

**ANALYSIS OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES TEACHERS OF ENGLISH ARE
USING IN GRADE SEVEN TO TEACH READING COMPREHENSION IN
SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MONZE DISTRICT, ZAMBIA**

**By
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**A Dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Literacy, Language
and Applied Linguistics.**

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DECLARATION

I, Inonge Martha Nawa (2023007979) declare that this dissertation represents my own work. It has not previously been submitted for a degree or any award at the University of Zambia. All published materials in this dissertation have been acknowledged.

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Date.....

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation by Inonge Martha Nawa is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters of Education in Literacy, Language and Applied Linguistics by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

The study analyzed instructional techniques used by teachers in teaching reading comprehension in grade seven in selected primary schools of Monze district. The objectives of the study were: assess teachers knowledge of teaching techniques used in teaching reading comprehension, analyze instructional techniques teachers use to teach reading comprehension and to establish challenges teachers face when teaching reading comprehension.

The study utilized descriptive research design within qualitative research approach. The target population of this study included all teachers of grade seven and all grade seven pupils in Monze district. 25 participants formed the sample size that was homogeneously purposively selected due to the nature of the study. Data was collected through interviews, focused group discussion and through non-participant lesson observations. Data was categorized into themes that formed the roadmap for data interpretation and discussion. To help researcher have trust in what was collected, data was verified through member checking, a technique that allowed researcher go back to participants to get the feedback ask if what researcher wrote was true.

From the findings, on the first objective, it was established that teachers had knowledge on instructional techniques used in the teaching of reading comprehension. To some it implied methods, skills, ways, strategies, approaches and methods used in teaching reading comprehension. Despite the differences in explaining what instructional techniques are, most of them mentioned the correct techniques as examples. Some teachers though showed lack of knowledge as when asked they could not say anything.

With regard to instructional techniques teachers used to teach reading comprehension, many techniques were established and these included: previewing, reading aloud, silent reading, passage discussion, questioning, prediction, vocabulary analysis, storytelling and picture reading. These techniques were concurrently used with one lesson (observation made).

Teachers strived to teach learners in reading comprehension but faced many challenges in their endeavors. Some of the prominent challenges included: lack of infrastructure (desks and space in classes), lack of reading materials in schools due to large class sizes, language barriers, difficult of vocabulary in books and laziness of learners. Despite these challenges teachers used other alternatives in helping learners such as catch-up activities, remedial work and giving daily home works to learners.

In view of the findings, the study recommends the need to have Continuous Professional Development (CPDs) to always sensitise and update teachers in schools to enable them apply reading comprehension techniques effectively. There is need to improve school infrastructure and provision of adequate reading materials in schools to enhance improvements in reading comprehension among learners.

DEDICATION

First and foremost, I dedicate this work to the almighty God for his providence in my life. I also dedicate this to you, Joseph Simweleba for your inspiration and support throughout this journey. Lastly but not the least to my dearest sons Wangu S. Gungu and Choolwe S. Gungu for your understanding during the times I even had to leave you behind.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CIERA:	Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievements
DEBS:	District Education Board Secretary
EFAL:	English First Additional Language
EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
L1:	First language
L2:	Second Language
GRM:	Gradual Release Model
PTD:	Primary Teacher's Diploma
R1:	Respondent One
SESO:	Senior Education Standards Officer
UNZA:	University of Zambia
UNESCO:	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
QAR:	Question and Answer Relationship

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This section presents background to the study, statement of the research problem, the purpose of the study, objectives of the study and the research questions. It also covers significance of the study, limitations, and delimitations of the study, theoretical and conceptual frameworks and operational definition of terms. The chapter will be concluded with a summary.

1.1 Background

Reading is the process of looking at written symbols and letters and understanding their meaning. It is a process that involves the construction of meaning. It is an essential aspect of success in society as the ability to read is highly valued and important for social and economic advancements of an individual (Snow et al., 1998). The significance of reading in society in contemporary world cannot be overemphasized. This is because, every activity if not all society demands requires an individual with literacy ideas. Many people have lost a lot of opportunities in life due to lack of reading which has become an activity component in the development of someone. Lack of knowledge on reading has made society be classified into social classes of the elite and non-elite. It has become a measure in society with regard to social stratification in modern and once in historical times. This has made their living styles a problem with regard to society demands especially modern world where reading is important in every societal and economic operation.

To become a good reader, one undergoes orientation (learning) where he or she should be able to construct meaning from print using appropriate strategies to relate to what is read with experience and background knowledge. Many scholars have defined reading differently but to mean the process of getting what is written or through media. According to Tarigan (1990), reading is a process that is carried and used by readers who want to get the message delivered by the author through the medium of words or written language. In this regard, to enable learners acquire psycho-understanding of words, reading need to be that which a learner understands what is read and apply it. At this stage, reading changes to reading

comprehension. Reading and comprehension are two different terms that combined mean something else from reading as a stand-alone word.

In the context of this study, Reading comprehension implies a dynamic process that involves making predictions, summarizing the main idea, questioning one's predictions, and clarifying unclear concepts. "No one process defines reading comprehension by itself, but together they provide a fairly accurate account of the processes required for fluent reading," (Grabe and Stoller, 2002:17). It is a complex and active process that involves understanding of written text, developing and deducing meaning appropriately to the type of text, situation, and purpose (National Reading Week, 2013). To comprehend a text, a reader must be equipped with a host of abilities of which are influenced by the specific text used. Comprehension is more than a linguistic skill; it is also a general cognitive skill (Walter, 2007). This is supported by (Hudson, 1996) who says that reading and understanding involves the interaction of several processes covering knowledge and ability, decoding, sentence structure, and other cognitive processes. Reading comprehension is a fundamental element both in primary and secondary education and it helps learners comprehend what is read both in and outside the classroom. The acquisition of reading skills is a complex intellectual process and unlike language which seems automatic, children require skilled instructions in learning to read and to develop strong reading skills (Howie, 2010).

Since reading comprehension involves both the teacher and the learner co-production of the intended outcome, understanding reading comprehension process is vital for teachers to effectively conduct teaching and assessment of reading in schools. It is the foundation for all other academic skills that helps children build their vocabulary as they learn new words and understand complex concepts.

The importance of reading comprehension in modern society and in linguistic studies cannot be overlooked. The significance of reading comprehension is ideological understanding of text. Comprehending written language is necessary for success through development and into adulthood. It helps in concept prediction and vocabulary analysis of learners. Reading comprehension further enables one to become a good reader and concept identification and extraction of meanings from words. However, to achieve a child with progressive language comprehension requires application of interventions that are instructional child hiding. One of the effective interventions for boosting reading comprehension among the children in lower primary schools could be proper use of instructional techniques by teachers (Shanahan, 2010). Instructional techniques are the procedures that the teacher uses to deliver various

contents (Al-Osseli, 2010). These procedures help the learners to learn independently and become strategic readers (Stahl, 2012). The instructional techniques help teachers to make learning enjoyable and help learners desire to learn (Doyle, 2008) This study strived to assess different instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension in Monze district of Zambia being that it is of importance not only in school but also in everyday life. The new English syllabus in Zambia, CDC (2013) aims at developing the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing as the general outcomes. Under reading in particular, a learner will be required to read for comprehension, at an appropriate speed, for improvement of vocabulary and for enjoyment from the beginning and then be introduced to the type of functional reading which will enable a learner to gradually read for specific purpose in crucial areas. What could be lacking is outlining what techniques the teachers could use possibly at each stage as they teach reading comprehension in class to help learners progress in their endeavors in future.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Performance Review Report for Primary School Examination (2022) revealed that most grade seven pupils in Southern Province, Monze inclusive did not perform well especially in English Language. Most of the candidates found themselves in division four (4) which simply shows there is a problem somewhere. These results were similar to those of 2021 and 2020. By cognitive level, the candidates performed poorly on questions that were on cognitive level of synthesis (40.89%) (Performance Review Report, 2022). The report goes on to show that most of the questions that were poorly answered were on comprehension. Also, a study conducted in Zambia by World Vision (2012) particularly in Monze district revealed that about 70% of the grade seven pupils were not able to read in English and the local language. Out of 50% of pupils who are supposed to learn the skill eventually, only a few of them will be able to read with comprehension. Reading with understanding is one of the challenging skills among most of the school going children, yet it is one of the important skills for life (Lyon, 2001).

Maala and Mkandawire (2022) looked at factors that hinder proper delivery of reading comprehension in schools but could not look at what instructional techniques could cause some of the identified challenges. Furthermore, the Curriculum Development Centre (2013) gives freedom for teachers to use their own teaching techniques in teaching reading comprehension but what begs an answer is what techniques are being utilized on the ground

especially at primary school level. Thus, there was dire need to conduct this study to establish instructional techniques that teachers use to teach reading comprehension in primary schools as it has been established that many learners in Monze have low levels of reading as stated by World Vision (2012). This was attributed to poor reading culture among learners and certain socio-cultural factors that hinder children such as lack of parental involvement in the learners' school affairs and inadequacies of reading materials in schools. Also, some of the teachers did not apply most of the instructional techniques when teaching reading comprehension. Others would use only one or two techniques the whole lesson. The study did not however, find out what techniques the teachers could be using to teach reading comprehension in schools. The low reading levels and inability of the learners to comprehend what they read, could it be to the way reading comprehension is taught in schools? This therefore, leads to the research of this study which said: Analysis of Instructional Techniques Teachers of English are Using in Grade Seven to Teach Reading Comprehension in Selected Primary Schools in Monze District, Zambia.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to analyse the instructional techniques used by teachers in teaching reading comprehension in grade seven in selected primary schools of Monze district.

1.4 Study Objectives

The study objectives were:

- i) To assess teachers' knowledge of instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension.
- ii) To analyse instructional techniques teachers of English use to teach reading comprehension.
- iii) To establish challenges teachers face when teaching reading comprehension.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What is the teachers' knowledge of instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension?
- ii. How are teachers teaching reading comprehension?

- iii. What challenges do teachers and learners face in the teaching and learning of reading comprehension?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study findings may provide information to different stakeholders on teachers' knowledge on teaching reading comprehension in primary school such as the Primary Teacher's Diploma (PTD) curriculum designers so as to see the effectiveness of curriculum implementation at school level. It will also unearth techniques that teachers use when teaching reading comprehension and associated challenges. This may also be a wakeup call to the Ministry of Education through Curriculum Development Centre to provide enough and relevant reading materials to the schools.

1.7 Scope of the study (Delimitation)

This study was conducted in Monze district of Zambia in selected primary schools at grade seven level in order to analyse the instructional techniques used by teachers to teaching reading comprehension.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Since the study dealt with cognitive processing, it became pertinent to use the schema theory which deals with prior-knowledge building with regard to making meaning of text. The scholar for this theory is J. Piaget who proposed the schema or scheme as an abstract concept to refer to our, well, abstract concepts. Text directs what learners make meaning of it. A Schema theory is a theory of how knowledge is acquired, processed, and retrieved. It is the technical term used by cognitive scientists to describe how people process, organize, and store information in the head (Widdowson, 1983). The Schema theory was adopted in this study based on the belief that "every act of comprehension involves one's knowledge of the world" (Anderson et al. 1977).

Schema theory has fundamental principles that govern the way a schema is built. First principle of the theory postulates that when individuals obtain knowledge, they attempt to fit that knowledge into some structure in memory that helps them make sense of that knowledge. It also proposes that individuals break down information into generalizable chunks which are then categorically stored in the brain for later recall (Widdowson, 1983). This indicates that, new information from the outside world can be cognitively received and related to already

known information stored in memory through retrieval or remembering. This transcends to new concepts assimilation into existing schemata which can be altered or expanded.

In the absence of already existing schemata, new knowledge builds up new schemata. In short, schema theory is an active strategy coding technique necessary for facilitating the recall of knowledge. With these assumptions, it was pertinent to use the theory in this study as its governing assumptions directed or influenced how the researcher was to make what instructional techniques teachers are using in reading comprehension and their impact in building the prior knowledge of learners.

When students are familiar with the topic of the text they are reading and become aware of the discourse level and structural make-up of the genre of the text, and skillful in the decoding features needed to recognize words and recognize how they fit together in a sentence, they are in a better position to comprehend their assigned reading. This could improve their inferential analysis of vocabulary and improved understanding of text.

Reading comprehension could become a problem to learners especially if the background is bad. This might affect a child's learning outcomes. Similarly, Carrell (1988b) argues that reading problems may be problems of insufficient background knowledge. There is need for teachers to activate learners' schemata if they are to comprehend text effectively and make meaning of it. Many children may fail to comprehend what the text could dictate not by choice but due to certain factors such as lack of schemata activation by teachers facilitated by lack of appropriate techniques that one uses to teach the learners. Hence the need to establish instructional techniques teachers use in teaching reading comprehension. This theory related to my study because when teaching reading comprehension, the learners' minds have to be activated, alerted and motivated so that in the process of enjoying the subject, they could comprehend what they read.

1.9 Limitations

This study was limited to Monze district and results may not be generalised to apply to Zambia or other regions.

1.10 Operational Definitions

Analyse: To examine something methodically and in detail in order to explain and interpret it.

EFAL: English First Additional Language

Instructional Technique: This is a teaching process through which specific activities are used to complete an educational task.

Reading: Refers to the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. It is a multifaceted process involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation.

Reading comprehension: The ability to read and understand a written text.

Play activities: Refer to a game or sport in which upper primary school child is engaged in. These include; pretended, socio-dramatic, hide and seek and fun activities.

1.11 Chapter summary

This chapter was about the background of the research paper. The introduction of the study was given and it's statement of the problem, the research objectives of the study, research questions, sampling procedure, sample size, significance, scope, limitations, delimitation, theoretical framework and operational definition of the study. The next chapter therefore looks at the review of related literature to this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Overview

This section presents the literature review of the study. It briefly looks at the concept of reading, teachers understanding of reading comprehension, instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension and challenges teachers face when teaching reading comprehension.

2.1 Concept of reading

Reading is one of the four skills in English. It is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. When we read, we use our eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and we use our brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to us. According to Brown (2004, p. 189), reading is defined as a process of negotiating meaning to the texts for understanding. Reading is made up of two processes namely word recognition and comprehension. Where word recognition is the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language and comprehension being the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Reading is commonly known as translating text into sounds or spoken words. Grabe and Stoller (2002) conceive reading as a complex cognitive process in which the reader decodes the symbols or printed messages into sound. In contrast, Klapwijk (2015) maintains that reading involves more than the ability to recognise letters and decode words. The author posits that reading is ultimately about understanding the meaning of the text. This suggests that the aim of reading is not only saying aloud individual letters or words but rather the essence is to make sense of what is being read.

