Dublin west Education Centre Post 14 Joyce way park
- Randi, J., Newman, T., and Grigorenko, E. L. (2010). Teaching children with autism to read for meaning: Challenges and possibilities. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 40*(7), 890-902.
- Richard and Schmidt. (2002). *Motivation strategy and pedagogical preference in foreign language learning*. University of Hawaii technical report # 23, pp. 313 – 359.
- Rizopoulos, L. A. and Wolpert, G. (2004). An overview of the techniques used to develop the literacy skills of adolescents with developmental delays. *Education, 125*, 130-136.

- Ryan, C. (2005). *The Bee and the Flea Decodable Book 53*. Retrieved April 14, 2018 from www.readinga-z.com
- Sampa, (2005). *Early child hood care and education in Zambia: an integral part of educational provision*. (Vol 4) ADEA.
- Saskatchewan Learning (2004). *Teaching students with reading difficulties and disabilities: A guide for educators*
- Schnorr, R. F. and Fenton, A. (2008). *Maximizing literacy learning for students with*
- Scruggs, A. (2008). Effective Reading Instruction Strategies for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities, *Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education*, 2 (3).
- Shaywitz, SE. (2003). *Neural systems for compensation and persistence: young Adult outcome of childhood Reading Disability*. *Biological Psychiatry* 55 – 25 – 33
- Silverman, D. (2005). *Interpreting Qualitative Data, Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction (2nd ed.)*, London: Sage Publication Inc.
- Snow, C. (2002). *Reading for Understanding: toward a research and development program in reading comprehension*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Stahl and miller (1989). *Whole language and language experience Approaches'' Review of education research spring*. [https: // www. Research gate. Net](https://www.researchgate.net)
- Stanovich K.E (2015). *Mathew effects in reading some consequence of individual difference in the acquisition of literacy: research on reading*, university of Toronto.
- Steele, M.M. (2005). Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities: Constructivism or Behaviorism? *Current Issues in Education*, volume 8.10

- Surgenor, P. (2010). *Teaching tool kit. Large and small group teaching*. www. UCD. Ie/teaching.
- Tambulukan, G and Bus A.G (2011) *Unquistic diversity: a contribution factor to Zambia's reading problems*. Journal of applied linguistics, 1 -21 doilo. 1093 / app/linomr 039
- Tandika, P. and Kumburu, S. (2018). Challenges teacher face and strategies deployed in teaching reading skills in public primary schools of Tanzania. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Arts, and Science*. Vol. 5.1. 52-59.
- The Zambia Curriculum Development Centre (2013). *National literacy framework* Lusaka CDC
- Tinku, P.(2015). *An analysis of adult literacy and cultural education for the youth in the Indian community in Lusaka, Zambia: Lusaka*, University of Zambia.
- Tolman, C. (2005). *Working smarter, not harder: What teachers of reading need to know and be able to teach. Perspectives*, pp. 15–23.
- Torgesen, J. K. (2002). The prevention of reading difficulties. *Journal of School Psychology*, 40(1), 7–26.
- UNESCO. (2006). *Zambia: early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmers. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007*. Geneva: international Bureau of education.
- Watson, J. B. and Rayner, R. (1920). Conditioned emotional responses. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 3, 1-14.
- Wentzel, V., D. (2016). *Primary school teacher's experiences of providing learning support for learners with mild intellectual disability*. Master dissertation, University of South Africa.
- Woolfolk, A. (2010). *Educational psychology* (11th ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice- Hall.

- Yin, R. K. (1984). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Zimba, T. M. (2011). *Emergent literacy support in early childhood education in selected pre-shools of Kasempa and Solwezi districts of Zambia*. Lusaka: University of Zambia
- Zunguze, K and Salvador J. (2011). *Teachers' views on factors contributing to low reading levels among Mozambican primary school pupils. A case of grade five teachers at selected schools, in Maputo district – Mozambique*. Lusaka, University of Zambia.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Informed Consent form

Dear Respondent,

This serves to give you an understanding of the purpose of this research and procedures that will be followed. You are being asked to sign this form to indicate that you have agreed to participate in the study.

Purpose: You are invited to participate in a research study on the literacy education (reading) for learners with intellectual disability: an assessment of strategies used in teaching, reading at UTH Special School. By providing information to this study, you contribute knowledge to the topic under study.

Participant selection: You were selected as a possible participant because of your experience in teaching learners with intellectual disability.

Explanation of procedures: If you voluntarily decide to participate, you will be asked questions during focus group discussion. Focus group interviews will be recorded using a digital voice recorder. Participation in this exercise is voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in this exercise.

Discomfort or risks: All data collected from this research is treated with utmost confidentiality. Be assured that names will remain anonymous and untraceable in this research. You are assured that they shall suffer no harm as a result of participating in this exercise.

Declaration of Consent: I have read and fully understood this document. I therefore agree to participate in this exercise.

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Teachers

Part A: Bio data

- i. Sex
- ii. Highest qualification:
- iii. Years of service:
- iv. Grade now Teaching:

PART B: Information on reading

- 1. For how long have you been teaching learners with intellectual disability at this school?
- 2. Explain your specific training that equipped you with skills to teach learners with intellectual disability?
- 3. What is the reading level of learners?
- 4. How many children are able to read and write legibly in your class
.....
- 5. How often are you monitored by the school administration?
.....
- 6. What specific strategies do you use to teach reading to learners with ID?
.....
- 7. What is the relevance of the named strategies to the classroom situation?
.....
.....
- 8. What challenges do you face in teaching reading? If yes, name some of them.....
- 9. What suggestions would you put forward in the following areas which influence the teaching of reading to learners with intellectual disability?
 - a) Curriculum content
 -
 - b) Teaching strategies
 -

- c) Teaching and learning resources
-
- d) Pupil assessment
-
- e) Homework
-
- f) Remedial work
-
- g) Other
-

Thank you for your time

Appendix 3: Observation Checklist

This checklist was used to assess the strategies and materials used in the achievement of reading and writing skills by the learners with intellectual disability. Although the checklist was devised and once used by Mubanga (2010), learners with intellectual disability were excluded in his study. The current researcher finds this observation checklist useful in assessing aspects that are vital to the acquisition of reading skills.

