

Factors Contributing to Low Performance in English Reading Comprehension in Selected Secondary Schools of Lusaka District

Akayombokwa Maala and Sitwe Benson Mkandawire
The University of Zambia

Abstract

This article investigated factors contributing to low performance in English reading comprehension among Grade 8 pupils in three selected secondary schools of Lusaka District of Zambia. The study employed the descriptive research design under qualitative mode of inquiry to gather information from (27) participants who were selected using typical case and convenient sampling. Data was collected through comprehension lesson observation, interviews, and focus group discussion with in-service teachers and learners. Content analysis was used to analyse data by categorizing similar content, coded themes, and key words to emerging threads. The findings of the study revealed that there were multiple factors contributing to low performance in reading comprehension which included lack of knowledge by some teachers on the procedure for teaching reading comprehension and therefore, taught poorly. Some pupils had challenges reading comprehension text due to illiteracy, lack of understanding, limited fluency, aliteracy, low reading culture, limited vocabulary, poor motivation, limited reading time in class against long passages, inappropriate teaching methods by the teacher and lack of learning and teaching materials. In order to improve on the challenges in reading comprehension, the study recommended that schools should have frequent Continuous Professional Developments on how to teach comprehension. Teachers should also make sure that teaching and learning materials are relevant to the grade levels. Appropriate teaching methods should also be used for comprehension lessons to promote quality and effective teaching and learning. The Ministry of Education should build libraries in schools to support the reading culture and schools should have a reading hour every day of the week.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, poor reading, poor performance, post reading, independent reading, loud reading, comprehension text, reading ability, intensive reading, extensive reading.

Background

The reading skill is important to the academic success of learners in schools (Mkandawire, 2022; Oberholzer, 2005; Oyetunji, 2011). Learners are expected to read volumes of books in schools to respond to assignments, class tasks, and homework across subject areas. Successful learners in education are those that can read diverse materials across subject areas with comprehension and address the problems in written form assigned to them (Mohammed & Amponsah, 2018). Reading is a basic life skill and a cornerstone for success at school and throughout life, therefore, pupils who can read well can function more effectively in everyday school activities (Mohammed & Amponsah, 2018; Silavwe et al., 2019). It is

believed that reading as well as language competency are both the means and the end to educational achievement (p.273). Reading comprehension knowledge is required and expected of all learners at different levels of education.

The English Language Syllabus of Zambia for Grades 8-9 on reading comprehension requires learners to acquire and exhibit comprehension knowledge, skills, and values from the texts they read (Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, 2012). For example, under ‘Knowledge’ parameter, the syllabus expects learners to “answer factual and inference questions, retelling detail of stories or passages and deducing meanings of unfamiliar words and idiomatic expressions from the contexts” Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, (2012:15). Furthermore, under skills and values, the syllabus expects learners to be engaged in answering factual and inference questions and deducing meanings of unfamiliar words from contextual clues” Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, (2012:16). When learners acknowledge what they can read or see clearly stated information for anyone to identify, this is literal comprehension, and it occurs at the surface level. However, when readers require prior knowledge of the topic to help them identify some text clues using familiar words, images, associations, and sounds to reason and interpret the text, they are in inferential comprehension (Keene & Zimmermann, 2007). When readers read or view a text, they can understand it at three levels: literal, inferential, and evaluative. Comprehensive understanding or deep comprehension occurs when all the three levels have been considered during the reading process. The keenness of reading comprehension in the English Language Syllabus of Zambia is partly in response to the change in instructional strategy from behavioural oriented approach to teaching to Outcome-Based Education (OBE) approach that connect learners’ real-life experiences to education. The outcome-based approach “seeks to link education to real life experiences as it gives learners skills to access, criticize, analyse and practically apply knowledge. Learners are given practical experiences during the teaching and learning processes that help them gain life skills” (Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, 2013:16).

Additionally, reading is a process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them (Mkandawire, 2018). Reading should be a primary schools biggest priority as it is one of the most important skills any child needs to succeed in education (Mkandawire, 2017). Reading is applied in our daily lives to survive as it is used when reading receipts, newspapers, books, and others. However, knowing how to read in a particular language posits several challenges that learners must overcome to breakthrough to reading. In regard to this statement, it can be said that, pupils breakthrough to reading at separate times depending on the rate at which they succeed in overcoming the challenges that might delay their ability to read (Mkandawire, 2012). On the other hand, Mutambo (2002;19) defines

reading comprehension as “the process of constructing meaning from the text.” The goal of all reading instruction is targeted at helping a reader comprehending text. The process of comprehending involves decoding the writer’s words and then background knowledge to construct an approximate understanding of the writer’s message. Grabe (2002) stated that the development of reading comprehension necessarily involves understanding a passage to get the intended message conveyed in a comprehension. The most fluent readers from English language settings apply predicting, clarifying, guessing, evaluating, and other associated skills to comprehend the information from a text. However, the less proficient learners from public schools may experience comprehension problems regarding the strategies applied to understand a text (Mumba, 2013).

Research on English language reading comprehension indicates that the deficiency of vocabulary development, inefficiency to understand context, and the lack of structural knowledge may cause reading comprehension and discourse understanding problems (Grabe, 2002). There may be some other factors, such as the practice of loud reading, independent reading and translation method creating difficulty in comprehension and discourse or text understanding. It has been observed that the learners lose interest and motivation in reading comprehension and fail to decode message from the passage resulting into incompetence, and fossilized bad reading habits (Grabe, 2002).

Reading comprehension is the ability to derive meaning from the words and the concepts they convey in written texts. However, explicit formal instruction in a variety of reading comprehension techniques has been shown to be highly effective at helping learners improve their reading comprehension. Explain that reading comprehension can be seen as interactive process between a reader and a text which leads to an automaticity or reading fluency (Alyousef, 2006). Other researchers contend that reading comprehension is the fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own back ground knowledge to build meaning (Nunan, 2003).