2.2 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to derive meaning from words and the concepts that they convey in written texts. According to Klingner (2007, p.2), "Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning by coordinating a number of difficult processes that consist of word reading, word and world knowledge, and fluency." Whereas, Pressley (2006), defines reading comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing

meaning through interaction and the involvement of the reader with the written language. The inference from the articulated literature is that reading comprehension means being able to deduce meaning from the printed words. The authors affirm that the construction of meaning depends on the reader's background knowledge and word processing skills. Furthermore, Fountans and Pinnell (1999) cited in Chisamba (2013) aver that comprehension is not the output of reading but rather what should happen during reading. In conclusion, both definitions of reading and reading comprehension have the reader in mind who should integrate with the text for him to understand. The explored literature emphasizes the significance of interaction and engagement which the learners may have with words in their immediate environment or socio-cultural context. Ideally, the two concepts of reading and reading comprehension are intertwined; there is no former without the latter. It is in this regard that the study perceives reading and reading comprehension as one. Reading comprehension is a kind of skill in reading which allows the readers to create meaning from written text which makes them able to understand the information in it. According to McNamara (2007, p.3), "Reading is an extraordinary achievement when one considers the number of levels and components that must be mastered." It means that when the reader reads, he or she must understand and master some components of the text. Reading is a constant process of guessing and what one brings to the text is often more important than what one finds in it. There are many symbols and writings that must be known in the text that is read. This is why, from the very beginning, the learners should be taught to use what they know to understand unknown elements, whether these are ideas or simple words. Therefore, reading is the key to successful language learning, especially in foreign language. Klingner et al (2007, p.8) explain that reading comprehension is multicomponent, highly complex process that involves many interactions between readers and what readers bring to the text (previous knowledge, strategy use) as well as variables related to the text itself (interest in text, understanding of text types). Similarly, McNamara (2007, p.111) says that reading comprehension is a product of complex interactions between the properties of the text and what readers bring to the reading situation. This understanding comes from the interaction between the words that are written and how readers trigger knowledge outside the text. Reading would be empty and meaningless without comprehension because a good reader is someone who understands what he or she is reading, and the faster he can get meaning from his or her reading, the more efficient he is. Reading comprehension is therefore, what readers know about the content of the text that they read and how they comprehend it.

2.2.1 Teaching Reading Comprehension

How reading comprehension is taught in a classroom situation matters a lot. First of all, one should understand that the aim of teaching reading comprehension is to develop the learners' reading skills to enhance accuracy, speed and fluency. Even before the learners are presented with a text, they should already have a reason as to why they want to read. When learners are taught to read, they are also taught how to get meaning from a given text. This involves critical thinking and also being able to tell when they cannot comprehend a certain word in a given text. Teaching reading especially reading comprehension involves a lot of stages, such as the pre-reading, while-reading and the post-reading stages. This helps learners to develop their reading skills fully. Alysousef (2005) confirms these stages when he states that, "Unlike traditional materials, contemporary reading tasks entail three procedures; pre, while and post reading stages." Teachers can become more aware of these reading stages by using various activities in each of the stages, depending on the purpose of reading in each stage because reading is purposeful, so teachers should use different activities for different purposes, namely: pre-, during, and after reading activities (Grellet, 1990).

2.2.1.1 Pre- Reading stage

This is the stage which occurs before learners begin their reading. Its purpose is to prepare the learners with the material that they would be interacting with even before they read it. At this stage, the learners could be asked questions related to the text or quickly explain the content of the text, so that they get a gist of what the text is all about. Pre-reading activities prevent learners from 'barking at print' (reading the text fluently but without understanding). These activities help learners to preview headings and sub-headings, and to predict information that is included in the text (Abraham, 2001; Fischer & Goldberg, 2016). Pre-reading activities also help the teacher to determine what the learners know about the topic under study. Cooper (1986) suggests the following pre-reading activities: asking challenging questions to assess prior knowledge to activate and build background knowledge; reading the introduction and conclusion first; skimming for general ideas; pre-questions, purpose setting activities, and objectives; using advanced organizers and story previews to connect ideas; webbing and semantic maps; using pictures to make correct prediction; and using concrete materials, role-playing, and field trips.

2.2.1.2 While- reading stage

During this stage, the text is supposed to be read three times by the learners. The first time reading is done silently by individual learners, the second time reading is done aloud by the learners and the third time reading is again done silently by individual learners. During all these readings, there are activities that are carried out by the learners. The main purpose of all this is to help learners comprehend the text that they read. Learners may be involved in activities like; discussing the purpose of the text, the structure and highlighting key elements from the text. These activities are like pre-reading activities, and they focus on what learners do with the text as they read it (Martin, 2016). Auerbach and Paxton (as cited in Fischer & Goldberg, 2016) advise that teachers can use, for instance, pair reading, silent reading, and loud reading to make learners understand what they are reading. To improve during-reading skills, teachers should teach their learners the 'post-its' strategy as they read. Learners can 'post-its' by asking questions, answering a question from fellow learners, expressing opinions, and connecting to real life (Gabby, 2016). Learners prepare notes that include key information, new vocabulary, idioms, interesting descriptions, or whatever learners find appropriate (Spohn, 2001).

Teachers ought to ask questions to help learners to find their own strengths and weaknesses. Learners' strengths and weaknesses are often helpful to learners who use graphic cues, note taking, re-reading, and summarizing paragraphs or sections as modeled to them (Toran, 2001). Other useful activities in the during-reading stage are skipping unfamiliar words, guessing from the context, predicting the main idea of each paragraph, and drawing pictures to express imagination (Martin, 2016).

2.2.1.3 Post -Reading stage

This is the stage where learners do activities related to the text read. This is aimed at assessing whether the learners comprehended the text or not. Learners could be involved in activities like, re-telling, summarising, story mapping, question and answer, role play, matching exercise, and many others. Post-reading activities help learners to engage with the materials they have recently read, to transform their thinking into actions, and to think critically, logically, and creatively about the information and ideas that emerge from their reading (Graves et. al 1998; Martin, 2016). Instead of asking short or multiple questions, learners may be asked to identify and select similarities and differences, and to make a mind

map with several different ideas connected by arrows (Martin, 2016). Martin (2016) suggests some post-reading activities such as, re-visiting pre-reading expectations; making an outline, chart, map, or diagram of the organization of the text at hand; retelling what learners think the author is saying; and relating the text to their own experience (p.13).

It is worth mentioning that questions posed after a detailed reading of the text should seek for global understanding of the text, and it should not be the type of questions that act on individual sentences. All three activities for the three reading stages are important, and teachers should ensure that they teach these activities to all levels of the learning process because they enhance active participation in reading comprehension activities.

When employing the post-reading activities and questions, teachers should consider Bloom's six levels hierarchy of skills in his taxonomy (Wessels, 2011). The levels of questions are as follows:

Knowledge and comprehension

These questions include the identification and recall of information. Learners demonstrate recalling of information work by the definition of verbs, the plot of the story, rules, or terminology in language lessons (Wessels, 2011). The problem with these questions is that they are often based on memorization, while the ability to think creatively is ignored. Too much knowledge-based questions frequently result in tiredness, boredom, and shifting communication because they are generally closed-ended (Wessels, 2011). In addition to knowledge-based questions, there are also comprehension questions that are probed at a low level. These questions involve learners transforming information in various ways, for instance, when answering interpretation questions or demonstrating insight, instead of repeating facts. The 'what', 'why', 'where', and 'how' questions all fall under literal questions. Although these questions are at the low-level order of thinking, they are very important in the classroom, as all other levels are built on the understanding of these questions. Thus, if learners do not clearly understand these questions, they may not be able to understand the text in a meaningful way.

Application

Unlike knowledge-based questions that require learners to respond at a literal level, the application is at higher order of thinking. Here, learners apply facts, rules, and principles to answer questions by using the information learned in the text (Martin, 2016). Learners must

show the relations between texts, and must provide examples for the answers and the significance of the given facts. All the answers come from the text that the Learner reads by applying the information as it is given in the text.

Wessels (2011) argues that if a learner really knows and understands a concept and how it works, he or she will be able to apply it in practice. In this level, learners are asked to make inferences or derive generalizations by, for instance, reading a recipe, and then they should be able to demonstrate it. In a language lesson, if a learner is told a story, they should be able to identify the plot, main character, the beginning, and end of the story, and possibly predict the end of the story.

Synthesis

These questions require learners to combine several ideas to become one whole. In other words, synthesis is the combination of parts of a text to form a new whole story (Reutel & Cooter, 2012). Synthesis demands creativity since individual parts are used in a new or unique combination to form a whole.

There are many possibilities that teachers can employ to apply synthesis in the classroom. For example, learners may form a group to role-play a radio program to be presented in class, panel discussions can be arranged, and various learners can be tasked with various responsibilities to perform as a group. Learners can also demonstrate awareness of issues through analysis. Furthermore, learners can compare articles in at least two newspapers covering the same news item or look at and compare issues found in the messages in stories from two different newspapers.

Evaluation

Evaluation requires learners to judge the value of the question. These types of questions are at the evaluation level of Blooms' taxonomy, and they require opinions, judgment, or decisions by the learner (Cooper, 1986; Martin, 2016). Most argumentative compositions fall under this category. Questions such as, "Do you think the death penalty will deter criminality in Zambia?" require the learner to make a judgment and to support his or her statement with facts. Teachers should not assume that learners really understand the text by the fact that they are able to retell, summarize, or learn the vocabulary from the text. For learners to reach thinking at a higher level of comprehension, such as the ability to interpret, evaluate, and apply what they read, they need an experience with scaffolding, which will encourage them

to critically question or discuss texts and make active meaning of what they read. Raphael and Au (as cited in Reutel & Cooter, 2012) discuss the following four strategies that teachers can teach their learners. Instructions in searching for answers in the text are as follows:

(1) Right there: The first guideline is that the answer is in one place in the text. Words from the question and those that answer the question are right there in the same sentence.

(2) Think and search: The second guideline is that the answer is in the text, and learners only need to think and search or put different parts of the text to find the answer. The answer can be within a paragraph, across paragraphs, or across chapters and books.

(3) Author and me: The answer is not in the textbook, so to answer the question, the learner needs to think about how the text and what they already know fit it together.

(4) On my own: The answer is not in the text, so learners need to use their ideas and experiences to answer the question. Research has shown that learners who are able to use these strategies are more likely to find answers within the text than those who are not taught these strategies. In their study to examine reading comprehension strategies on four first language (L1) and second language (L2) language readers, Reutel and Cooter (2012) confirm the importance of teaching comprehension instructions to quickly find answers from the passage being read.

2.2.3 Basic Skills in Reading Comprehension

As reading comprehension is being taught, it should be borne in mind that there are basic skills to be attained. Reading itself is a basic skill before speaking and writing. Klingner, et.al (2007) highlights the fundamental skills in reading comprehension as follows:

a) Fluency

This is the ability by the learner to recognise the word, read it with accuracy, prosody and with understanding. Fillmore (1979, page 93) described the word fluency as “the ability to fill time with talk.” Therefore, if this wider range of skills could be applied more than speaking, fluency can be said to be defined as the ability to use language both as a receptive and product at an acceptable speed.

b) Vocabulary

This is the ability by the learner to comprehend the given words. Vocabulary is a robust predictor of reading comprehension across development. Children acquire vocabulary at an astounding rate, an average 2 to 8 root words per day (Biemiller & Slonim, 2001). When vocabulary skills are enhanced, comprehension becomes deeper.

c) Word Knowledge/Word reading

To make it easier for the readers or learners to understand the text, one should have enough background knowledge from the text to his or her advantage. To make it easier for the learners to understand the text, they should be well equipped with the basic reading comprehension skills. Learners also comprehend best when they know important words in the text (Quinn et al. 2015).

It should also be understood that according to Harmer, (2007), there are two types of reading. These are intensive and extensive reading.

2.2.3.1 Intensive reading

This involves reading a text deeply with concentration. This means it is reading for intense comprehension purposes. Usually the text is short, read slowly and carefully to get or understand its detail. When doing intensive reading, one has to pay attention to issues of style, grammatical forms, literal meaning and vocabulary. It is usually done for examinations, analysis and generally for academic purposes. Harmer, (2007) adds that intensive reading refers to the detailed focus on the construction of reading texts that occur usually in the classroom. Meaning, it is accompanied by activities in the areas of attention (vocabulary, grammar).

2.2.3.2 Extensive reading

This is reading on a wider scale for information or awareness or as Harmer (2007) puts it, it involves reading for pleasure. Readers could read stories, magazines, newspapers and any other type of literature. It provides a broad and general understanding of texts. It also focuses mostly on gists.

However, Duffy in Muslaini (2017, p70) states that teachers should consider two things when teaching reading comprehension. The first one is that, comprehension is knowledge based

which means that teachers should familiarise themselves with the text to be read so that they are able to explain to the learners.

The second one is that reading is a complex cognitive and linguistic activity that requires deciphering alphabetic symbols in order to help learners' comprehension. Therefore, teachers must implement appropriate strategies which are suitable to condition learners' needs, background knowledge, learning objectives, subject matter and level of comprehension. Through teaching reading comprehension, the teacher can also give better understanding to learners about vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and how to construct a sentence. Janzen and Stoller (1998) identified processes or techniques of reading comprehension as "Identifying a purpose for reading, previewing, predicting, asking questions, checking predictions or finding answers to the questions, connecting the text to prior knowledge, summarizing, connecting one part of the text to another, and recognizing text structure." Below are some of the techniques that could be used when teaching reading comprehension.

2.3 Techniques used in teaching Reading Comprehension

Psychologically, reading is seen as a two-way activity between language and thought. Teachers should use appropriate techniques when teaching it in order to make learners able to interpret or to understand the idea and thought of the whole text. Technique is implementation of that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick, stratagem or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective. Technique must be consistent with a method, and therefore, in harmony with an approach as well (Anthony 1963, p.96) in Fauziati (2009, p.17). Thus, technique encompasses the actual moment-to-moment practices and behaviours that operate in teaching a language according to a particular method. In other words, techniques are classroom activities that integrate into lessons and are used as the basis for teaching and learning. Reading techniques interactive learning Scholars such as Cooper (1986), Grellet (1990) and Wessels (2011) reveal that learners with good reading skills apply various reading strategies and techniques for different reading purposes. It is therefore essential for learners to be made aware of these strategies and of how they can apply them in their own reading. Grellet (1990) states that because reading is purposeful, learners should use different reading speed for different purposes. According to Cameron (2009), there are several techniques that can be used by teachers when teaching reading comprehension.

