

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (SPECIAL EDUCATION)

Rose Chikopela, B. Ed Special Education, MEd Special Education

Title of Thesis: The Role of Oral Language in Phonemic and Phonological Development of Hard of Hearing Pupils in Selected Primary Schools in Lusaka, Zambia.

Mrs Rose Chikopela-Katongo was born on 6th October, 1983. She did her primary education at Sacred Heart Convent School in Kabwe and completed her secondary education at Mporokoso Secondary School in Mporokoso in 2002. In 2008, she was awarded a Bachelor of Education degree in Special Education and was employed as a teacher at Chongwe Secondary School in Chongwe District. Between 2010 and 2012, she worked as part-time tutor in the Department of Adult Education and Extension Studies at the University of Zambia. From 2012 to date, she has worked in the Department of Educational Psychology, Sociology and Special Education as a part-time tutor and as a part-time lecturer. She was admitted to the University of Zambia in 2011 to pursue her Master of Education degree in Special Education and graduated in 2013. In 2014 she enrolled for Doctor of Philosophy in Special Education degree and successfully completed it in 2017.

Her study investigated the role of oral language in phonemic and phonological development of pupils with hard of hearing impairment in Zambia. Her study provides insights on the importance of oral language when delivering lessons as well as teaching materials that stimulates phonemic and phonological development. The major findings of her study show that hard of hearing pupils displayed insufficient knowledge in letter sound knowledge and sound blending tasks. It was further established that both expressive and receptive vocabularies did not predict sound awareness in hard of hearing pupils due to lack of instruction in this area. Rose's thesis has made a contribution by establishing that oral language has a role in phonemic and phonological development of pupils with hard of hearing impairment. When teachers used visual charts, flash cards and pictures awareness of sounds was stimulated in pupils with hard of hearing impairment. Building on these findings, the study recommends that pupils with hard of hearing impairment should be identified early by teachers, possibly at entry into pre-school or grade one so that they are provided with hearing aid device to help them speed up the acquisition of oral language skills. Teachers of the hard of hearing pupils should utilize oral language when teaching phonemic and phonological skills. Ministry of General Education (MoGE) should provide appropriate and adequate teaching aids in schools in order to help teachers deliver lessons effectively to the hard of hearing pupils. In addition, schools should conduct continuous professional development seminars for teachers to learn how to teach phonemic and phonological skills to the hard of hearing pupils.

Rose has immensely contributed to the life of the University of Zambia as a tutor and part-time lecturer for seven (7) years. In terms of contribution to community service, among others, in 2016, she was elected editor for the National Guidance and Counselling Association of Zambia (NAGCAZ), the position she still holds.