Kucer (2001) states that comprehension occurs between the reader and the text. Readers should come to school with a world of knowledge that distinctly apply with each text and situation (Butcher & kintsch, 2003). Therefore, pupils need to have background knowledge because it is an important factor for creating meaning, and teachers need to help learners activate prior knowledge before reading. That information can help the pupils get connected with concepts in the text (Miller, 2002). For this reason, it is prominent that when choosing texts for pupils for comprehension; teachers should pick on those that have familiar topics such as health, games, cleanliness, food preparation and shopping. Duke (2003) also suggested that the use of information books can help learners connect to world knowledge. The use of information in books also helps learners acquire the necessary information to be activated later. It is cardinal to note that, teachers can also help learners acquire world knowledge when they provide a rich, literate

environment, full of text that provide learners with many opportunities to learn content in a variety of topics. Teachers should be able to improvise extensive reading to their pupils in order to improve in reading comprehension.

Building and activating prior knowledge to learners, teachers should help them learn important vocabularies of words prior to reading unfamiliar texts. Those words which the teachers select must be essential for making meaning with the text the learners will be reading and then help them connect the new words to what they already know (Nunan, 2003). Therefore teachers should not pick texts that are too advanced for the learners. Teachers should also pick some texts from other subjects such as Social Studies and Science because this will help learners connect with what they already know.

Furthermore, reading comprehension in a classroom context requires accomplishment of certain tasks, such as identifying and locating general ideas and specific information while using subskills like scanning and skimming. Several fluent readers can independently work with the reading skills by using such strategies to achieve the objectives in the classroom and the less privileged readers fail to attempt comprehension due to incompetence and fossilized reading habits Mumba (2013).

Reading comprehension is complex process, in which many other skills are used (Cain et al, 2004). Many factors are involved which affect this reading comprehension process (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Samuels, 1983) and these factors are related to the text, context, work, and the reader (Snow, 2002). Vocabulary is also one of the main factors which affect reading comprehension (Nagy, 1998 in Bauman, 2009).

Vocabulary being a vital factor that affects reading comprehension, different researchers have suggested different amount of vocabulary for reading comprehension. According to Laufer (1989) investigated to find out how much amount of vocabulary is necessary for reading comprehension. She concluded that 95 per cent tokens of the text should be familiar to the reader to comprehend the whole text. Nation (2001) also suggests that the necessary percentage for comprehension should be approximately 98 per cent. These research show that vocabulary is an essential factor for reading comprehension of the text and if students' vocabulary is weak, they will not be able to understand or comprehend the whole meaning of any texts. Students who have problems in reading comprehension have poor or limited vocabulary (Biemiller and Boote, 2005).

Reading speed and rate also matters in comprehension of texts. Carver (1992) studies that in first language reading, indicates that fluent readers can read between 200 to 300 words per minute. Fluency in reading develops as students' progress through different grades and age level.

It is cardinal to note that word recognition and comprehension help in reading speed in English language learning. Background knowledge also plays a significant role in comprehending texts. Floyd and Carrell (1987) show that students, who

have lack of cultural knowledge about the target language, can enhance their reading comprehension ability by being taught explicitly the cultural knowledge of target knowledge. Students can perform better if prior knowledge and topic interest is high than students whose topic interest and background knowledge are low (Carrell and Wise, 1998). The background knowledge and topic interest show a significant role to understand the information given in texts.

Furthermore, meta-cognition also affects the reading abilities of learners (Brown et al, 1986). In this regard, meta-cognition refers to the diverse aspects of one's own knowledge and controlling of one's own actions during reading. Successful and fluent readers show better level of controlling their actions during reading and meta-cognition knowledge than less successful readers (Baker and Beall, 2009). Successful readers, therefore, use distinct types of strategies for successful comprehension (Pressley, 2006). The readers who use more strategies score high in reading comprehension tasks (Anderson, 1991). For better performance, knowing of different strategies does not mean performing well; a reader who knows how to use different strategies can perform better though.

Reading is an important skill because it helps students to read different types of books, journals, newspapers, web blogs and exploring information from the internet. Hence, without comprehension reading is useless. The different factors which are involved for better reading comprehension such as vocabulary, reading speed, word recognition, and meta-cognition are cardinal when teaching comprehension. They might help them to improve their teaching 'reading' methodology and techniques by bringing innovation to their teaching methodology.

In order to investigate the factors contributing to low performance in English reading comprehension lessons, there was need for the researcher to carry out a study on how English reading comprehension lessons were taught in schools.

Therefore, the present study was carried out to investigate the factors contributing to low performance in teaching English reading comprehension lessons among grade eight (8) pupils in three selected public secondary schools in Lusaka District of Zambia.

Meaning of Reading Comprehension.

A study by Mumba and Mkandawire (2020) reported that reading is a process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them and this is the central focus of reading comprehension. The reading skills should be a primary school's biggest priority as it is one of the most important skills any child needs to succeed in education. Reading is applied in our daily lives to survive as it is used when reading receipts, newspapers, books, and others (Silavwe et al, 2019). When learners construct meaning from text, they many times use comprehension knowledge and skills.

On the other hand, Mutambo (2002; 10) stated that "reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from a text." The goal of all reading instruction is targeted at helping a reader comprehend text. Reading comprehension involves

at least two people: the reader and the writer. The process of comprehending involves decoding the writer's words and then using background knowledge to construct an approximate understanding of the writer's message.

Reading comprehension is "the ability to derive meaning from the words and the concepts they convey in written texts. However, explicit formal instruction in a variety of reading comprehension techniques has been shown to be highly effective at helping learners improve their reading comprehension. Comprehension begins for emergent readers when they read repeatedly" (Ministry of Education Science Vocational and Training in Early Education, 2013:9). These definitions were further supported by other studies where they reported that reading comprehension is the fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning (Nunan, 2003).

A study by Grabe (2002) reported that the development of reading comprehension necessarily involves understanding a passage to get the intended message conveyed in a comprehension. The most fluent readers from English language settings apply predicting, clarifying, guessing, evaluating, and other associated skills to comprehend the information from a text. Research on English language reading comprehension indicates that the deficiency of vocabulary development, inefficiency to understand context, and the lack of structural knowledge may cause reading comprehension and discourse understanding problems (Grabe, 2002). There may be some other factors, such as the practice of loud reading, independent reading, and translation method creating difficulty in comprehension and discourse or text understanding. It has been observed that the learners lose interest and motivation in reading comprehension and fail to decode message from the passage resulting into incompetence, and fossilized bad reading habits (Grabe, 2002). The less proficient learners from public schools may experience comprehension problems regarding the strategies applied to understand a text (Mumba 2013).