2.3.1 Using Prior Knowledge/ Previewing

This is a technique in which readers make broad remarks about the book's contents. Prior content knowledge supports relevant comprehension and learning (Barnes, Dennis & Haefele-Kalvaitis, 1996). Prior knowledge predicts text recall for students across development and supports the ability to make inferences (Recht & Leslie, 1988) and learn new words (Kaefer, Neuman, & Pinkham, 2015). Learners use what they know to assist them to grasp the content they are about to read when they preview the text. This gives them a framework to work with when they come upon novel facts.

2.3.2 Predicting

This is a technique in which readers make an educated guess about the context of the reading material. Good reader use predicting as a way to connect their existing knowledge to new information from a text to get meaning from what they read (Gillet & Temple, 1994). When students make predictions about a text they are reading, they are setting expectations based on past understanding of related themes.

2.3.3 Questioning

The questioning technique is a method in which the teacher asks the learners a series of questions about the context of the reading material. It is another approach for helping learners focus on the meaning of the material to ask and answer a question on the text's content. Research has shown that good questions can increase curiosity, motivation, attention, and memory-making (Schwartz et al., 2016). Teachers can help learners by demonstrating how to ask proper questions and how to discover answers in a text.

2.3.4 Making Inferences

This is a way of teaching reading comprehension where teachers ask learners to draw a conclusion from a passage of the reading text they read. It is the ability to integrate information within or across texts using background knowledge to fill in information not explicitly stated, is an essential component of language (Kendeou, McMaster, & Christ, 2016, Kintch, 1988). In order to make inferences about something that is not directly mentioned in the text, learners must learn to rely on past knowledge and detect hints in the text itself.

2.3.5 Mind- Mapping

This approach aids the reader in bringing order to the chaos. Mind mapping is a tool for enhancing learning and thinking. Buzan and Buzan (2002:82) state that, “mind mapping is a creative technique which let the students to get success in remembering written information. Marton and Booth (1997) state that mind mapping is a visual representation of hierarchical information that includes a central idea surrounded by connected branches of associated topics. Individually, mind-mapping can be done by reading a text and then looking for the text’s major ideas which can then be written down in the learners’ book in the form of a mind-map.

2.3.6 Storytelling

Storytelling is a technique of imparting knowledge and skills by adopting use of spoken words and actions to influence communication. As resources, stories enable primary school children to learn about the world around them and are critical to primary school children’s socialization (Sakthivel, Phil &Kavidha, 2010). Using storytelling as an instructional strategy for teaching of reading skills is the earliest and most enduring form of education practiced by different people worldwide (Amer, 2012). Use of stories is viewed as a way of entertaining, teaching of reading skills and learning language skills, preservation of folktale and instilling morality among people (Koham & Pourkalthor, 2013). Among different traditions, use of stories was a method of educating children. According to Riwes (2010), stories are used in a manner that enhances human beings skills to pass themes which make primary school children understand real and imagined worlds.

2.3.7 Summarizing

Using the summarizing and re-telling approaches, learners are expected to summarize the text and narrate the context of the text in their own words. It is considered one of the reading techniques that permit students to understand the text more profoundly, and at the same time, it works as an indicator of understanding (Pecjaka & Pircb, 2018). In order to summarize, the learners take a lot of information and create a condensed version that covers the main points. They could first determine what is significant and then express it in their own terms. Attempting to comprehend the author's purposes for composing the materials is implicit in

this process. In addition, there are a variety of classroom methods that may be utilized to assist students improve reading comprehension.

2.3.8 Picture reading

Pupils try to make sense of a given story or text from the pictures in there if any. Pictures can facilitate the creation of a mental representation as well, as they clarify implicit or unclear relations in the text (Eitel & Scheiter, 2015). They connect the happenings in the pictures to come up with a story, of course not far away from the text to be read.

2.3.9 Read aloud

Teachers would read aloud to the learners or ask the learners to read aloud in class. Read aloud is when children listen to an adult read different genres of texts (Franzese, 2002) and then engage in talking about them. This helps learners to enhance their pronunciation of words, fluency and also to build their confidence.

2.3.10 Group discussion

Group discussions are, a significant part of group learning and they have been defined as a group of individuals that come together for verbal communication to make decisions or simply share knowledge (Morgan et al., 2000). Learners are given tasks to do in groups. This could be reading or other class activities. Group work promotes collaboration and cooperation among learners. This also helps the shy or closed up learners to participate fully.

2.3.11 Re-telling

When retelling, learners tell everything about a particular text, that is, all the details and some main ideas of a text read. In retell, students are typically asked and/or purposely prompted to tell or write down in their own words the main ideas or everything they can recall from a passage they just read (Bellinger & Diperna, 2011; Collins, Compton, Lindstrom, & Gilbert, 2020; Reed, Vaughn, & Petscher, 2012; Shapiro, Fritschmann, Thomas, Hughes, & McDougal, 2014; Tilstra & McMaster, 2013) or heard (Barnes et al., 2014, Kim & Schatschneider, 2017).

2.3.12 Skimming

This is reading a text quickly to get what it is about or to get the gist to gain general impression. It equips the readers with strategies for how to look for general information or ideas. Skimming is a reading technique that focuses on finding specific information from a

written text. Given that skimming enables readers to gather as much information as possible from a text in the shortest time possible, the technique may be important for first language (L1) learners when reading within a limited time. The technique does not require learners to read everything; they simply need to look for outstanding features, such as the heading, subheading, pictures, and font size. Skimming is an effective way for learners to preview reading materials that they may later read more carefully (Grellet, 1990). The technique is important because it activates learners' background knowledge on the issue at hand.

2.3.13 Scanning

This is reading intensively in order to get specific information or idea of what one is looking for. Learners are asked to look for names and dates, find an explanation of crucial ideas, or list a specified amount of supporting details in a scanning assignment. This technique asks learners to read and look for specific information of the reading text and list it into the learner's book. Scanning, on the other hand, is a technique used when reading swiftly and efficiently extracting certain data from written or printed materials. Grellet (1990), states that, scanning is used to quickly find essential facts or instructions, eliminating the laborious reading of every word in the text. Moreover, scanning helps learners to run their eyes over a text quickly to locate specific information.

This reading technique is important because it saves time, and it is more appropriate for efficient, competent readers who can, among other things, complete a reading task efficiently without wasting time or effort (Moats & Foorman, 2003). Teachers must always put limits on reading tasks by incorporating the time limit in instructions. For example: "you have a train to catch but you have only two minutes to find someone's number". In that way, all learners (including learners who are reluctant to read) will apply the scanning technique naturally. Teachers are encouraged to never assume that learners already know these techniques, as they might not have been taught in previous grades; teachers should, therefore, teach and demonstrate how and when the techniques should be used. It is essential for the teacher to follow a structured procedure during the reading lesson in class. This will not only help learners to acquire these skills, but the teacher will also be a model for them.

2.3.11 Analyse vocabulary

Vocabulary knowledge refers to a schema on passage mental image cognition and single word or character semantic meaning identification (Nation, 2015; Braze et al., 2016). In analysing some vocabulary, the reader can use several techniques as follows:

1. Look for prefixes that might lead to further information.
2. Look for suffixes that may identify the sections of speech to which they belong.
3. Look for roots that are known to the reader.
4. Matching given words with given meanings

2.4 Review of Studies

2.4.1 Teachers' knowledge of instructional techniques used to teach reading comprehension

Al Husban, (2019) carried out research on teachers' understanding of the concept of reading through interviews and observations showed that teachers had limited, traditional and superficial understanding of the reading comprehension strategies and practices. This impacted their delivery and impartation of literacy skills and vocabulary analysis on the learners. There is need for teachers to be well vested with knowledge on reading comprehension especially in lower grades as these are critical foundation levels for learner's breakthrough. In Saudi Arabia for example, writing and reading skills are very much debated in the recent studies as learners exhibit surprising lack in these skills at the later stages of their university education (Al Qahtani, 2010; Al Roomy, 2013) showing a great need to intensify skills and knowledge in teachers. If teachers are not aware of how to introduce related vocabulary and do not believe that learners' autonomy is necessary to make out sense of the text on their own, it impacts on learner concept understanding and misplacement and become severe issue when the teachers don't see any difference in top-down or bottom-up approach (Alenzi, 2019).

Furthermore, through interviews, Cekiso (2017) conducted a study on perceptions of reading instruction in selected primary schools in the Eastern Cape regarding the initial training programme, established that, teachers some teachers were not trained to teach in the Foundation Phase. The majority of respondents doubted if their classroom practice would yield positive results as far as reading instruction was concerned. Teachers only paid attention

to oral reading (observing punctuation marks and pronunciation), without attending to reading comprehension.

Teaching reading comprehension has stages that are not fully applied by many teachers due to lack of knowledge and refresher trainings to boost their teaching standards. There was a general consensus that the new ways of teaching reading were necessary in order to improve the reading ability of learners. Howie (2006) reports that inadequate subject knowledge of teachers is among the factors that contribute to learners' inability to read. Thus, teachers' classroom practices have a significant impact on student outcomes. This is a cause for concern as teachers play an important role as mediators, facilitators and monitors of the reading process (Richards in Rido, Ibrahim & Nambiar 2014). The results of Cekiso (2017) and Howie (2006) are vital in this study because, they brought out some discrepancies and projectable understanding of teaching comprehension which brings the context of investigation to the Zambian context in order to establish what transpires on the ground. This study will bridge this gap by bringing out complimentary data on teachers knowledge on reading comprehension from the Zambian context.

Segooa (2020) carried out a research about teachers' understanding of teaching reading through interviews and observation in Limpopo, South Africa. Through interviews and generated narratives, all the participants' narratives indicated that teachers had low levels of knowledge with regard to reading comprehension. However, they were involved in trainings and workshops that developed and improved their teaching of reading comprehension to learners. However, the classroom observations revealed that their presentations were, to some extent, unable to practice what they alluded to during interviews, and that shows that they had not acquired the full sense of the theoretical and practical knowledge of teaching reading.

Van der Merwe and Nel (2012) conducted a study in identifying which reading literacy components (that are embedded in knowledge of language structure) were included in the reading comprehension programme. The results of their study showed that the reading literacy components were included haphazardly within the teacher preparation programme, and there was no evidence-based research included in the curriculum of the pre-service teachers. The responses also pointed to the teachers' failure to design relevant teaching aids like wall charts that would allow learners to read independently. This indicates that there is no clear path in terms of teacher understanding of techniques for teaching reading

comprehension. This study will add to this gap by establishing teacher's knowledge of teaching reading comprehension in the Zambian context.

2.4.2 Techniques used in teaching reading comprehension

Teaching techniques is an educational strategy which can be defined as a plan method, or series of activities designed to educational achieves a particular goal. It is a teacher's plan in teaching and learning process to achieve that which have been planned (Aswan, et. al., 2010). In other words, it could imply approaches to teaching students with a certain goal to achieve. In reading comprehension, the applicability of different techniques could help enhance learner grasp of the content. The teacher have to applied the technique to balance between the method which the teacher's used and the way of the teacher's used to applied the material (Aswan, et. al., 2010).

The techniques for teaching reading comprehension should be made appropriate for each skill in order to attain the expected outcomes. Teaching reading comprehension is a global call. Many scholars across the world have done studies on techniques to be used when teaching reading comprehension. For example, Manoli and Papadopoulou (2013) studied Greek EFL teachers reading comprehension practices in central Greece and specifically whether they explicitly teach students reading strategies when interacting with written texts using semi-structured interviews and classroom observations deduced that teachers mainly focused on oral reading of texts, teaching vocabulary and asking questions, demonstrating that there was a lack of research-based reading comprehension instruction. This lack means that teachers did not help students understand the reading texts. Reading comprehension is the thinking process used to make meaning of what a person reads (Block, Gambrell, and Presley, 2002) and calls for applicability of effective teaching techniques to realize the grasp of the required meanings by learners.

Another study Nurdianingsih (2021) on teachers' strategies in teaching reading comprehension revealed that revealed that the strategies used by the teacher were understanding text, individual and group learning strategy, and QAR strategy. However, what was noted in Nurdianingsih (2021) was that teachers needed to be equipped by strategies in teaching reading comprehension in order to help the students to cope with the difficulties in learning English. For example, Vacca and Vacca (1999) state that the Question and Answer Relationship technique could allow the students to understand their thinking processes and

develop their metacognitive abilities. QAR strategy could be used to help them decide when and how to use their background knowledge to summarize the reading text. In Nurdianingsih (2021) study, teachers used various techniques to teach reading comprehension which enhanced concept building among learners in a diverse manner.

According to *Put Reading First 15* developed by the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA), multiple research studies have indicated improved reading comprehension by implementing various reading strategies (Adler, 2001). Some of the suggested reading Comprehension strategies include modeling, the think-aloud process, inferring, summarizing, making connections, questioning, and predicting should be implemented. Erlidawati (2015) carried out a research on the use of retelling technique in learning reading comprehension in Indonesia and the results showed that retelling techniques helped students increase vocabulary, to explain the main topic and can motivate students to understand the content of the text. However, the study by Erlidawati was single cased to one technique eliminating the other techniques. This study will review several techniques that teachers use in teaching reading comprehension.

Olifant *et al.*, (2020) investigated reading comprehension strategies used by teachers during English first additional language reading instruction and the study showed that the majority of teachers used questioning (a critical reading strategy) in order to probe for more information from the learners. However, their questioning technique reflected their dominance of the lesson and sadly what was noted was that, all the teachers engaged learners in lower order questions that did not facilitate learners' critical reading skills. Olifant *et al.*, (2020) further argues that to make the situation worse, one teacher focused only on oral reading and as such paid specific attention to pronunciation, without any focus on comprehension. This finding is in line with the findings of a study conducted in Thailand by Blything *et al.*, (2019) were it was revealed that teachers asked more lower-order than higher-order challenging questions. Blything *et al.*, (2019) argues that lower-order reading comprehension techniques involve memorization of basic information whereas higher-order reading comprehension strategies require understanding and application of knowledge hence the need for techniques that are integral and facilitates co-production of knowledge between the teacher and the learner.

Kurniawan (2018) conducted a study on teachers' techniques in teaching reading comprehension at Sman 1 Kota Sungai Penuh in academic year 2017/2018. Techniques that

came out were questioning, summarizing technique, close procedure and semantic mapping. These were among effective techniques that could be used in teaching reading comprehension but were not fully utilized in the investigated situation. Many teachers used instructional means such as the media that could not be measured with regard to learner grasp of the contents. Mechanisms such as brainstorming activities can make the students think easier and encourage the students to learn or follow the learning process, after that the media can facilitate the students to learn more actively and through making discussion group can make the students enjoy the learning process. Through this process, it could help learners become active readers and meaning creators in life.