S/N	ASPECTS TO BE OBSERVED	COMMENT		
		Available & Good	Available & poor	Not available
A	CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT			
A1	Classroom organization			
A2	Furniture			
A3	Talking walls			
B	LESSON DELIVERY			
B1	Introduction			
B2	Development			
B3	Conclusion			

B4	Time management			
C	TEACHING AIDS/MATERIALS			
C1	Suitability			
C2	Sufficiency			
C3	Utilization			
D	ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK			
D1	Question and answer			
D2	Individual attention to pupils			
D3	Pupil motivation			
D4	Pupil-overall performance			
E	METHODOLOGY			
E1	Teaching strategy (ies) used			
E2	Learners engagement			
E3	Use of concrete objects			

Appendix:4 Interview guide for school administrators

1. Sex
2. Highest qualification
3. What is your position at this school?
4. For how long have you served in the current position?
5. How often do you monitor the teachers in a term?
.....
6. What is your school level tracker – children able to read and not able to read by grade?
.....
7. What strategies do teachers use in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability?
.....
8. How significant are the strategies teachers use in teaching reading to learners with Intellectual disability to improve reading in your school?
.....
.....
9. What challenges do teachers face in teaching reading to learners with intellectual disability?
.....
.....
10. Are there special challenges that hinder delivery of lessons to learners with intellectual disability?
.....
.....
11. What should be done to alleviate the challenges you have mentioned?
.....
.....

Thank you very much for answering this questionnaire.

Appendix 5: Permit Letter



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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

PO Box 32379
Lusaka, Zambia
Fax: +260-1-292702

=====

Date: 31/01/2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: FIELD WORK FOR MASTERS/ PhD STUDENTS

The bearer of this letter Mr/Ms BERNADETTE TEMBO..... Computer number 2016145663..... is a duly registered student at the University of Zambia, School of Education.

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

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

Yours faithfully

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
ASSISTANT DEAN (PG)
31 JAN 2018
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 32379, LUSAKA

Emmy Mpozi (Dr)
ASSISTANT DEAN POSTGRADUATE STUDIES- SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

cc: Dean-Education
Director-DRGS

Appendix 6: Approval Letter



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Great East Road | P.O. Box 32379 | Lusaka 10101 | Tel: +260-211-290 258/291 777
Fax: +260-1-290 258/253 952 | Email: director@drgrs.unza.zm | Website: www.unza.zm

Approval of Study

24th January, 2019

Ref. No. 2018-AUG-014

The Principal Investigator

Dear, Ms Bernadette Tembo

RE: Literacy Education for Learners with intellectual Disabilities: An Assessment of Strategies used in Teaching Reading at UTH Special School Lusaka, Zambia.

Reference is made to your request for waiver of ethical approval of the study. The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee IRB has approved the study.

On behalf of The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee IRB, we would like to wish you all the success as you carry out your study. In future ensure that you submit an application for ethical approval early enough.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Judith Nubala Ziwa
VICE CHAIRPERSON

c.c. Director – DRGS
Assistant Director – DRGS
Senior Administrative officer – Affiliations
File

Excellence in Teaching, Research and Community Service

Appendix 7: Verdict letter



The University of Zambia
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Telephone: +260-211-290258/293937
Fax: +260-211-290258/293937
E-mail: drgs@unza.zm

P O Box 32379
Lusaka, Zambia

10th April, 2019

Ms. Bernadette Tembo
C/o School of Education
Department of Educational Psychology, Sociology and Special Education
University of Zambia
P.O. Box 32379
LUSAKA

Dear Ms. Tembo,

RE: EXAMINATION RESULTS OF YOUR MASTER OF EDUCATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The examination results of your Master of Education in Special Education Dissertation entitled: **"An Assessment of Strategies Used in Teaching Reading to Learners with Intellectual Disabilities: A Case of University Teaching Hospital Special School, Lusaka"** was presented at the Board of Graduate Studies Meeting held on Wednesday 10th April, 2019.

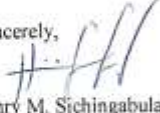
The decision of the Board was: **Pass subject to moderate corrections.**

Therefore you are expected to attend to all the moderate corrections identified by the examiners. Your Supervisor should certify in writing that all the corrections have been done before you deposit three copies of the Dissertation and a soft copy with the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies.

Please note that depositing of the Dissertation and Soft Copy can only be done after showing proof of satisfying the Postgraduate Regulations as follows:

- i. Given an Oral and Poster Presentation;
- ii. A letter from Supervisor/Assistant Dean (Postgraduate) indicating that a paper has been submitted to a Journal (Taught Masters and Dissertation);

Yours sincerely,


Prof. Henry M. Sichingabula
DIRECTOR

cc Dean - School of Education
 Assistant Dean (PG) - School of Education
 Head, Department of Educational Psychology, Sociology and Special Education
 Assistant Registrar (Graduate Studies)