Cotter (2012), on the other hand, views reading comprehension as a complex process of integrating information, making inferences, and constructing meaning. Cotter's definition recommends that the concept of reading comprehension is complex and does not outline the complexity of the concept, nor does it explain the decoding skills required to arrive at the sounds and meaning of the written symbols. However, a comprehensive explanation of reading comprehension is adopted by Grabe and Stoller (2011) in Harding, Alderson and Brunfaut (2015). In their study they states that complexity of reading comprehension, which operates at two levels, the lower level and higher level. Reading comprehension at the primary level involves word recognition, where readers link written symbols to sound symbols. From sound symbols, learners work out meanings at word and sentence level using working memory. At the secondary level, reading involves topic and world knowledge, inferencing, and building mental models on what is read. This denotes that readers also monitor what they read by checking whether it has been understood and finally synthesise and evaluate what they read. In return, reading comprehension becomes an active process rather than being a passive idea

of working main ideas.

According to studies by Pardo (2004) in Grabe and Stoller (2011) further revealed that for the reader to develop comprehension skills he or she poses questions throughout the reading process for monitoring the meaning. Their study acknowledged that reading comprehension involves a transaction between the reader and the text in which the reader brings to the text world knowledge to confirm what is read and monitor meaning so that it is not lost. Children at primary and grade eight level might not achieve this on their own without the help from the teacher. Thus, the teacher ought to be the center in the reading process to provide a stimulating learning environment consisting of a variety of print resources and artwork (Muijs and Reynolds 2005).

Therefore, the definitions highlighted above corn stone the idea of interactivity in reading comprehension, where readers not only decode words but also display several skills. These reading skills do not develop naturally; the reader must adapt the part of his or her brain that identifies images and written words (Gove and Cvelich, 2011).

Problematising the study

A number of studies (Chazangwe 2011; Mumba 2013; soomoroo 2019; Tella & Akande 2007) have shown low performance in reading comprehension .According to Chazangwe (2011) Grades 9 and 12 marking centers have over the years expressed concerns that pupils do not perform well in reading Comprehension component . An analysis of the Examinations Council of Zambia examiners report on the 2019 Grade 9 examinations and the 2020 Grade 12 Joint School Certificate and General Certificate of Education examinations also showed poor performance of pupils in reading comprehension tasks. The reports indicated that more than fifty percent of the candidates scored below half the total mark in reading comprehension section; with some scoring as low as between 0 and 7 marks out of 20. The 2014 and 2013 Examination Council of Zambia, Examiners' report showed similar results and the trend is continuing across schools in Zambia. Teachers' professional development meetings minutes in different schools also report similar results (Chazangwe, 2011; Muyangana, 2012; Mutale, 2013). A study by Mumba (2013) also noted that pupils have challenges in understanding a text due to diverse factors. This is despite English being the official language, the only mandatory language subject and he defacto language of power in Zambia (Mwanza, 2020; Mwanza & Bwalya, 2019; Mwanza, 2020; Nyimbili & Mwanza, 2021). The problem is that the factors contributing to low performance among pupils in grades 8 and 9 in reading comprehension lessons and examinations are not known. Having looked at these studies and other studies conducted in reading comprehension, little is known for the study conducted on factors contributing English reading comprehension among Grade 8 pupils in three selected Secondary Schools in Lusaka District. Therefore, the study found a positive motivation factor to be conducted and bridge the gap on the factors contributing to low performance in teaching English reading comprehension lessons among Grade 8 pupils in Lusaka District in 2021.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following research questions.

- (i). What factors contributed to low performance in English reading comprehension lessons among Grade Eight pupils in the selected public schools?
- (ii). What were the suggested strategies to improve reading comprehension performance in the selected public secondary schools of Lusaka District?

Methods and materials

The study employed qualitative research method approach. The qualitative design has the advantage of presenting detailed data expressed through narrative (Wakumelo, Mwanza & Mkandawire, 2016). The study also adopted descriptive research design as regard to the study's intention to focus on describing, analyzing and interpreting an observable characters from the three selected secondary schools in Lusaka district for the interest of the study. The sample size comprised the total of twenty-seven (27) respondents drawn from each of the three selected public secondary schools in Lusaka District. That is one head of department of English language from each school, four teachers of English language and four grade eight pupils from each of the three selected schools. That gave a total of three (3) heads of department of English language, twelve (12) grade eight pupils and twelve (12) teachers of English language for interviews and Classroom observation in teaching English reading comprehension lessons in grade eight 8 classes in three selected schools. The focused group discussion allowed 8 pupils per school.

The sample was purposive typical case sampling. Typical case sampling is a type of purposive sampling useful when a researcher wants to study a phenomena or trend as it relates to what is considered "typical or average" members of the affected population (Crossman, 2020). Purposive typical case sampling was used by virtue of grades and subject (English) taught. Purposive typical case sampling was used to select the pupils and teachers as it is based on dividing the population into several the study's significant criteria (Gau et. al. 2007). Purposively sampling involves selecting respondents that manifest the characteristics of most interest to the researcher. This was done in order to make it possible for the researcher to record information without biasness. The selection of three schools was based on the convenient sampling. Therefore, schools were sampled in line with those which are easily accessible for the researcher to carry out data.

The Research instruments used to collect data were the lesson observation guide, interview guide and a focus group discussion guide. Primary data was collected through the research instruments guiding the study and secondary data was collected from different reviews related literature to the present study. The data collected was analysed thematically. This implies that the findings were organized into categories that emerge from identified themes.

Findings and Discussion

The findings of this study were presented with respect to the questions and themes generated as a result of content analysis.

Factors Contributing to Low Performance in English Reading Comprehension

Through content analysis, the data obtained on this question showed different thematic areas of interest to the researchers. The data from interviews and focus group discussions were cross checked and consolidated through lesson observations for purposes of triangulation. When asked to comment on the factors contributed to low performance in English reading comprehension the following responses under themes.