A more rich research was conducted by Nining et al, (2016). The study was conducted in Malang, Indonesia regarding the strategies performed by the teachers in teaching reading comprehension. What was established was that, skimming, giving some questions related to the text, analysing vocabulary, identifying the component of the text, discussing the content, previewing, highlighting the main points, taking notes, predicting and guessing, making conclusions, relating text with the students' daily life and retelling were techniques that could be used when teaching reading comprehension. However, studied teachers utilized much of skimming and questioning strategies. These were seen as easy techniques in making learners grasp what was taught. This study added more data on instruction techniques used to teach reading comprehension from the Zambian context such as pre and post reading as a less utilized technique in the teaching of reading comprehension.

When teachers pause for discussion during and after reading, [teachers can] prompt students to stay in the driver's seat and to reflect on what had happened in their heads during their reading" (Brabham and Villaume, 2001, p.262). Teachers should show children how to use resources within themselves and within the book (Box, 2002). By doing this, students will gain, maintain, and consider new meaning for themselves. If children know how to apply and integrate the strategies of predicting, sampling and confirming text, and can regain control when meaning is lost, then guided reading can shift to making children aware of how they can use these competencies to cope with more complex challenges in content and structure" (Mooney, 1995, p.55).

Reading comprehension could be taught severally depending on the situation and type of lesson prepared by the teacher. There are many techniques that could be applied but the application of Predicting, making connections, visualizing, inferring, questioning, and summarizing are strategies shown by research to improve reading comprehension (Block & Israel, 2005) by learners and foster improved understanding by learners of what is read. For

example, through inference, students can make text-to-text connections through drawing, making a chart, writing, and graphic organizers. However, if it is drawing, these text-to-text connections could be based upon how characters in the story relate to each other, or how story elements relate between stories.

Nurie (2017) conducted a study which aimed at examining current practices of teachers in teaching reading and how the teachers handle and organize reading comprehension at Fasilo Secondary School in Ethiopia. Data was collected through interviews and classroom observation. The results revealed that all the teachers exhibited similar practices of teaching reading comprehension such as giving assignments and expecting correct responses and a brief description of the topic.

However, geographical diversity may make other techniques less effective. Globally, studies of techniques for reading comprehension have been developed and adopted in other countries like Zambia, however, despite the adoption of such techniques in teaching comprehension, little has been known how teaching comprehension in lower grades is done in Zambia. This study was therefore vital to bridge this knowledge gap.

2.4.3 Challenges teachers face when teaching reading comprehension

Teaching reading comprehension is quite challenging especially in geographical areas where English receive less attention if adopted as a second language. Pupils grow in different localities of different instructional media (Languages). This negatively affects them in adopting the concepts of English in schools. This could be made worse if teachers themselves are not familiar with English with respect to non-proficient enough in the language they use for instructions. Thus, Sentsho (2000) argues that if teachers are not perfect in instructional language, imperfectness impacts negatively on the outcome which is on the learners (child). Incapability of using basic structures correctly could lead to word incomprehensible (McGrath, 1974: 297). If children do not learn to read, understand, write and use language to communicate their ideas and perspectives based on teacher incompetence, their favorable conditions for a fulfilling and rewarding life are seriously compromised (Lyon, 2003). This means that teachers need to ought to learn and be familiar with the language or languages spoken by majority of learners. It also implies that in multilingual classrooms, language practices such as translanguaging should be utilized owing to its many advantages which several studies have established (Mkandawire, 2022; Nyimbili and Mwanza, 2021; Mashinja and Mwanza, 2021; Mwanza, 2020; Mkandawire et al., 2022; Mubita and Mwanza, 2020;

Chella, 2023; Banda and Mwanza, 2020; Mwanza and Bwalya, 2019; Mkandawire et al., 2023; Banda and Mwanza, 2020).

Studies have been conducted in many countries across the world with regard to how teacher incompetencies could disturb or become a challenge in teaching reading comprehension. For example, Kepe (2017). This sentiment is shared by Mather (2012) who posits that glitches may be related to the insufficient training and inadequate knowledge of teaching reading to many South African teachers. The problem that go hand in hand with teachers who are given the responsibility to teach English classes at senior phase in secondary schools for which they do not have better command of the language is well known (Kepe and Foncha, 2017)). Not only do they lack sufficient subject knowledge, but they also lack the skills on how to teach English, the language of teaching and learning. Teaching reading to English first additional language learners have its challenges because teachers are not proficient enough in the language. Learners who are not taught by teachers proficient in English might not have the necessary foundation on which to build English language skills. Iversen and Mkandawire (2020) observed that language teaching is a multifaceted activity especially in multilingual settings. Alexander (2000) argues that if learners from their first school year are taught in English by teachers not proficient in English, they would have problems with reading and writing either at home language or the language of teaching. The point of departure here is that in order to promote communication and reading comprehension amongst the learners, it is necessary to know whether teachers themselves have the skills and expertise to teach that language (English). However, what need to be established here is that, teacher's challenges in teaching reading are not only a South African problem but a global one.

Another study conducted by LanPhuongl (2022) on Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension, showed that students who had prior knowledge could comprehend the text with ease. However, when students encountered unfamiliar readings, they struggled mightily to understand them and needed to read the texts more than once to do so. All this is because; the majority of pupils have trouble understanding English text from materials such as newspapers, articles, textbooks, and periodicals (Zuhra (2015). Difficulties in vocabularies could make learners lose interest in the lesson thereby making it hard for them to grasp the content. It is also worth mentioning that, difficult in vocabulary moves with students' attitude toward reading. Learners try to read and understand but if the learner's heart is not willing to accept, it's hard to teach such kind of a learner. This can be a large part of the problem when it comes to the deficit found in their ability to both comprehend what they read, as well as, read at an appropriate rate (Dean & Trent 2002). Often students approach reading with the

mindset that they will fail and therefore the effort they put forth decreases. This lack of confidence in their abilities can lead to low self-esteem and high anxiety toward the subject of reading (Dean & Trent, 2002) (Simplicio, 2003).

Furthermore, a study conducted by Lu, (2022) on Challenges teachers face in teaching reading among elementary pupils established that, existing challenges of teachers in teaching reading comprehension to elementary pupils are the Inadequacy understanding reading, Deficiency reading development, Underdeveloped sounds and words recognition, Difficulty attending student's need and Insufficient reading materials. Lack of reading materials in many schools both rural and urban schools could greatly pose a great challenge in trying to teach the reading of comprehension. Lucas (2011) and Rany (2013) also note that pupils may have low reading ability due to school heads not availing the necessary course books for practice reading, lack of appropriate curriculum to help improve pupils reading abilities and classroom environments that are crowded and noisy for an appropriate teaching pedagogy to be fulfilled. These challenges if not adhered and addressed could make teacher's delivery of comprehension lesson difficult thereby destroying the future of the learner. In China for example, the unavailability of resources which include teaching material as well as teachers was found to be a huge challenge in teaching China learners to read in English as a first additional language (Valencia et al, 2006). Teaching materials were inadequate and the vocabulary was too difficult for the learners as China has a localized curriculum which made called for more English reading books in China to achieve the goal of reading comprehension.

A research done by Muyangana (2012) where he was investigating how reading comprehension was taught in selected junior secondary schools of Lusaka district in Zambia revealed some of the challenges faced by teachers when teaching reading comprehension, and these could relate even to lower primary grades. Data was collected from three secondary single sex schools through focus group discussion, lesson observation and semi-structured interviews. The findings of the study revealed that most of the challenges faced in the teaching of reading comprehension were: lack of expertise in handling reading comprehension lessons, teacher's poor reading culture, lack of teacher initiative in promoting reading, teacher inability to publish books, articles and other relevant reading comprehension materials, insufficient text-books in some schools, failure to instil discipline among pupils and heavy workload by some teachers.

Another study by Maala and Mkandawire (2022) on factors contributing to low performance in English reading comprehension in selected secondary schools of Lusaka district reviewed

that there were multiple factors which included lack of knowledge by some teachers on the procedure of teaching reading comprehension therefore be taught poorly. On the other hand, pupils had challenges due to lack of understanding, limited fluency, low reading culture, limited vocabulary, poor motivation, limited reading time in class against long passages and lack of teaching and learning materials.

2.5 Identified Gap in Literature

This section has presented a review of literature on instructional techniques and resources used in teaching reading skills among pupils in school from global to local context. Prior studies on instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension are appreciated. However, concentration as the case of Zambia was on secondary schools and generalization without localizing the situation in order to understand instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension in primary schools. Hence this study. World Vision (2012) established that 70% of learners in grade seven were not able to read but could not go further to establish techniques teachers use to teach reading as inappropriate application of techniques can also make a child fail to read.

2.6 Summary

The essence of teaching reading comprehension is to make pupils understand the passage. Understanding of the whole passage makes pupils understand questions asked. This can only be achieved if teachers fully understand what reading comprehension is and are able to use the correct instructional techniques when teaching it. Despite the challenges faced, teachers should thrive at ensuring the learners actively participate in the reading comprehension lessons.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

In this section, the researcher presents the methodological framework of the study. It presents the research paradigm, research design and methodology which the study used to achieve the research objectives. The chapter also looks at location where the study was carried out; target population; sampling techniques and sample size; data collection instruments; methods of testing the validity and reliability of instruments and data collection techniques that were used. It also presents data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Paradigm

The term paradigm was first used by Thomas Kuhn (1962) to denote a conceptual framework shared by a community of scientists which provide them with a convenient model for examining problems and finding solutions. This study used a purely qualitative approach with a constructivism research paradigm. Constructivism is a learning theory which holds that knowledge is best gained through a process of reflection and active construction in the mind (Mascolo & Fischer, 2005). The respondents were at liberty to give data on the techniques they used to teach reading comprehension based on their own views or knowledge, experiences and cultural background. Since the researcher believed in the existence of multiple realities with a subjective mind, the data generated through the use of interviews, focused group discussions and lesson observation just to have a divergence of information.

3.2 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design. Descriptive design according to (Kothari, 2011) is concerned with describing, recording, analyzing and interpreting conditions that either exist or existed, using balanced panel research design. Creswell (2009) further states that through descriptive research design, data is collected through interviews and observations. The researcher utilized this assumption and used interviews, focused group discussions and observations in data collection as this helped the researcher

to establish the instructional techniques that were used to enhance pupils reading comprehension among sampled schools in Monze district of southern province, Zambia. The research design adopted in this study falls under qualitative research approach. A qualitative research is concerned with feelings, ideas or experiences. It is the study of the nature of phenomenon, which includes their quality which they appear or the perspectives from which they can be perceived but excludes their range (Val et al., 2023). It is an investigation that involves studying people's experiences as they occur in their natural setting, the meaning that they attach to the experiences and the multiple contexts within these experiences occur (Chilisa and Preece, 2005). To establish the demands of the research questions, data was derived from the interview guides and observation checklist. This correlates with Creswell, (2009) who also stipulates that, through qualitative research data is collected through interviews and observations. The researcher utilized this assumption and utilized qualitative demands in data collection, analysis and interpretation.

3.3 Study Site

The research was conducted among the grade sevens in two urban primary schools and two rural primary schools in Monze district of Southern Province of Zambia.

3.4 Target Population

According to Sidhu, (2006), a target population includes all those who are proposed to be covered under the scheme of the study. The study's target population was all grade seven teachers and learners in Monze district because it was a critical stage that marks the transition to secondary school and the pupils are expected to be proficient enough in English in order for them to learn all the other subjects. The teachers at this stage should have been conversant with the techniques used to teach reading comprehension to help the pupils to transition into secondary schools with challenges. The study also included the Senior Education Standards Officer (SESO) for English, Southern Province.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the process of selecting elements of a population for inclusion in a research study (O,Leary, 2010). In this study, a homogenous purposive sampling was used. Purposive sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002). It is a

non-probability sampling was used as it is a non-parametric sampling technique. A non-probability sampling consists of samples that are not drawn in a random fashion (O, Leary, 2010). In this regard, the researcher used subjective methods in deciding which elements to include in the sample (Battaglia, 2008). The study utilized homogenous purposive sampling technique. This sampling technique is defined as technique under purposive sampling which is used to capture a wider range of objects or individuals with similar traits. Similar traits in this study meant learners taking reading comprehension lessons and teachers that handle them.

3.6 Sample size

A sample size is the number of items, people or objects selected for a study from within the target population (O’Leary, 2010). Since it was not possible to study the entire grade seven teachers and pupils in Monze District, The study covered a total of four schools, that is, two urban schools and two rural schools. Six (6) grade seven teachers of English were purposively sampled from each school. The learners were also purposively sampled. The other one was The Senior Education Standards Officer-Languages from The Provincial Education offices making the total sample size 25.

3.7 Research Instruments

This study was purely qualitative in nature. In this regard, the study utilized primary data collection instruments. According to Hox and Boeije (2005), primary data are data collected for specific problem at hand using procedures that complement the problem under research. The study utilized interview guides, non-participant observation guide and focused group discussion guide.

3.8 Data collection procedure

Interviews were done using interview guide that had open ended questions to allow participants’ divergence of views in their responses. According to Bernard, (2006), a semi structured interview guide is one that is open-ended but follows a general script and covers a list of topics. In this study, interview guide directed the interview. However, emerging questions during the interview process were treated with care as they held significant follow-ups to emanating situations that were not there but vital follow-ups. Similarly, Cohen and Manion (1981) states that, an interview provides access to what is inside a person’s head,

makes it possible to measure what a person knows, what a person likes or dislikes and what a person thinks. This was complimented with a lesson observation guide on situations that required researcher a feel of what was transpiring in real classroom situation.

Focus group discussions through the use of focus group discussion guide were one data collection technique in this study that helped researcher get many answers from teachers and students. This technique complimented to what was observed during the lessons using the lesson observation guide. Since focused group discussions are organized by selecting a group of individuals and assembled by researcher (Powell et al., 1996), the researcher through assistance from teachers organized pupils and teachers in groups. This was meant to allow each participant express themselves freely without fear or favor.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data generated was purely subjective and called for a method of data analysis that could have been used to categorise raw data easy data presentation and interpretation. In this manner, researcher used thematic data analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (200), thematic data analysis is a qualitative data analysis technique usually used for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data. This technique reports experiences, meanings and reality of participants or constructs of events and their meanings. In this study, data from focused group discussion and in-depth interviews were first transcribed and a similarity checking was done. Comparison helped bring out patterns that helped create themes. Generated themes per objective were used for data interpretation.

3.10 Trustworthiness / credibility of the findings

Qualitative researchers utilize various validation strategies to make their studies credible and rigorous (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Since this study was purely a qualitative study and researcher held respondent's views and trust with honor, member checking was used to asses if what the researcher got was a true reflection of respondent's views. This was through researcher making follow-ups on issues that required explanation from respondent's for better understanding of what was meant. The aim was to establish the degree to which a study results accurately reflected constructs that the researcher was attempting to establish from the field (Thorndike, 1997).

3.11 Ethical Considerations

The proposal was cleared by The University of Zambia (UNZA) ethical committee. Furthermore, permission and consent was requested from UNZA Ethics Committee and an introductory letter from the Assistant Dean Post Graduate in the School of Education before going into the field for data collection. Also, the authority from Monze District Education office was sought where research was to be conducted. In this regard, all participants gave their consent after the researcher had explained the purpose of the study and guaranteed them confidentiality of information. All the information was kept confidential including personal interviews. Confidentiality was achieved by using codes, for example, letters of the alphabet for schools, that is A,B,C and D, and numbers for teachers, instead of their names.

3.12 Summary

The chapter has described the manner in which data was collected from the four primary schools in Monze district. Since this research was purely qualitative, it used lesson observation, interviews and focus group discussion to come up with the required data. Observation was done when teachers of English taught reading comprehension in the grade seven classes while interviews were done to all teachers of English that were available at the time the research was being conducted. Focus group discussion was done to grade seven pupils in all the four schools. The method of data analysis has been discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

Having shown the methodological framework in the preceding chapter, this chapter presents research results on teachers' understanding of instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension, techniques teachers use when teaching reading comprehension and challenges teachers face when teaching reading comprehension. The presentation of findings is in line with aligned objectives and since the analysis was purely qualitative, thematic analysis was used to generate themes that are presented in tabular format. For the first objective, much of the results are presented as verbatim due to the nature of the research question that was to be answered.

4.2 Teachers' knowledge of instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension

This section presents finding of the first question which was aimed at establishing teachers' knowledge of teaching techniques used in teaching reading comprehension. The results are given in table form using the main theme and sub-themes that emerged during data collection. The sub-themes are those that came out so strongly from respondents during interviews and focused group discussions.

Table 1: Theme and sub-themes which emerged

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Sub-themes</i>
Teachers' knowledge on instructional techniques in teaching reading comprehension	1.1 Skills
	1.2 Strategies
	1.3 Methods
	1.4 Approaches

Many teachers considered reading comprehension as reading a story or passage and concept grasp and thus defined instructional techniques differently. Through verbatim expressions, it was established that most of the teachers had knowledge on techniques used in teaching reading comprehension though some gave other definitions as evidenced from table 1. They contextualized teaching techniques differently dependent on their college education, teaching experience, experiential studies, literature and advanced knowledge from CPDs. Many techniques were used to establish if pupils really grasped the concepts of the read story. Some

of these techniques included among others: discussing the passage with learners, asking of oral questions, giving of remedial work, discussion of new words, individual exercises and learner's explaining what they had heard from the passage or story. The following section therefore, presents sub-themes and verbatim of what was extracted from the field during data collection in the four sampled primary schools of Monze district, Zambia.

4.2.1 Skills

A teacher from school C said:

Instructional techniques are activities that we use when teaching to make the lessons interesting and learners to understand and participate fully.

Another teacher from school D defined instructional techniques as:

Madam, instructional techniques in my own understanding are different ways teachers use to help the learners understand what they are being taught in a friendly manner. Or strategies deployed when teaching a certain topic or lesson.

Coincidentally, most of the teachers were defining instructional techniques as above. The only minor difference was in the wording.

4.2.2 Strategies

Others were defining instructional techniques as strategies. Like one teacher from school B said;

An instructional technique in my own understanding people, is a strategy that one can use when teaching to make the lesson easier to understand.

Some teachers from school A, C and D defined it as a strategy.

4.2.3 Methods

There were a few teachers who could not differentiate between a technique and a method as thus defined it as thus.

Teacher 1: *A technique is a teaching method used when delivering a lesson. That is my thought any way.*

4.2.4 Approach

A few went further to define a technique as an approach. Teachers at school A and C said;

A technique to me madam is just like an approach one uses to teach a particular subject or lesson.

However, despite this knowledge by some teachers, others did not say anything signifying lack of knowledge on techniques in teaching reading comprehension. The researcher tried provoking their minds by trying to get more from them but silence revealed lack of knowledge. This indicated that in some schools, some teachers failed to define a technique, others hiding in the name that ‘the answer has already been given by my colleagues’.

Since the researcher was much interested in teacher’s knowledge of techniques used in teaching reading comprehension, it was also necessary to establish what techniques could be used when teaching reading comprehension in a bid to establish the linkage of knowledge and technique applicability. From focused group discussions with teachers in the four sampled schools, it was established that teachers had knowledge of techniques that could be used to teach reading comprehension. For example, one teacher from school C stated that:

There are many techniques that could be used when teaching reading comprehension and some of them includes: analysis of new vocabulary, picture reading, storytelling, questioning, reading aloud and story retelling.

Responses proved that knowledge of a technique was there among teachers though there was a mixture of reading comprehension techniques and associated activities in the teaching of reading comprehension. For example, storytelling is an associated activity to teaching reading comprehension though in this context it was placed as a technique. There is need for more refresher courses in schools as results of this study showed less committal and knowledge on teachers with regard to techniques in teaching reading comprehension.

4.3 Instructional techniques teachers of English use when teaching reading comprehension

Techniques that teachers used to teach reading comprehension varied. However, thematically, the following summary gives established teaching techniques that teachers used as observed during lessons and what was established from interviews conducted.

Table 2: Themes and sub-themes which emerged

Theme	Sub-Theme (associated activities)
1. Inference techniques	<i>1.1 Prior knowledge/Previewing</i> <i>1.2 Picture reading</i> <i>1.2 Prediction</i> <i>1.3 Story telling</i>
2. Content comprehension techniques	<i>2.1 Reading aloud</i> <i>2.2 Group discussion</i> <i>2.3 Content summary</i> <i>2.4 Question and answer</i> <i>2.5 Scanning and skimming</i>
3. Discovery techniques	<i>3.1 Word discovery</i> <i>3.2 Vocabulary analysis</i>

From the above table, many teaching reading comprehension techniques were established from the four sampled schools. From lesson observations and focused group discussions with teachers and learners, techniques that were commonly used in the schools included: questioning, prediction, vocabulary analysis, read aloud and silently, scanning and skimming, summarization. These techniques were grouped into three themes which included: instructional techniques, discovery techniques and inference techniques for convenience sake. However, in this study, each technique is presented as a standalone and complementary techniques as used by teachers in observed lessons and through what was established from the focused group discussions done. The following passages explain how each technique identified was being utilized in schools.

4.3.1 Inference techniques

4.3.1.1 Prior knowledge/Previewing

From the lesson observed at school D, after writing the title on the board, ‘The Waiter is not your Servant’, the teacher wanted to know whether the pupils knew what a restaurant is and what happens there:

Teacher 1: *Is there anyone who can tell me what a restaurant is? Is there anyone who has gone to a restaurant before? What happens at a restaurant? What do we call the people who serve food at a restaurant?*

Also at school A, one teacher during the focus group said:

After writing the title of the passage on the board, I ask the pupils to say what they think the text is all about in connection with the passage about to be read. Then I ask them if there is anyone who has had any experience related to the title given.

4.3.1.2 Picture reading

This came out from most of the teachers during the focus group discussion and also from lesson observation for schools A, B and D.

Teacher 1: With me, if a story we are reading that particular day has a picture, I first ask the pupils to look at it and then tell me what they see or what they think is happening there. Then we connect to the lesson of the day.

From the lesson observation at school B, the teacher said;

Open your text books on page 78. What can you see in the picture? What has happened to the eggs?

4.3.1.3 Prediction

Prediction was said to be used by some teachers during the focus group discussion as one of them from school A said:

After looking at the picture in the text book, I ask the pupils to say what they think the story is all about even before they read it. Then at the end of the reading, I ask them if what they thought is what has been read.

4.3.1.4 Story telling

Some teachers used storytelling to introduce their lessons. For example, during the lesson observed at school D, the teacher said:

I want all of you to listen attentively. I am going to tell you a story about a restaurant. Then later I will ask you to tell me similar things from the passage we are going to read today and the story I am going to tell you.

Under inference techniques it was discovered that some teachers use more than one. For example, a teacher at school B used many reading comprehension techniques within one lesson as shown in the lesson observed. The teacher used Activation of

Prior Knowledge and Prediction strategies before reading. During the actual reading activity, teachers used the Inferences strategy to help pupils develop their meaning making skills. The use of these instructional techniques can be considered a metacognitive process in which readers need to create meaning for unfamiliar content in the text by making inferences.

Researcher asked a post lesson question on the techniques the teacher used in this lesson delivery and this is what was stated:

I do a lot of Question and Answering, especially during prediction, so I have an idea of what the learners think about the text to be read. And they have to tell me first and then write it down. This helps them understand what they were reading and put it into practice.

Overall, researcher noted that the combined strategies of Prior Knowledge, Prediction, and picture reading successfully enhanced pupils' engagement and understanding of the new material. The use of visual cues proved to be especially significant in activating the pupils' prior knowledge.

4.3.2 Content comprehension techniques

4.3.2.1 Read aloud

Most of the pupils in the sampled schools did not know how to read thus reading aloud became a rescue. Most teachers used this technique to keep pupils attentive and follow the lesson for example at school C where only three pupils were able to read and had only one copy of the text book against the whole class, the teacher had no other option. Therefore, during the observed lesson the teacher said:

Those who know how to read properly come in front. You will read the passage one at a time while your friends will be listening. Pay attention all of you because I will ask you questions at the end.

During the focus group discussion, a teacher from school A said:

During reading comprehension, I mostly read aloud with my pupils so that even those who do not know how to read will be following and listening to how words are pronounced. This has worked for me because the same pupils others ask questions from the passage.

From the pupils' focus group meetings, the following were some responses:

Pupil A: *Bayi balaambila bacizyi kubala kuti babale omwe omwe kumbele. Bambi nkuswiilila.* (Teacher tells those who know how to read to read one at a time in front. Others listen).

Pupil B: *Sometimes our teacher reads for us, sometimes we read ourselves. Those who know how to read only.*

4.3.2.2 Group discussion

During focus group discussion it was established that some teachers all the schools use group work when teaching. For example from school D, one teacher said:

Teacher 1: *I find it easy to put the pupils in groups because we have few text books so this helps them to at least access the text.*

However, someone from school A said this:

Teacher 2: *I avoid using group work because of the large numbers of pupils in class. It is difficult to manage.*

From lessons observed at schools A and D, the pupils were put in groups.

School A: *I want you to sit three three. Share a text book given and let us follow as the passage is being read aloud.*

School D: *Since we have few text books, let us be in groups of five each. I will give each group a text book and we will be reading one at a time aloud."*

4.3.2.2 Content summary

This came out from a few teachers from school B and D during the focus group discussion.

Teacher 1 School B: *Sometimes I ask the pupils to summarise the passage read though not as a final activity. I just ask them orally to see whether they understood the text.*

4.3.2.3 Question and Answer

This was the most used technique by almost all the teachers. They used it at all the stages that is, pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading stages. They had this to say:

School A, Teacher 1: *I find it easy to use the questioning techniques because pupils respond from where they are sitted. No movement is made.*

School B, Teacher 2: *It is easy to use even when you have a full classroom.*

School C, Teacher 3: *It does not give stress for marking because answers are given and corrected there and then.*

4.3.2.4 Skimming

A few teachers would ask the pupils to quickly go through the text just for them to have an idea of what it is all about. For example at school A, one teacher said this:

Sometimes before reading the whole text, I ask the pupils to quickly go through the passage just to see if there are difficult words they would see or even to check the paragraph layout or even something else strange.

4.3.2.5 Scanning

All the teachers from the lessons observed and also from the focus group discussion apparently used the scanning technique. After the text was read, they asked learners questions which expected them to look for specific information. From school D, the teacher observed said:

- Teacher: Now, listen attentively as I read paragraph 1. (Learners listen to text and how teacher is reading).

-I want you to read one at a time aloud. Try to follow as your friends are reading. (teacher aided learners with words they failed to pronounce).

-Now, I want you to read the text individually and silently. (However, it was difficult to maintain silence because a book had to be shared among the members of the group, but the teacher tried to go round to ensure that the learners were reading and helped them where they faced challenges).

-On page 70 there are questions given. Answer them in your exercise books. All the answers are in the text that you have just read. (Instructions were given on how the exercise was supposed to be written).

So the pupils had to look for specific information or rather answers for the questions that they were given from the text they had read. No wonder pupils are expected to read a comprehension passage three times.

4.3.3 Discovery techniques

4.3.3.1 Vocabulary analysis/word discovery

This came out during lesson observation for all the lessons observed though done differently and at different stages. Initially, this is supposed to be done before the passage is read but others did it after reading the passage. From school D, the teacher wrote the following words on the board before reading the passage.

*Restaurant, pleasant, reservation, honored, seamless juggling, impatience, flips, staff.
Read these words. So together, let us define these words. When one defines it in English, we also say what it means in Chitonga. Are we together?*

A teacher from school B said:

I define the new vocabulary with the learners after they have read the passage and identified those same words.

Another teacher said:

I give a lot of activities to test vocabulary like matching words with their meanings, finding words that mean the same and those that mean the opposite.

From the pupils' focus group, some responses from the some pupils from the selected schools were:

Pupil A: *Teacher asks us to find the meaning of new words from the dictionaries. So it is easy for us.*

Pupil B: *When teacher gives us the words, we find their meaning together. Sometimes in groups, sometimes one one.*

4.3.4 Senior Education Standards Officer's response on techniques

The Senior Education Standards Officer (SESO) for languages also had this to say on the techniques used.

The selection of instructional techniques when teaching reading comprehension depends on a number of things among them the level of the learners. However, some of the techniques that they use are pair work, discussion, group work and question and answer, though the former is sometimes overdone in schools.

4.3.5 Findings from Lesson Observations – School B

4.3.5.1 Lesson observation 1

Through the same lesson observation of a grade 7 class at school B on a reading comprehension topic ‘Don’t Kill the Goose That Lays Golden Eggs’ page 78. The following observations were made.

Teacher: Good morning class.

Class: Good morning madam.

Teacher: Open the text books that I have given you on page 78. There is a picture there. What can you see in the picture?

Class: Pupils say what they see one at a time.

Teacher: Let us read the title of the passage together.

Class and teacher: ‘Don’t Kill the Goose That Lays Golden Eggs’

Teacher: Now, I want you to read the passage silently and take note of the difficult words.

As the learners read, the teacher was busy re-arranging the sitting of the learners and emphasized on silent reading.

Learner 1: Teacher, I am asking for a dictionary.

Learner 2: Ine sininamvele bwino madam, English yanivuta. (*Cinyanja: I did not hear well madam, English is difficult for me*).

Teacher: If you want to say something, use English.

Teacher: Now, I want you to use the dictionaries to find the meanings of the words you found difficult to understand.

Learner 3: But madam, we do not have dictionaries, only one of us has.