Most Pupils have Limited Vocabulary.

Teachers indicated that among other factors that contribute to low performance in reading comprehension among Grade eight classes in three selected public Secondary Schools in Lusaka District was limited vocabulary. Most teachers interviewed indicated that pupils in their classes lacked an understanding of most words they read, and this contributed to their low levels in comprehension activities. For example, the following teachers had this to say:

It is the words that give them problems. Most pupils do not understand simple words that they read in their passages, and this make us spend more time explaining the meaning of words. (R1)

Another teacher said that;

My pupils know some words, but they can do more because they keep asking me questions on words that appear frequently in the society and I do not know why. (R2)

One teacher also revealed that:

Our pupils need help in expanding their vocabulary because this troubles them a lot. I do not know how we can enforce this because vocabulary is very important. (R3)

Another teacher said, “pupils lack good command of vocabulary to understand a passage and if we work on this, they can be very good in comprehension.” What teachers reported during interviews were also observed during lesson observations. Pupils were seen asking multiple questions related to the meaning of words, and phrases based on the passages that were given to them for reading. This imply that learners lacked adequate vocabulary to comprehend what they read. These findings agree with Pulido (2007) who noted that there is a relationship between text comprehension and the amount vocabulary that readers have acquired. Vocabulary is also one of the main factors which affect reading comprehension (Bauman, 2009). Expressive and receptive vocabulary have a significant role to play in aiding the understanding of text.

Inadequate Reading Materials for Comprehension.

In all the lessons observed, pupils were seen sharing the available reading materials from the textbooks provided to them. Furthermore, the Heads of language department indicated that lack of sufficient teaching and learning materials is reported to be huge contributing factor. Other HOD shared the following views in favor of this point during interviews.

Chronic lack of adequate materials have been at this school for a long time, and we are even tired of asking for these books because every time we ask for books, they do not give us. (R4)

Another HOD stated that;

yes... there are pupils in class that may not have access to the passage in the textbook because there are very few copies of the pupil's textbook against so many pupils in class. So, teachers tries putting them in groups so that they can share reading one copy, but you know, it difficult sometimes. (R5)

The HOD further had this to say;

I do not think there is any department with enough learning and teaching materials at this school. Making matters worse we do not have a library at this school. (R6)

The lack of sufficient reading materials in schools was noted and this contributed to the poor performance in reading comprehension. These results agree with previous studies (Mwanza, 2017; Mwanza & Mkandawire, 2020)

Low Reading Culture among Pupils.

During interviews, pupils indicated that one of the contributing factors to low performance in teaching English reading comprehension lessons among Grade eight pupils in three selected public secondary schools in Lusaka District was low reading culture. Most pupils interviewed indicated that they lacked interest in reading, and this contributed to their weak comprehension lessons. For example, the following pupils had this to say:

Iyah, madam. At times, I do not understand well when one pupil is reading fast with a mask at a mouth...he continued that 'it is not easy to understand the whole story that's I can say madam. (R7)

Another pupil stated that:

when asked she added that, 'actually, it's a challenge for me to read a paragraph with a mask madam,.I also can't understand when the other pupils read while masked up and when they can't speak English well...she further said that some passage are difficult to understand. (R8)

Furthermore, another pupil added when asked that, 'for me,

I don't like reading a big passage mmmm she continued that, the mask makes me not to understand

when other pupils are masked up while reading the other thing is when time is very fast and then the teacher wants us to finish the exercise ...and mark our books. (R9)

In all the lessons observed, pupils indicated that one of the factors that contributes to the low performance in teaching English reading comprehension lessons among Grade eight pupils in three selected public secondary schools in Lusaka District was low reading culture. The information from classroom observation correlates with the information collected from interviews. Most pupils interviewed indicated that they lacked interest in reading, and this contributed to their weak comprehension lessons, for example pupil J, pupil K and pupil L. The results on low reading culture agree with Kafusha et al (2021) who noted that the lack of reading culture in Zambia begins in schools and gets down to all communities.

Teacher Factor.

Some teachers were not certain on how to teach comprehension. In all the lessons observed, Teachers indicated that among other factors that contributes to low performance in teaching English reading comprehension lessons among Grade eight pupils in three selected public Secondary Schools in Lusaka District was as a result of teacher factor. This information correlates with the data collected during interviews, some teachers interviewed could not mention the right comprehension instructions in teaching English reading comprehension lessons to grade eight pupils and during interviews they gave out the following views; A teacher from school X revealed that;

Teaching mmm the best way in reading comprehension to pupils is by reading to them (R10)

Another teacher school Y from responded that, ’

Comprehension instructions are good in comprehension to strengthen the lesson. (R11)

A teacher from school Z revealed that:

Summarizing what they have read from the passage and reading the whole passage. (R12).

The researcher after observing the lessons she awarded the following scores of performances towards the testing scores (1). Retrieving explicitly stated information low performance, (2). Making straightforward inferences constituted low performance (3). Interpreting and integrating ideas indicated low performances (4). Examining and evaluating content, language and (5) textual elements reviewed low performances using a checklist after compailing the data from all the selected schools in Lusaka District. The graded performances coded and recorded in accordance to how the lesson was taught, assessed and evaluated from each of the selected school. However, this recorded information on low performance correlates with Mkandawire (2017) on “familiar language based instruction versus unfamiliar language for the teaching of reading and writing literacy skills: a focus on Zambian languages and English at two primary school