Teacher: Ok, try to define the words in your own words. (Teacher goes round checking for the words the pupils wrote down). Those who have found the meanings to say them out one at a time aloud and wrote the words on the board.

Learner 4: Madam, what does the word ‘offer’ mean?

Teacher: To offer means being offered. (In which case the word was not defined).

Teacher writes other words on the board.

Learner 4: Madam, that word you have written is supposed to be 'short' and not 'shot'.

Learner 5: Madam, write this word also, 'cackling' on the board.

Teacher: Now, I want you to read the passage again one at a time aloud.

Class: The learners read the passage one at a time.

Teacher: What does the title of the passage mean?

Learner 6: The goose does not lay eggs. (wrong response of course)

Teacher: May be he knows what he means. (Instead of just correcting the learner)
Learner 7: We should be good to people who are good to us.

Teacher: Very good.

Teacher then asks questions from the passage which learners answer aloud.

Teacher: Now I want you to do the exercise on page 79 questions 2-5 in your exercise books.

Teacher goes round marking learners' books.

Arranging learners while reading was going on was destructive thereby distorting the vitality of the technique used to teach learners reading comprehension. Since the lesson was not properly organized with the use of prediction and picture reading techniques together, one learner asked for a dictionary from the teacher while reading. The other one said in Chinyanja: *Sininamvele bwino madam, English yanivuta.* (I did not hear well madam, English is difficult for me). The teacher encouraged the learner to use English when airing their views.

After they read, the teacher asked the learners to use the dictionary and find the meanings of all the words they found difficult. However, it was found that only one learner had a dictionary. The teacher then asked the learners to try and define the words in their own words and went round checking for the words the pupils wrote down. Teacher then asked the learners who had found meanings to say the words and their meanings aloud.

The teacher then asked the learners to read for the second time aloud for comprehension. After reading, the teacher asked for the meaning of the text title. When one learner gave a wrong answer, instead of correcting it, the teacher said, “May be she knows what she means”.

Then they discussed the text through question and answer. Later the learners were asked to answer the questions on page 79 (2-5) in their exercise books. Teacher went round marking the learners’ books. Researcher asked a post lesson question on the techniques the teacher used in this lesson delivery and this is what was stated:

I do a lot of Question and Answering, especially prediction, so I have an idea of what the learners think about the text to be read. And they have to tell me first and then write it down. This helps them understand what they were reading and put it into practice.

Overall, researcher noted that the combined strategies of Prior Knowledge, Prediction, and Inferences successfully enhanced pupils’ engagement and understanding of the new material. The use of visual cues proved to be especially significant in activating the pupils’ prior knowledge.

Generally, some learners were able to follow the lesson as could be seen from their participation but for others, the teacher had to come in to tell them to keep quiet and concentrate. The Gradual Release Model was not implemented and apart from visual scaffolding, no other accommodations were used. The timing of the lesson was on point. Among the techniques used were; predicting, questioning, making inferences, analysing vocabulary and previewing which was done after the second reading of the text.

4.3.5.2 Lesson observation 2 – School D

This lesson was observed at school D.

There were a total number of 31 learners present (15 female and 16 male).

Immediately the teacher entered the classroom:

Teacher: Good morning class.

Class: Good morning madam.

Teacher tells a story about going to a restaurant which is related to the lesson of the day. She then asks follow-up questions from the story.

Teacher: Today’s lesson is on the text titled ‘The Waiter is not your Friend.’ (she writes the title on the board).

Teacher writes new words from the text on the board and asks learners to read them, correcting them as they read. Then together with the learners, they define the new words and the teacher was translanguaging where necessary.

-Restaurant, pleasant, complex system, reservation, honoured, seamless juggling, impatient, flips, staff

Teacher: Be in groups of five each. (she distributes the text books among the groups, one book per group). Open on page 69. Read the title. (unit 8, page 68 of the Progress in English book 7

Class: 'The Waiter is not your Friend.'

Teacher: Look at the picture in the text book. What do you think is happening there?

The pupils say what they see and what they think is happening in the picture.

Teacher: Now, listen attentively as I read paragraph 1. (Learners listen to text and how teacher is reading).

-I want you to read one at a time aloud. Try to follow as your friends are reading. (teacher aids learners with words they fail to pronounce).

-Now, I want you to read the text individually and silently. (However, it was difficult to maintain silence because a book had to be shared among the members of the group, but the teacher tried to go round to ensure that the learners were reading and helped them where they faced challenges).

-Open your text books on page on page 70 and answer the questions in your exercise books (instructions were given on how the exercise was supposed to be written).

The teacher concluded the lesson by emphasizing on the main points from the passage.

Again, a number of techniques were used by the teacher ranging from storytelling, prior knowledge, vocabulary analysis, read aloud, scanning and question and answer. Unknowingly, some of the teachers use these techniques but there is just need for emphasis.

4.4 Challenges teachers face when teaching reading comprehension

Researcher did interviews and conducted lesson observation. Through these activities, many challenges were established that teachers faced during the teaching of reading comprehension to primary school learners.

Many themes emerged with associated sub-themes with regard to challenges that teachers face when teaching reading comprehension. Themes with associated sub-themes emerged on challenges that teachers face when teaching reading comprehension. The following table

shows themes and sub-themes of challenges that teachers in sampled schools face when teaching reading comprehension to learners. Three themes emerged with seven sub-themes.

Table 3: Themes and sub-themes which emerged

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Instructional challenges	1.1 Over burdening curriculum/syllabus 1.2 Limited Instructional Techniques used 1.3 Language barrier between text content and learners 1.4 Lack of pedagogical skill by teachers 1.5 Lack of teaching and reading materials 1.6 Difficult of vocabulary found in books
2. Intrapersonal challenges	2.2 Late coming of learners 2.1 Negative attitude of learners towards English 2.3 Laziness of learners
3. Institutional challenges	3.1 Inadequate school infrastructure 3.2 Overcrowded classrooms

From the table above, it is evident that most teachers faced instructional and interpersonal challenges in their teaching of reading comprehension to learners. Expanding sub-themes for explanatory aspect of how the challenges affected the teaching of reading comprehension, sub-themes will be discussed:

4.4.1 Instructional challenges

4.4.1.1 Overburdened curriculum/syllabus

The curriculum is too demanding on the use of strategies, activities which all demand the teacher to be actively involved. This limits the time for implementation of correct procedures and techniques when teaching reading comprehension. One teacher said:

I have very little time with a lot to cover. Sometimes even when we are allocated many periods, we fail to cover what the curriculum and syllabus demand. Sometimes I wish we could be allowed to teach how we feel the learners can benefit than following what the curriculum dictates.

4.4.1.2 Limited Instructional Techniques used

Not many instructional techniques are used by the teachers as some claimed not to be aware of some. Others just avoid using some for their own reasons. One teacher said:

Me, I do not use role play in my class because I have many learners. I have seen that it would take me a lot of time to organize them and come up with a reasonable play to show within the given time.

Another teacher said:

The techniques I use in class are chosen by looking at the level of the learners, the number of text books available and the time that I have to teach that particular topic.

Another one yet said:

As for me, I am only comfortable to use prediction and question and answer because they are easy when you have a big numbers of learners in class like me.

4.4.1.3 Language barrier between text content and learner

In all the schools sampled, many pupils never knew how to read. In these instances, teacher called for someone to read on behalf of others. What was observed was that after one reads a passage, teacher asked if everyone had got what was read and the answer was always “yes”. This to the researcher proved something inappropriate in that after reading when pupils were asked to explain difficult words on the board, they failed. Learning reading comprehension calls for solidified attention and time but for learners of all the sampled schools, language barrier was a problem as content in books seemed strange to them. Also in some instances, for example the urban schools, the classes comprise of learners from different tribes and that would require the teacher to translanguage or code-switch. This came out strongly at school C and D where most of the learners were failing to express themselves in English. This could also be associated with illiteracy, absenteeism and the attitude learners themselves have towards the use and learning of English. One teacher stated that;

Madam these children can't understand what they read because every day they just use local language (Chitonga) which transitioning to English is a problem. This makes it difficult for them to read and understand what they are reading.

4.4.1.4 Lack of pedagogical skills from the teachers

Some teachers were so frank to mention this as a challenge as they said:

Teacher 1: *Some of us it has been long since we left college and I cannot remember even the correct flow of a reading comprehension lesson. You people from the colleges should be going round schools to sensitise us.*

Teacher 2: *“Some of these things it is just to be frank that we need help. Teacher group meetings should help us otherwise we are not doing what is expected in these classrooms.”*

4.4.1.5 Lack of teaching and reading materials

For the learners to understand what they read, there is need for availability of reading materials so that learners digest data without intimidation or favor. However, what was observed was that, lessons observed reviewed the presence of inadequacy of books. This made learners share one book per group and some teachers called for one learner to read to the rest. This promoted little attention by learners who could not be offered chance to read. Lack of teaching and learning materials were not just emanates of lack of resources for purchase, some teachers stated that class sizes were too large and existing reading materials could not cater for everyone. For example one teacher from school C stated that;

Aaba bana basiisi mbanji cakuti mabbuku aaliko taacikonzyeki kuti aummwi mwana inga wapegwa pe (these pupils are many and available materials cannot sustain them all).

This made many teachers to find it difficult to move around and observe what learners were doing.

4.4.1.6 Difficult vocabulary found in text books

Though most of the schools had something to say on this, it came out strongly at school D. It was mentioned that some vocabulary used in some text books was too advanced for the level of the learners. This makes some learners lack confidence in themselves as they fail to read or define the words. To help them, teachers spent a lot of time explaining concepts to them and ask them to try and explain things on their own before teacher aids.

Madam, some books that we use for comprehension have difficult vocabulary for the pupils. Some words are too big looking at the grade levels of the pupils. If only those

who right books could consider this. As a teacher, sometimes you end up spoon feeding the pupils.

4.4.2 Intrapersonal challenges

4.4.2.1 Late coming of learners to school

This is another challenge that came out from the teachers' focus groups almost in all the four groups though strongly from the rural schools. Learners tend to report late for school or not report at all due to long distances between their homes and the schools. School D is located among the commercial farms which are quite distant from one another and the school itself. This makes the pupils miss the first lessons more sad if it was English. This came out from both the teachers and learners focus group meetings. One learner from school C said;

Cikuwa cilatuyumina tobamwi nkaambo zyindi zyinji tujana bamana kale kwiiya beenzuma akaambo kakuti tukkala kulamfwu aacikolo. (English is hard to some of us because most of the time we find that our friends have already learnt because we stay far from the school).

Reading comprehension was not taught every day, some teachers said that they teach it twice or once a week. Asked how they treat late comers, they make them seat down and make them as readers.

4.4.2.2 Laziness and negative attitude of learners towards English

This came out as another challenge that teachers face when teaching English, in particular reading comprehension. Below is what the teachers had to say:

Teacher 1: *These pupils are too lazy that they do not put any effort to know how to read let alone understand what they read. If they cannot read Chitonga, what more English madam?*

Teacher 2: *Some pupils have a negative attitude towards English that they either absent themselves during lessons or come late so that they miss English. Others even say that they miss because they fear to be told to read.*

Teacher 3: *I have had pupils who would not do anything during the lesson, not even attempting to answer questions or writing exercises. It really puzzles me mwe. Especially that you cannot even beat them, awe mwandi.*

From the pupils' focus group, some of them proved to have negative attitude towards learning in English or reading comprehension in particular as one pupil from school B said:

Ine ninajaila cinyanja, so cizungu niciyopa elo siniziba ngati nizakaciziba. So olo banzanga babelenga vambili sinimvela. (I am used to Cinyanja, so I fear English and I do not think I will know it. Even when my friends are reading, I do not understand most of the things).

Another pupil from school C said:

Mebo bayi nobayiisya cikuwa syevwuli kujanika nkaambo kwiina ncemvwa alimwi ndilayoowa kwaambilwa kubala kayi nsyecizyi. (I am rarely there when the teacher is teaching English because I do not understand anything and I fear to be asked to read because I do not know).

4.4.3 Institutional challenges

4.4.3.1 Inadequate school infrastructure

The other challenge that came up in all the selected schools is inadequate school infrastructure. Some responses from the teacher group discussions which we had were:

Teacher 1: *The challenge that I have for my class is lack of enough desks for the pupils. I have many pupils in my class but only a few desks. This makes my pupils uncomfortable even to write properly.*

Teacher 2: *Lack of enough desks in my class is the one that makes it impossible for me to use some of the techniques when teaching. For example, some activities requires the pupils to move around, now making them do that especially if they are sitted on the floor is difficult. Sometimes I just feel bad myself.*

4.4.3.2 Overcrowded classrooms

Another challenge that had clearly made it impossible for the teachers to effectively implement some of the reading comprehension techniques that would greatly help the learners, was overcrowding in the classrooms. One teacher from school C, had this to say over the same:

This free education seem to have brought more harm than good. These classrooms are full. Aaya ma kkilasi alizwide topu (Chitonga: These classrooms are very full). That is why personally I fail to effectively teach read comprehension. In the end we just go to class, read the passage and give an exercise. Sometimes even marking is a challenge.

Another teacher from school B, said:

I find it hard to use most of the techniques due to the large numbers in my class. For example if I have to involve them in drama or role play, it is difficult to control. In the end I find myself using mostly questioning.

4.4.4 Summary

From the findings, it was established that, different teachers of English present their reading comprehension lessons differently. Among the teaching techniques used included picture reading, questioning, discussions and vocabulary analysis and many more. In quest of proper lesson delivery of reading comprehension, teachers faced many challenges which included among others lack of teaching materials, inadequate infrastructure, laziness of learners and language barriers. However, it was also observed that, teachers concentrate more on testing than the teaching of reading comprehension in all the schools that were visited in Monze District.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.0 Overview

Having presented findings of this study in the preceding chapter, the chapter offers the discussion of research results with specific reference to research objectives. The layout is as follows: teachers' knowledge of teaching techniques used in teaching reading comprehension, teaching techniques teachers of English use when teaching reading comprehension and challenges do teachers face in the teaching and learning of reading comprehension in selected schools in Monze District of Southern Province, Zambia.