in Lusaka district.” The study used e case study and collected data qualitatively using research approach of post- positivism paradiagm. The method to collect data were done through interviews, focus group discussion and lesson observation. Findings from this study reviewed that the method and strategies used to teach learners how to read and write were not appropriate for the lessons of reading and writing. Mkandawire (2017) cited in Luangala (2011) reported that learners were reading at grade three levels below their own level in other words a grade five pupil in class would prefer to read a grade two book and a grade six pupil would prefer to read a grade three book. Furthermore, the southern Africa consortium for monitoring educational quality reported that only 3% of learners in grade six were reading at desirable level, meaning reading at grade level. The national reading committee (NRC) stated that about 70% of grade 7s were leaving school unable to read and write. The lower rates in reading and writing levels amongst primary school going learners in most cases triggered by many factors such as lack of appropriate language learning and teaching materials, improper teaching strategies and the diverse nature of these classroom. The issues of inappropriate language of instruction and fault teaching strategies could be one of the major causes of poor literacy skills in Zambia because, they are key factors in literacy development. Having read through Mukandawire’s it is evidently that pupils might leave Grade seven without knowing how to read and write hence this analysis outlines that pupils might enroll to Grade eight in Lusaka District of Zambia with low levels of reading and writing in comprehension in Lusaka which is the target sample of the current study. Hence a research was needed to investigate the factors contributing to low performance in teaching English reading comprehension lessons among Grade eight pupils in three selected public secondary schools in Lusaka District. The findings above agrees with kazemian (2015) a study was conducted at the University of Gujrat in Pakistani. The study titled, “factors responsible for poor English reading comprehension at secondary school level students.” The purpose of this study was to explore those factors and to suggest remedies to strengthen English reading comprehension skills of the students. The study by Kazemian revealed that tests and interviews were conducted to get the data. This is so because different factors like poor command of vocabulary, habits of clamming, no interest to learn creativity in reading but the sole goal was just to pass the examinations which is one of the factor responsible for poor English comprehension motivation to learn reading and develop poor reading comprehension skills of pupils were also identified from the present study.

The findings also agrees with Mohammed and Amponsah (2018)’s study titled “predominant factors contributing to low reading abilities of pupils at Elsie land basic school in the tamale Metropolis in Ghana.” The study used purposive sampling technique to select twelve (12) classroom teachers at the Elsie land basic school when collecting data, the study used one to one in depth individual interview. The gathered data were analyzed thematically. The analysis of the data indicated the following to be the low reading abilities of their lack of confidence to practice low to read in class, poor motivation from teachers and parents to help develop

interest of the pupils in reading, lack of pre-readers books in schools and at home, lack of library, teachers in adequate knowledge on phonemic awareness strategy of teaching, reading, lack of reading clubs and lack of reading competition among the pupils in the school. However, the challenges reported by Mohammed and Amponsah (2018)'s study correlates on challenges findings with the present study. In this revelation, the suggested strategies were made to overcome the challenges in reading comprehension.

In summary, multiple factors contributed to poor performance in reading comprehension and these included lack of knowledge by some teachers on the procedure for teaching reading comprehension and therefore, taught poorly. Some pupils had challenges reading comprehension text due to illiteracy, lack of understanding, limited fluency, aliteracy, low reading culture, limited vocabulary, poor motivation, limited reading time in class against long passages, inappropriate teaching methods by the teacher and lack of learning and teaching materials.

Strategies to Improve Reading Comprehension Performance

The second research question sought to establish the strategies for improving reading comprehension among learners in schools and these have been presented under specific themes. Through interviews, teachers and heads of departments indicated diverse suggested strategies to help reduce the low performance in reading comprehension among grade eight pupils in selected secondary school in Lusaka District and these are presented in themes below.

Supply Enough Teaching Materials.

Teachers indicated varying strategies for teaching reading comprehension in schools. Much of what teachers reported during interviews was also observed by the researcher in class during lesson observation. However, what some teachers reported to be doing during interviews was not observed by the researcher during lesson observation in their classes. For example, one teacher reported the use of independent reading as part of the process for teaching reading comprehension, but this was not seen when he was teaching in class. A few other cases of this nature were noted in a few teachers during data collection. During interviews, the Head of Department (HOD) stated.

HOD from school X explained when asked and he said that:

Okay. At this school we encourage our teachers to work hard in terms of teaching all subjects...mmmmm for reading comprehension challenges because of lack of teaching materials and we hope the ministry would provide us more pupils books. (R13)

HOD from school Y responded that;

Teachers mostly use progress grade eight which are available and could cater for every learner during comprehension lessons because now they are the books which can cater for all pupils in classes.(R14)

HOD from school Z also responded that,

'Reading comprehension is best taught when allowing silent reading but it's difficult in times of the covid 19 to have all pupils enough books so we requested for some books and still waiting'mmmmm previously, we did not have enough books and we received some books and mmm not ZBEC but progress grade eight so that's the books our pupils are using though they are a bit shallow because they don't have much information.. mmmm our teachers are expected to have CP D S meetings but due to this season of covid 19 we allow them to have meetings on WhatsApp groups and share experiences and the other challenge is on some teachers on experience we receive at times their teaching methods are not effective and I have to make sure that permanent teachers mentor them well mmmmm they have to write lesson plans and the last area is on monitoring teachers to work hard and check pupils books as well as assess them to see where they don't understand. (R 15)

Teachers indicated that lack of sufficient teaching and learning materials is reported to be a contributing factor to low levels of comprehension. At school X, the researchers observed that the teacher was using one text book to the whole class, while at school Y and School Z some pupils were seen sharing one book per desk.

This study agrees with Nyambe (2017) who carried out a study focused on the low levels of literacy amongst learners in Zambian secondary schools. Nyambe's study revealed that availability of teaching and learning materials will help to bridge the gap faced in teaching literacy and English language at Mufumbwe secondary school in North-western province. This study correlates with the information obtained from the HODs in the current study as reported above.

Additionally, this study agrees with position of the Ministry of Education where teachers are required to work hard and ensure that pupils are equipped with knowledge, value and skills needed in the society. Teachers are expected to improve pupils reading skills and making sure that they are equipped with skills that will help to improve quality education in schools. The Ministry policy also reveals that when learners are equipped with comprehension skills, expected to understand and recall what they read in other subjects across the curriculum. Teachers are therefore obliged to work out strategies that would help learners grasp the reading concept in order to improve in comprehension skills. Teachers are expected to understand and apply effective teaching methods when teaching English reading comprehension. This information is prominent for this study.

Using a case study research design, Simfukwe (2019) conducted a study in Lusaka District and presented at University of Zambia. The study focused on investigating teacher's views on factors leading to literacy achievements among Grade one to Grade four pupils in Lusaka District of Zambia. The study employed qualitative research design which involved face to face interviews with teachers. Findings of the study revealed that, there were several factors that lead to high literacy and these are; commitment to hard work and motivation, availability of teaching and learning materials, monitoring and supervision teachers by

school administration, pupil and teacher motivation, pupils and teachers familiar languages, pupils' interests in Education parent involvement. A similar study by Ashley (2008) revealed that when teachers create the desire to read in learners and build reading confidence in reading comprehension lessons it plays a significant role in increasing reading motivation. Presenting opportunities in the classroom that give learners reasons to read helps increase their motivation, in as much as choosing a text that interests them would allow them to base their choice on prior knowledge or positive feelings about what they read. Therefore, Simfukwe (2019)'s study is linked to Ashley (2008) on the aspect of motivation in order to achieve high literacy in writing and reading which is also prominent strategy for the present study.

Furthermore, I agree with The Ministry of Education (1996) as it also identified successful skills to reading comprehension such as fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, phonemic awareness and phonics. The present study also employed these strategies in comprehension such as, comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, phonemic awareness, and phonics. When teaching vocabulary driving meaning of new words from the comprehension text is prominent. Similar Nation (2003) discusses that driving meaning of new words in context is one of the important reading strategies dealing with semantic based activities of comprehending a text. His study revealed that driving meaning of new words allows learners consciously focusing on unknown words, interpreting their normal and systematically drawing on the available words meaning from the context. Therefore, the process would allow pupils to shift their reading focus from the ideas to the contextual clues of the passage to know the meaning of unfamiliar words determined by the context. The conscious mental activity which specifically focuses on driving new words from the context and later becomes regular practice of a learner's memory would improve comprehension.

In conclusion, this study investigated the factors contributing to low performance in reading comprehension from three selected secondary schools in Lusaka district of Zambia. It was noted that there were several factors contributing to low performance in reading comprehension and these included lack of knowledge by some teachers on the procedure for teaching reading comprehension and therefore, taught poorly. Some pupils had challenges reading comprehension text due to illiteracy, lack of understanding, limited fluency, aliteracy, low reading culture, limited vocabulary, poor motivation, limited reading time in class against long passages, inappropriate teaching methods by the teacher and lack of learning and teaching materials. In order to improve on the challenges in reading comprehension, the study recommended that schools should have frequent Continuous Professional Developments on how to teach comprehension. Teachers should also make sure that teaching and learning materials are relevant to the grade levels. Appropriate teaching methods should also be used for comprehension lessons to promote quality and effective teaching and learning. The Ministry of Education should build libraries in schools to support the reading culture and schools should have a reading hour every day of the week.

The study made the following recommendations;

- (i) The Ministry of General Education should build up libraries in schools

for pupils to improve their reading culture.

- (ii) The Ministry of Education should provide enough Grade 8 English language teaching and learning materials to all schools so that teachers can provide quality education when teaching and assessing comprehension lessons.
- (iii) The Ministry of Education through schools should prepare the catch – up strategies to teach extensive reading to learners who do not know how to read.
- (iv) School should source enough learning and teaching materials for all learners to have copies to read.

References

- Aebersold, J.A., & Field, M.L. (1997). *From reader to reading teacher: Issues and strategies for second language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Alyousef, H-S, (2005). Teaching reading comprehension to ESL/EFL learners. *The Reading Matrix* 5, 143-154.
- Amruster, B. and Osborn, J. (2002). Reading Instruction and Assessment (understanding the IRA standards). Boston ; A person Education Company.
- Anmarkrud, & Bråten, I. (2012). Naturally-occurring comprehension strategies instruction in 9th-grade language arts classrooms. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 56(6), 591-623.
- Atalla, A. (2015). *The Reasons that affect secondary stage students Reading comprehension skill of English Language southern Region of Jordan from the teachers perspectives*. Tafila Technical University faculty of Educational Sciences: Tafila: Jordan.
- Banda, F & Mwanza D.S. (2020). The Idea was that those who were trained to train atleast critical Reflections on the 2014. *Zambian language of initial literacy change*. In Asraf Adbaechay, Sinfree, B .Makon, & Christine G. severo (eds) language planning and policy: ideologies, *Ethnicities and semiotic spaces of power*. Cambridge scholars publishing. Pp. 125-54.
- Banda, F & Mwanza, D.S. (2017). Language in education policy and linguistic diversity in Zambia: *An alternative explanation to low reading levels among primary school* in Banja, Madalisto Khilupliluka (ed) selected reading in education, 109-132 Lusaka: University of Zambia press.
- Barness, M. V. (2012). *An Investigation of English Learners' Acquisition of Academic Language to Obtain Reading Comprehension Skills*. Unpublished doctoral thesis. Liberty University: USA.
- Bell, J. (1993). *How to complete your research project successfully*. New Delhi: UBS Publishers.
- Bellet, D., & Gursoy, E. (2008). A comparative study on strategies of the children for L1 and L2 reading comprehension in K12. *College of Teaching Methods & Styles Journal*, 4, 37-48.