5:1 Teachers' knowledge of instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension

With reference to objective one which looked at teachers' knowledge of instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension, teachers had knowledge of the instructional techniques with regard to teaching reading comprehension though their definitions of what they really are differed from one teacher to another and from one school to another. A few do not know the difference among the method, approach and technique. But when asked to give examples of what they thought were techniques, they gave the correct ones as will be seen in objective question two. These responses proved that teachers had knowledge on techniques used in reading comprehension though there was need to establish their knowledge of techniques used in teaching reading comprehension. However, what came out prominent among the techniques was skills or activities that learners could be involved in to make them understand the lesson. This is because even at school B, a technique was viewed as an activity. This compliments with Grint (2014) who states that, instructional techniques are a domain-independent and largely learner independent method used in either human or computer based tutoring. Teachers' knowledge is important for supporting the development of students with varying knowledge and skills, including those who have difficulties in comprehending texts they read. A study conducted by Jakobson *et al.*, (2022) on general and special education teachers' knowledge about reading comprehension processes and instructional practices established that, teachers content knowledge about reading comprehension processes and pedagogical knowledge of reading comprehension instruction were considerably viable yet mostly limited. Teachers' lack of knowledge about

reading comprehension processes and reading comprehension instruction indicate the need to improve topics in pre-service and in-service teacher training to enhance their teaching skills. A few teachers however, defined instructional techniques as methods while others said they are approaches. This shows that some teachers could not differentiate techniques from methods and approaches. But when asked to give examples of instructional techniques that they knew, most of the teachers mentioned the correct ones.

Several studies have indicated the importance of teachers' reading-related knowledge and its relationship to their reading instructional practices and/or students' reading skills in both lower-level processes (Lane et al., 2009; McCutchen *et al* 2009; Piasta *et al.*, 2020) and higher-level processes (Andreassen & Braten, 2011; Houtveen & Van De Grift, 2007). A landmark study about teachers' content knowledge of language and reading by Moats (1994) found that in-service teachers from varying backgrounds (speech pathologists, graduate students, general education, and special education teachers) had poor understanding of language constructs relevant in literacy instruction, such as phonemes and morphemes. This compliments with what was established in this study were some teachers could not define nor explain what reading comprehension techniques were. Even when teachers might have had the knowledge, they were not explicitly aware of their Reading Comprehension (RC) strategy instruction (Brevik, 2014).

Research has also indicated that reading strategies are not widely known among teachers. For example, Sampson et al. (2013) found that pre-service teachers knew the reading strategies according to the survey, but showed misconceptions when completing their strategy logs and lesson plans. Indeed, more than half of undergraduate pre-service teachers mistakenly identified many items (e.g., worksheets) as comprehension strategies in their strategy logs and lesson plans. Furthermore, teachers who included strategies such as context clues and prediction in their lesson plans did not actually identify them as strategies in their logs (Sampson et al., 2013).

Learners are diverse objects that require scaffolding during their learning time. They need the ideology of making inference and construct meaning. With this in mind, teachers' knowledge about reading comprehension techniques is vital in trying to build literacy schemas in learners via the use of prior knowledge.

5.2 Instructional techniques teachers of English use when teaching reading comprehension

Reading is an important aspect of literacy development of children. If children are not given strong foundation in their early years of education, it is probable that they might fail to read in later years of their life. To foster continued child development in terms of literacy and comprehension of what is read, teacher application of instructional strategies that foster child literacy development incorporating the existing schema which either culturally or association exists is necessary.

According to Ahmad Al-Issa (2011), one's cultural orientation appears to be a dominant force in shaping one's reading habits. This is because; information stored in the long term memory of someone can be modified by new information. In this manner, the application of instructional techniques in reading comprehension should be those that embed prior knowledge in order to impart new one. This study established that most instructional techniques that were used were those associated with content comprehension. These techniques included scanning, skimming, reading aloud, vocabulary analysis, questioning and prediction. These techniques helped develop learner's critical thinking and ideal decision makers in society. For example, the application of Predicting, making connections, visualizing, questioning, and summarizing are strategies that could help learners improve reading comprehension with applicability to real life situation (Block & Israel, 2005) and the end result of this could be vocabulary improvement and understanding.

What need to be emphasized is that, when learners come in class, they already have a schema that is waiting for modification. Text read directs what the reader makes meaning of it. In this case, teachers need to be there and offer mechanisms that could foster the modified schema be streamer in the normal comprehension understanding. Negating existing schema of a child could make the available instructional techniques in reading comprehension useless. Similarly, Carrell and Eisterhold (1983, p. 80) points out that "one of the most obvious reasons why a particular content schema may fail to exist for a reader is that the schema is culturally specific and is not part of a particular reader's cultural background."

The research conducted by investigators at the Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) ascertained that the child's experiences contribute to reading achievement when the school uses a basal text containing stories directly related to the child's own world. Koh (1986) also related understanding to the reader's prior knowledge and found

that a combination of linguistic proficiency and prior knowledge is important for comprehension. Similarly, this study established that inferential techniques that embedded child prior-knowledge were applied by teachers. These inferential techniques as contextualized in this study included among them picture reading and storytelling. Teachers gave story books that learners read and made meaning of what they learnt. This was done through teacher recap of the story read through questioning during and after the story was read. This helped children build confidence and listening skills.

A study conducted by Bellot et al., (2020) on story telling as a tool for improving reading comprehension in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) primary classroom also revealed that, storytelling helps children remember, understand and use vocabulary of a certain topic and a specific grammatical structure which are compatible with the vocabulary and the use of structure in a given story. Story telling was seen to have an impact during a lesson observation as it proved to help student improve their reading-comprehending of separate sentences. Similarly, Koh (1986) and Williams (1987) also stipulates that, when reading a story with a familiar theme, especially one from the native culture, L2 readers might more easily activate the appropriate background concepts and hence more efficiently process the text. Not only is it important for the reader to have the background knowledge to read more efficiently, but that knowledge also needs to be activated. This can be done through pre-reading activities such as recall questioning and experience sharing that could be done through storytelling. Through this, it nurtures learner's graduation to automaticity in using language and develops their reading comprehension (Bellot *et al.*, 2020).

According to schema theory, our background knowledge (schemata) and its relevancy to the text that is being read, determines the ease or complexity of understanding that particular text. In other words, no matter how well a reader may know a language, he or she cannot read in that language with good comprehension if the subject matter or the content of the text is one he or she knows absolutely nothing about. To understand a line such as 'The runner was called out at the plate,' the reader must have acquired a kind of "baseball schemata," i.e., an organized understanding or model of the game within which words like "runner," "plate," and "out" have special meaning and relate to each other in special ways (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983). The understanding of this line by an ESL student who does not have a clue about what a baseball game is depends mainly on his or her ESL teacher's ability to activate the student's related schemata through classroom activities and teaching techniques.

The concept of schema was embedded in the Picture reading techniques that teachers used. Teachers made learners relate the picture to what it could imply. This helped retrieve child's prior knowledge to the aspect of reading comprehension to be imbedded in the existing schema. Picture reading technique was seen to be helpful to learners as it triggered learner's interest in the lesson. Teachers gave out books with a picture to analyze. This was followed by identification of picture title and what it could imply. Through picture reading, pupils were able to decipher meaning from the picture where they could have failed with text. Simple words were used by learners to describe what was in the picture and this helped them build their understanding of what they were interpreting in the picture. Therefore knowledge of schema theory is of particular importance to teachers who are responsible for recommending materials for reading instruction.

Overall, it was noted that the combined strategies of Prior Knowledge, Prediction, and Inferences successfully enhanced pupils' engagement and understanding of the new material. The use of visual cues proved to be especially significant in activating the pupils' prior knowledge. On this point, Raphael and McKinney (1983) argued that readers who have a large amount of prior knowledge relevant to the topic at hand are better able to answer questions than readers with a low amount of prior knowledge, especially when it comes to inferential questions. I suggest that this point be of particular significant to the learning needs of the pupils.

The Question-Answering technique is considered the most common technique used to improve pupils' acquisition of reading comprehension skills (Durkin, 1979). Correlating with Durkin's (1979) premise, teachers at school B and D used the Question-Answering strategy regularly during all the observed reading comprehension lessons. In comparison with the other reading comprehension techniques used throughout the course of the study, teachers used the Question-Answering strategy more frequently. This technique was in conjunction with several other techniques such as the inferencing, prediction, prior knowledge and sometimes with teaching Summarization. Analyzing vocabulary is a technique that was done in almost all the stages of the reading comprehension lesson. That is; the pre-reading, while-reading and the post-reading stages. It is important that before a text is read, the pupils are helped to define the new vocabulary found in it. It was however discovered that some teachers omitted that stage and instead opted to discuss the words after a text had been read and others just went straight into exercises without discussing the new vocabulary with the learners. A lot of activities could be done under this like word matching, finding synonyms and antonyms, matching words with meaning.

5.4 Challenges that teachers face when teaching reading comprehension

Teaching reading comprehension in a primary school set up has challenges that at the same time are opportunities as remedy for improvement. This paper established that teachers in sampled schools faced diverse challenges in their quest of teaching reading comprehension. One important challenge that they faced was associated with instructional challenges. There are several challenges faced by English Language teachers and learners in the teaching and learning of reading comprehension in English Language.

There was an issue on the demanding curriculum. Teachers need to be more flexible with teaching approaches and instructional skills to respond to learners' individual needs. However, Zaheer and Rahman (2016) argue that in situations where there is a national curriculum, teachers fail to be more flexible in teaching reading comprehension because the curriculum dictates the predetermined skills of instruction to be followed. Teachers faced challenges associated with the demands of overburdening curriculum which includes variety of tasks, activities, and presentations just to mention but a few. It cannot be ignored that all these demands require teacher's facilitation, guidance, and monitoring. Sentanda (2014) also highlights that if curriculum is controlled by those who are least familiar with the consumers being the learners, it poses a challenge to teachers during implementation. Teachers must meet the requirements of the curriculum within a specified time and that turns into a challenge since they may not have adequate time to help all learners experiencing reading comprehension difficulties.

Limited use of instructional techniques during the reading comprehension lesson was yet another challenge observed. Teachers tend to use only a few techniques that favour them claiming the big numbers of learners in the classrooms cannot allow some. Most of the teachers avoid role play, discovery method as they feel they consume a lot of time considering the large numbers in their classrooms. Some teachers were however quick to mention that the selection of techniques they use when teaching were mostly dependent on the level of learners in the class and availability of resources. Literature also depicts that despite many years of English Language being taught as a subject in ESL primary and secondary schools, students continue to fail to derive meaning from English written texts (Roth, 2004; Pretorius and Klapwijk 2016; Nurie 2017). The cited literature points to learners' lack of reading comprehension skills as one of the variables that facilitate reading comprehension. Pressley (2006) and Lai (2013) posit that learners, who do not have reading

comprehension skills find it difficult to predict, summarize, infer, question, find meaning of unfamiliar words and identify main ideas from the text. It may also be assumed that poor reading comprehension skills amongst learners may not only deny learners an opportunity to understand reading passages in English Language but also would cripple them to grasp content across another subject. This implication is supported by Nurie (2017) who affirms that most academic communication is in the printed form.

The other challenge that was established is language barrier. This was most prominent at schools B and C. Most of the learners could neither understand English nor express themselves in English. They kept using Chitonga and Cinyanja. This was most evident during the focus group discussions. This forces the teachers to do a lot of translanguaging during the lessons. However, this does not sit well with some teachers as they feel it consumes a lot of time. Consequently, readers, natives and non-natives, failure or confusion to make sense of a text is caused by their lack of appropriate schemata that can easily fit with the content of the text. This lack of appropriate schemata can be either formal or content-based (Brown (2001). For teachers of sampled schools especially school C, remedial and catch-up exercises were conducted in the afternoons to enable slow learners catch-up in their reading skills.

On the other hand, poor pedagogical skills of teachers are another challenge which teachers are facing. Teacher's knowledge and orientation towards teaching reading comprehension is not up to the standard (Ariong, 2013; Chisamba, 2014; Pretorius and Klapwijk, 2016). It may be that teachers are not well trained to teach reading comprehension from teachers' training institutes. Hence, they lack appropriate pedagogical skills to teach reading comprehension inclusively. Teachers' own understanding of reading and their own reading practices may have adverse effects on their learners' literacy level (Pretorius and Lephala, 2011; Pretorius and Klapwijk, 2016).

Moreover, literature depicts that content knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge and curriculum knowledge as three areas of knowledge continue to pose a challenge to many ESL teachers (Taylor and Taylor, 2013 cited in Pretorius and Klapwijk, 2016). In consensus, Pressley (2006) posits that good comprehension instruction demands teachers with extensive knowledge of the language, and modern pedagogical instruction to teaching reading comprehension. It is reasonable therefore, to assume that teachers who are poorly oriented to teaching comprehension end up assessing comprehension by asking learners questions based only on what they have just read instead of teaching them comprehension skills. This is

highlighted by Pressley (2006) who further argues that reading comprehension cannot only be assessed with learners mastering questions from the passage. This suggests that lack of theoretical knowledge of teaching reading, knowledge of nature of reading comprehension instructions and poor teachers' training impede effective teaching and learning of reading comprehension.

It was established that most schools lacked teaching and reading materials. In lessons observed, pupils were placed in groups and assigned with one book to read. At school C, there was only one text book against 47 learners thus, the teacher asked one learner to read for the friends in front. This proved inappropriate as it only benefited the reader in the group and not the entire group. In this way most teachers were unable to effectively teach reading because of insufficient reading materials used during instruction, which has an impact on the instructional process (Henry et al.,2015). Also at one of the schools, it was found that the whole class had only one dictionary thus it was difficult to use it. This calls for enhanced improvements in stock of teaching and learning materials if learners are to learn reading comprehension effectively. However, teachers despite lack of reading materials took time severally to read the passage over and over in a bid to enable learners grasp the concepts and the contents being read. This was an added advantage for the learners as teachers efforts proved to help learners despite the existence of lack of reading materials.

Fitaloka (2019) also argues that, when the reading resources are limited, the classroom activities are affected and teachers fail to give learners a chance to manipulate the reading resources because they are not enough or not in place thus the teachers use teacher-centred strategies for teaching reading which does not enhance the reading skills of the learners. Torres (2016) contends that effective teaching of reading requires teachers to have adequate teaching resources to develop the learner's manipulative, exploration and collaborative skills which are the skills for the 21st century learner and they enhance the reading skills.

Another challenge that came out was the difficult vocabulary found in some text books that are used for reading comprehension. This came out strongly at school D, as some teachers felt some books they use have difficult words for the learners which they feel are not of their level. Because of fearing to make mistakes or pronounce words wrongly, some learners even tend to lose their self-confidence. However, this is where teacher initiative comes in and also the use of correct instructional techniques. Introduction and discussion of the new vocabulary is one of the pre-reading activities the teacher is supposed to engage the learners into before

reading a particular text. Difficulty in vocabulary posed a challenge to teachers who had to put much effort in explaining the meaning of certain words in books. Teachers wrote difficult words on the board that were discussed with learners. After that, learners were made to stand and explain each word before knocking off.

There was also an issue of late coming among learners especially those from school D as it is a farm area and most of the learners come from far places. This came in because most of the English lesson periods come in the morning and some learners come after the friends have learnt. This however, is an issue that could be resolved administratively by allocating the lessons at the time when they feel every learner would be in school so that no one is left behind.