- Best, John W. and Karn, James, V. (2009). *Research in education*, 10th ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey prentice_Hall, Ine. Gall, Meredith, D. Gall, Joyce and Borg,
- Betty, K. (2016). *Factors influencing performance of English as a subject in Kenya certificate of primary Education in Nakuru town, East of Sub country*: University of Nairobi; Kenya.
- Bloom, B., & Krathwohl, D. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The classification of Educational Goals*. New York, Ny: Longmans Gren.
- Carrel, P. Pharis, B. & Liberto, J. (1989). Metacognitive strategy training for ESL reading. *TESOL Quarterly*. 23, 647-678.
- Chang, S. C., (2011). A contrastive study of Grammar Translation Method and Communicative Approach in teaching English grammar. *English Language Teaching*, (4), 2, pp. 15-22
- Chazangwe, V. (2011). *An investigation into the factors for poor performance of grade twelve pupils in reading comprehension: A case study of selected High schools in Kalomo District*. Unpublished Masters Dissertation from The University of Zambia.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. Oxen: Routledge.
- Cook, L. K. (1983). *Instruction effects of text structure-based reading strategies on the comprehension of the scientific prose*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. London: Sage publications.
- Cromer, W. (1968). *The effects of pre-organizing reading material on two types of poor readers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Clark University.
- Crossman, A. (2020). *Understanding purposive sampling*, an overview of the method and its applications thought co, Aug. 27, 2020.
- Cummings, J (1984). Language proficiency and Academic Achievement revisited a response Edited by C. Rivera. *Multilingual matters* 10 (400); 90.
- Cunningworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your course book*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Dar, F. (2014). *Teaching and Learning in Sindh Schools*. Society for the Advancement of Education: Pakistan.
- Davis, F. B. (1968). Research in Comprehension in Reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 3, 499-545.
- Dawkins, L. (2017). *Factors influencing Reading in achievement*. United states; Walden University.
- Duke, N., & Pearson, P.D. (2002). *Effective practices for developing reading comprehension*. In A. Farstrup & S. J. Samuels (Eds.), *what research has to say about reading instruction* (3rd Ed.) (pp. 205-242). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Elleman, A.M., & Oslund, E.L. (2019). *Reading Comprehension Research: Implications for Practice and Policy. Policy Insights from the Behavioral and*

- Brain Sciences*, 6(1), 3–11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2372732218816339>.
- Grabe, B. (2002). Using discourse patterns to improve reading comprehension. *JALT 2002 at Shizuoka. Conference Proceedings*. pp 9-17.
- Grabe, W. (2008). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Grasser, A. C., Ozuru, Y., & Sullins, J. (2010). What is a Good Question? In M. G. McKeown, & L. Kucan, (Eds), *Bringing Reading Research to Life*, (pp. 112-141). New York, Ny: Guilford Press.
- Grasser, A. C., & Person, N. K. (1994). Question Asking During Tutoring. *American Educational Research Journal*, 31, 104-137.
- Hung, D., M. & Ngan, V.P.T. (2015). Investigating reading strategies used by EFL students at Dong Thap University. *Asian Journal of Education Research*.
- Imelda, S. (2014). Is there a Conceptual framework?" *Journal of social science* vol. 3595. 185-195. *is peer teaching still an international journal of humanities social sciences and education*. 3 (ii): 88-100
- Iversen, J. Y. & Mkandawire, S. B. (2022). Comparing Language Ideologies in Multilingual Classrooms Across Norway and Zambia. *Multilingual Margins*, 7(3), 33-48
- Ivowi (2004). *Curriculum implementation for school administration*: Noah, An ok, shonisone, ojo and olajuwa, T. (tds) curriculum implementation and professionalizing teaching in Nigeria, logos; central educational service.
- Jeremiah, M. (2009). Factors influencing student's achievement in English in secondary schools in Kenya; A case study of Kish South District Kenya ; MOI University in Kenya.
- Jia, Y. (2004). *English as a Second Language Teachers' Perception and Use of Classroom- Based Reading Assessment*. Unpublished doctoral thesis. Texas A&M University.
- Jimene R.T, G.E Garcia and PD Pearson (1996). *The reading strategies of Bilingual lattices of students who are successful*. English readers opportunities and obstacles. *Reading research Quarterly*, vol 31, 90-112.
- Kafusha, M. M., Mwelwa, J., Mkandawire, S. B., & Daka, H. (2021). Reading Culture in Zambia: Perspectives of Selected Households of Zambia on their Reading Practices. *Journal of Lexicography and Terminology*, 5 (2), 80-106
- Keene, E.O. and Zimmermann, S. (2007). *Mosaic of Thought: The Power of Comprehension Strategy Instruction* (2nd Ed). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Kintch, W. (2012). Psychological models of reading comprehension and their implication for assessment. In J. Sabatini, E. Albro, & T.O' Reilly (Eds.) *Measuring up: Advances in how to reading abilities* (pp. 21-38). Lanham, MD; Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Kisilu, D. and Tromp , L.A Delno (2006). *Proposal and Thesis writing . An Introduction* Nairobi. Pauline's publications Africa.
- Koda, K. (2003). Insights into second language reading: *Across linguistic approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Leaner, J. (2003). *Learning disabilities: theories, Diagnosis and teaching strategies*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

- Luangala, J.R (2011). *A reading culture in Zambia: an alternative explanation of its absence*. Seminal paper presented at the department of languages and social sciences education at the University of Zambia.
- Long, M.H., & Richards, J.C. (1987). *Methodology in TESOL A book of Readings* University of Hawaii at Manoa: Heinle and Heinle Press.
- Manchishi, P. C. (2017). *Communicative Language Testing*. Lusaka: University of Zambia.
- Meikley, J. (2005). ESL textbook evaluation checklist. *The Reading Matrix: (5),* 2 pp. 25-34.
- Mohammed & Amphonsah, O. (2018). *Predominant factors contributing to low reading abilities of pupils* .at Elsie Land Basic School in the Tamale metropolis in Ghana.
- Ministry of Education (2017), (nd) *Enriching our Teaching Effective practices for transitioning from literacy*. In Zambia languages to literacy in English teachers manual. USAID- Zambia.
- Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (2012). *English Language Syllabus Grades 8-9*. Lusaka: Curriculum Development Center.
- Ministry of education science, vocational Training and Early education (2013). *National literacy framework*. Lusaka: C D C.
- Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (2013). *Zambia Education Curriculum Framework*. Lusaka: Curriculum Development Center.
- Ministry of Education (1996). *Education our future: policy Reforms Document*. Lusaka: Zambia Education publishing House.
- Ministry of education (1997). *Educational reform: proposal and recommendation*. Lusaka government printer
- Ministry of education. (1977) *Educational Reforms, proposals and recommendations*. Lusaka Government printers.
- Mkandawire, S. B. (2022). *A Comparative Assessment of Grade One Learners' Reading Achievements Between Speakers and Non-Speakers of the Language of Instruction in Multilingual Classes of Lusaka Vis-A-Vis Monolingual Classes of Katete District of Zambia* [Unpublished Doctoral Thesis]. The University of Zambia in Association with Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences.
- Mkandawire, S. B. (2018). Literacy versus Language: Exploring their Similarities and differences. *Journal of Lexicography and Terminology*, 2 (1), 37-55.
- Mkandawire, S. B. (2017). Familiar Language Based Instruction versus Unfamiliar Language for the Teaching of Reading and Writing Skills: A Focus on Zambian Languages and English at two Primary Schools in Lusaka. *Zambian Journal of Language Studies*, 1(1), 53-82.
- Mkandawire, S. B. (2019). Selected Common Methods and Tools for Data Collection in Research. In: M. K. Banja (Ed.). *Selected Readings in Education Volume 2*. (pp.143-153). Lusaka: Marvel Publishers.
- Mkandawire, S. B. (2012). *An Evaluation of the Neganega Literacy Programme in Mazabuka District of the Southern Province of Zambia*. Unpublished Masters