There was also an issue of laziness and the negative attitude of some learners towards English. Some learners have found comfort in their local languages that they do not make any attempt to learn the language. This can simply lead one to say the illiteracy levels are quite high among the learners. Learners are not lazy, bringing out that laziness of learners was a challenge proves something on the part of the teacher. Lessons observed from all the four sampled schools showed that schools had limited reading books. This led to children losing interest making them feel lazy in the lesson. Some pupils interviewed stated that they do not understand anything in English. This could have also lead to the negative attitude of the learners towards English. This calls for activities that foster child interest when teaching reading comprehension or use of methodologies that rejuvenates children interest in the lesson. This is made worse by some parents who also seem not to be helpful in helping their children learn how to read and write. Home literacy is never there. The school could be making deliberate meetings for all parents to sensitise them on the importance of home literacy. Also, learners could be involved in reading programs within the school.

The other challenge that was established was associated with inadequate school infrastructure challenges. It was observed that all the sampled schools had large numbers of pupils in class as compared to available desks and reading books. Desks in particular are not enough and the learners have to squeeze themselves when they sit. This contributes to lack of active participation in class as they are not comfortable on their seats. Due to this challenge of infrastructure, teachers in all sampled schools were forced to put pupils in groups due to lack of desks and reading books. This posed a burden to teachers in the lesson delivery. Large classes were difficult to apply reading comprehension techniques effectively as pupil

numbers were too big. This complements with Keller (2013) who also argues that, most primary schools are in a worse state because of inadequate infrastructure such as teaching materials and inadequate teachers compared to the enrolment which is too high in most primary in Africa. This has been made worse in Zambia especially with the introduction of free education policy. Numbers in classes have increased with limited space for accommodation, hence the need to balance class size and number so as to enhance the teaching of reading comprehension effectively. To try and help learners and harmonise the situation of lack of school infrastructure especially desks, double stream helped enable learners learn one or two from what was taught. Teachers had to break one class into two having class A and B. This was aimed at accommodating each and every learner.

Overcrowded classrooms are another challenge being faced in schools. With the coming of free education, there is over enrolment in schools such that some learners have no desks to sit on. There seemed to be many learners in the classrooms than expected. Teachers could hardly move around within the classrooms in some instances. Only a small place was left for the teacher in front. Even though teacher- student ratio in schools as given by UNESCO (2010) is 1:45, there is an influx of large enrolments in Lesotho junior secondary school. This is drawn from the researcher's teaching experience. A number of researchers have affirmed that if there are too many learners in the classroom that impedes effective teaching and learning. Understandably, since the teacher is overburdened with a large class even if she has expertise in teaching reading comprehension it is difficult to deliver in such a crowded class. At some schools that were visited, in some cases four learners shared a desk. Besides that, poor staffing of teachers in rural schools, some schools are overstaffed while others are short-staffed. In cases where classes are large, teachers seem to be doing more of the administrative duties than facilitating learning and this is time consuming.

From the lessons observed only at school D did the teacher seem to have used the Gradual Release Model (GRM) but, during the focus group discussion, the answers that came out were that they do use it only that they did not know what it was called. Learners learn by observation and thus teachers should always be models to them. Explicit instructions should always be given before any activity so that the end product will also be correct.

5.5 Summary

From the discussion, it was discovered that most of the teachers understood what techniques are and used them in class but some may not have realized what they that what they were

actually doing is applying those techniques to help learners understand what they were learning. It was also notice that teachers used different techniques to teach reading comprehension though others did not even follow the correct procedure when teaching. The chapter further more discussed the shortage of reading materials in schools as well as the many challenges that teachers of English face when teaching reading comprehension among them are lack of seriousness from the learners, late coming, inadequate infrastructure, just to mention a few.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

This last chapter of the study presents the study conclusions and recommendations. The first part of this study chapter presents the conclusion of the study while the second part of the chapter outlines the suggested recommendations based on the findings of the study.

6.1 Conclusion

6.1.1 Assess teachers' knowledge of Instructional techniques used in teaching reading comprehension

With regard to objective one which looked at teacher's knowledge of reading comprehension, it was established that teachers had knowledge on reading comprehension though not to the level of what was and is expected based on the way they expressed themselves. This was evident as the majority never knew the process of teaching reading comprehension. Instructional Techniques used in teaching reading were understood differently by teachers. To some, it implied a method, a skill, a way, a strategy and an approach to teaching reading comprehension. However, what was noted during lesson observations was that, reading comprehension instructional techniques were used interchangeably within one lesson which made most lessons observed carry different teaching techniques within one lesson making pupils grasp lesson content with difficulties. With this in mind, there is need for refresher lessons for teachers so as to enhance improved delivery of reading comprehension lessons in primary schools as the case of Monze district.

6.1.2 Analyse instructional techniques teachers of English use to teach reading comprehension

However, worth noting was that, in objective two which looked at instructional techniques teachers use to teach reading comprehension, several teaching techniques in teaching reading comprehension were used by teachers in the four sampled schools. These instructional techniques included prediction, storytelling, vocabulary analysis, loud reading. There was no much expertise shown by the teachers because most lessons were centered on testing rather than teaching.

6.1.3 Challenges teachers face when teaching reading comprehension

Objective three looked at challenges teachers face when teaching reading comprehension, the established challenges were instructional, institutional and intra-personal. Some of these includes; laziness of learners in English, difficult of vocabulary found in books, lack of teaching and learning materials, failure to involve learners in pre-reading activities, lack of infrastructure, learners coming late for lessons, teachers not following the lesson procedure for teaching reading comprehension and also not using the helpful techniques. These challenges made it difficult for teachers to effectively teach reading comprehension. However, these could not be termed as challenges but opportunities for exploring remedies to enable learners acquire the required knowledge. Teachers need to be resourceful to enhance the demands of the curriculum.

6.2 Recommendations

1. There is need for refresher courses for in-service teachers with regards to the teaching of reading comprehension at primary school level through CPDs. This could be done with the help of the district and provincial offices for education.
2. There is need for provision of reading materials to enhance interest among learners in reading by the Ministry of Education through the Curriculum Development Centre.
3. There is also need for testing of techniques teachers use to assess reading comprehension by the teachers themselves.

6.3 Suggestion for future research

Based on the results of this study, there is need for future research on identification of the relationship between prior-knowledge and instructional techniques teachers use in teaching reading comprehension in primary schools.

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APPENDICES

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Appendix A: Focus group discussion for grade seven (7) teachers of English

I am a postgraduate student undertaking a degree course in Master of Education in Literacy, Language and Applied Linguistics at the University of Zambia. I am carrying out a research on '*Analysis of Instructional Techniques Teachers of English are using in Grade Seven to Teach Reading Comprehension in selected Primary Schools in Monze District, Southern Zambia.*' You have been purposively selected to take part in this research and the information that you will provide will be treated with confidentiality and entirely used for purposes of this study.

District:..... Teacher's code number:

School:..... Date of interview:

Time:..... Sex of respondent:

Background information

1. What is your highest professional qualification?
2. How long have you been teaching English?
3. Do you teach any other subject apart from English?
 - a) **Assess Teachers' knowledge of the instructional techniques used when teaching reading comprehension.**
4. How often do you teach reading comprehension?
5. What do you understand by the term 'Techniques'?
6. What techniques did you learn in college or university that should be used to teach reading comprehension?
7. What activities do you think should characterize the teaching reading comprehension?
 - b) **Analyzing instructional techniques teachers of English use when teaching reading comprehension**
8. How do you teach reading comprehension?

9. What pre-reading activities are the learners involved in during the reading comprehension lesson?
10. Which techniques do you use the most? Why?
11. Which techniques do you use the least? Why?
12. What activities are the learners involved in during the 'while reading' stage?
13. What activities are the learners involved in during the 'post-reading' stage?
14. Do you implore the Gradual Release Model (I do, We do, You do) in the use of these techniques?
15. How do you select the techniques that you use when teaching?
16. Do you think the techniques that you use benefit your learners? If so, how? If not, why?
17. How do your learners respond towards the techniques that you use?
 - c) **Establish challenges teachers face when teaching reading comprehension**
18. Do you face any challenges when using the techniques to your learners? If yes, what are they?
19. What other techniques would you suggest to help improve reading comprehension?

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

**Appendix B: Interview guiding questions for Senior Education Standards Officer-
Languages (Southern Province)**

I am a postgraduate student undertaking a degree course in Master of Education in Literacy, Language and Applied Linguistics at the University of Zambia. I am carrying out a research on '*Analysis of Instructional Techniques Teachers of English are using in Grade Seven to Teach Reading Comprehension in selected Primary Schools in Monze District, Southern Zambia.*' You have been purposively selected to take part in this research and the information that you will provide will be treated with confidentiality and entirely used for purposes of this study.

Province:.....SESO's code number:

Date of interview:..... Time of interview:

Sex of respondent:

1. How long have you been in this position?
 - a) **Assess knowledge of instructional techniques used when teaching reading comprehension**
2. In your own words, how would you define 'Reading Comprehension'?
3. What techniques do you think should be used when teaching reading comprehension?
4. What activities do you think should characterize the teaching of reading comprehension?
 - b) **Analyzing instructional techniques teachers of English use to teach reading comprehension**
5. Are teachers using the techniques to teach reading comprehension?
6. Which techniques do the teachers use to teach reading comprehension?
7. Explain how the teachers use the techniques when teaching reading comprehension.

c) Establish challenges teachers face when teaching reading comprehension

8. What challenges do you think teachers face in using the teaching techniques to the learners?
9. What suggestions would you make on the techniques to improve reading comprehension?

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Appendix C: Focus group discussion guide for Grade 7 learners

I am a postgraduate student undertaking a degree course in Master of Education in Literacy, Language and Applied Linguistics at the University of Zambia. I am carrying out a research on *‘Analysis of Instructional Techniques Teachers of English are using in Grade Seven to Teach Reading Comprehension in selected Primary Schools in Monze District, Southern Zambia.’* You have been purposively selected to take part in this research and the information that you will provide will be treated with confidentiality and entirely used for purposes of this study.

1. How many times do you learn reading comprehension in a week?
2. What activities do your teachers use when teaching reading comprehension?
3. Do your teachers use the Gradual Release Model (I do, We do, You do) when teaching reading comprehension?
4. Do you like the activities that your teachers involve you in? If yes, why? If no, why?
5. How would you wish your teachers could teach reading comprehension?

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Appendix D: Checklist for Observation

The researcher will check and review the lesson plans on teaching reading comprehension. The researcher will be looking for the following:

Specific techniques employed by teachers when teaching reading comprehension.

Lesson Observation Checklist

Name:.....Date:

Class observed:..... Time:

Code of teacher observed: School Code:.....

Competences
1.General Organisation
Lesson plan – Bio data Initial reading activities Appropriateness of the content of the passage
2.Presentation of the lesson
Pupils’ ability to follow the lesson Teacher’s ability to capture class attention Use of appropriate methodology (e.g. Gradual Release Model) Accommodations considered Timing of the lesson
3.Teaching techniques
Using prior knowledge/previewing Predicting Questioning Making inferences Summarizing and retelling Mind mapping Analyzing vocabulary (tier-two-words) Variety of techniques are used

Approval letter



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

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APPROVAL OF STUDY

IORG No. 0005376

HSSREC IRB No. 00006464

REF NO. HSSREC-2023-MAY-017

Ms Inonge Martha Nawa
The University of Zambia
P. O. Box
LUSAKA

Dear Ms **Nawa**

**RE: “ANALYSIS OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
ARE USING IN GRADE SEVEN TO TEACH READING COMPREHENSION IN
SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MONZE DISTRICT, ZAMBIA”**

Reference is made to your submission of the protocol captioned above. The HSSREC resolved to approve this study and your participation as Principal Investigator for a period of one year.

REVIEW TYPE	ORDINARY REVIEW	APPROVAL NO. HSSREC:- 2023-MAY-017
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 19 th June, 2023	Expiry Date: 18 th May, 2024
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	18 th June, 2025
Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	<input type="checkbox"/> English.	To be provided
Consent form ID and Date	Version - Nil	To be provided
Recruitment Materials	Nil	Nil
Other Study Documents	Questionnaire.	
Number of Participants Approved for Study		

Specific conditions will apply to this approval. As Principal Investigator it is your responsibility to ensure that the contents of this letter are adhered to. If these are not adhered to, the approval may be suspended. Should the study be suspended, study sponsors and other regulatory authorities will be informed.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

- No participant may be involved in any study procedure prior to the study approval or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated or Serious Adverse Events (SAEs) must be reported to HSSREC within 5 days.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to HSSREC within 5 working days.
- All recruitment materials must be approved by HSSREC prior to being used.
- Principal investigators are responsible for initiating Continuing Review proceedings. HSSREC will only approve a study for a period of 12 months.
- It is the responsibility of the PI to renew his/her ethics approval through a renewal application to HSSREC.
- Where the PI desires to extend the study after expiry of the study period, documents for study extension must be received by HSSREC at least 30 days before the expiry date. This is for the purpose of facilitating the review process. Documents received within 30 days after expiry will be labelled “late submissions” and will incur a penalty fee of K500.00. No study shall be renewed whose documents are submitted for renewal 30 days after expiry of the certificate.

- Every 6 (six) months a progress report form supplied by The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee as an IRB must be filled in and submitted to us. There is a penalty of K500.00 for failure to submit the report.
- When closing a project, the PI is responsible for notifying, in writing or using the Research Ethics and Management Online (REMO), both HSSREC and the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) when ethics certification is no longer required for a project.
- In order to close an approved study, a Closing Report must be submitted in writing or through the REMO system. A Closing Report should be filed when data collection has ended and the study team will no longer be using human participants or animals or secondary data or have any direct or indirect contact with the research participants or animals for the study.
- Filing a closing report (rather than just letting your approval lapse) is important as it assists HSSREC in efficiently tracking and reporting on projects. Note that some funding agencies and sponsors require a notice of closure from the IRB which had approved the study and can only be generated after the Closing Report has been filed.
- A reprint of this letter shall be done at a fee.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC by way of an application for an amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address or methodology and methods. Many modifications entail minimal risk adjustments to a protocol and/or consent form and can be made on an Expedited basis (via the IRB Chair). Some examples are: format changes, correcting spelling errors, adding key personnel, minor changes to questionnaires, recruiting and changes, and so forth. Other, more substantive changes, especially those that may alter the risk-benefit ratio, may require Full Board review. In all cases, except where noted above regarding subject safety, any changes to any protocol document or procedure must first be approved by HSSREC before they can be implemented.

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

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

Yours faithfully,



Dr. J. I. Ziwa

DR. J. I. Ziwa

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

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