- Dissertation. The University of Zambia.
- Mohammed, I., and Amponsah, O. (2018). Predominant factors contributing to low reading abilities of pupils at Elsie Lund Basic School in the Tamale Metropolis, Ghana. *African Educational Research Journal*, 6(4): 273-278.
- Mubanga, E. (2010). The Nature and prevalence of Reading and writing difficulties in Grade Two under the primary reading programme; The case of twelve Basic schools in the Northern Province. Lusaka; University of Zambia.
- Muilew, G. A. (1973). *Linguistic communication perspective for research*. Newmark, Del: international Reading Association.
- Mumba, M. & Mkandawire, S. B. (2020). Reading Achievements of Pupils with Preschool Background and those without at a Primary School in Lusaka District of Zambia. *Malcolm Moffat Multidisciplinary Journal of Research and Education*, 1(1), pp 53 – 80. ISSN: 2706-6029
- Mumba, M. (2013). *Reading culture of pupils in primary school; a study of icomera and kasenga primary school in chongwe district*. Zambian Open University: Lusaka.
- Mutale, K. (2013). *Challenges faced by grade twelve learners in reading comprehension: A case of a selected School in Kafue District*. Unpublished Masters Dissertation from The University of Zambia.
- Mutambo, P. P. (2002). *A palmpet English language teaching methods for second years*. LUSAKA; NISTCOL.
- Muyangana, A. (2012). *Strategies Employed by Teachers in the teaching of Reading Comprehension in Selected Secondary Schools in Lusaka District*. Unpublished Masters Dissertation from The University of Zambia.
- Mwanza, C. & Mkandawire, S. B. (2020). From Curriculum Guide to Classroom Practice: Teachers' of English Language Narratives of the 2013 Revised Curriculum Implementation in Zambia. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Language and Social Sciences Education*, 3(2), 193-215.
- Mwanza, D.S., & Bwalya, V. (2019). Democratisation or Symbolic Violence? An Analysis of Teachers' Language Practices in Selected Multilingual Classrooms in Chibombo District, Zambia. In F. Banda (Ed.), *Theoretical and Applied Aspects of African Languages and Culture (pp.215-241)*. Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS).
- Mwanza, D.S. (2020). Critical Reflections on the Zambian Education System and the Teaching of English in Post-Colonial Zambia. *English Literature and Language Review*, 6(2), 15-23.
- Mwanza, D. S. (2017). *The eclectic approach to language teaching its conceptualization and misconceptions*. University of Zambia: Lusaka.
- Mwanza, D.S. (2020). In search of High Literacy Levels in Zambian Primary Schools: Does Duration of Mother Tongue Instruction before Transitioning into a Second Language Matter? *International Journal of Education and Research*, 8(2), 119-134.
- Ness, M. (2011). Explicit reading comprehension instruction in elementary classrooms: Teacher use of reading comprehension strategies. *Journal of*

- Research in Childhood Education, 25 (1), 98-117.
- Nezami, S., R. (2012). A critical study of comprehension strategies and general problems in reading skill faced by Arab EFL learners with special reference to Najran university in Saudi Arabia. *International J. Suc. Sci. & Education* (2)3, pp. 306-316.
- Nyambe, J. (2017). The low levels of literacy amongst learners in Zambian secondary schools ;A case study of Mufumbwe day secondary school. Kabwe; Nhrumah University.
- Nyimbili, F & Mwanza, D.S. (2021). Translanguaging Challenges faced by teachers in first grade multilingual literacy classrooms in Zambia. *International Journal of Studies in English and Literature*. 9 (3): pp 20-31.
- Oberholzer, B. (2005). The relationship between reading difficulties and academic performance among a group of foundation phase learners. *Journal of Higher Education*, 16(3): 196-206.
- Oyetunji, C. O. (2011). The Effect of Reading Strategy Instruction on L2 Teacher Trainees' Performance. University of South Africa, Pretoria. [Online]. Available at <http://hdl.handle.net/10500/7760>. Accessed February 4th 2022
- Palembang, R. (2019). *The correlation between and academic achievement of English education study program students of Un Raiden Fatah ; Islamic state University*.
- Pearson, P.D., & Fielding, L. (1991). Comprehension instruction. In R Barr et al. (eds.), *Handbook of reading research*, Volume II (pp. 815-860). New York: Longman.
- Pressley, M. (2006). *Reading instruction that works*, 3rd ed. New York: Guilford Press.
- Pretorius, E. J. (1993). Reading ability and academic performance in South Africa: Are we fiddling while Rome is burning? *Language Matters*. 33, 169-196
- Pulido, D. (2007). The relationship between text comprehension and second language incidental vocabulary acquisition: A matter of topic familiarity? *Applied Linguistics*, 28 (1), 66-86.
- Richard, J.C. (2001). *Curriculum in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- RO. E. (2013). A case study of extensive reading with an unmotivated L2 reader. *Reading in Foreign Language*. 25.
- Ruddell, R. B., & Unrau, N. J. (1994). Reading as a meaning-construction process: The reader, the text, and the teacher. *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (4th ed., pp. 996- 1056).
- Sanford, M. (2015). *Factors that affect the reading comprehension of secondary students*. University of San Francisco.
- Seyabi, F & Tozluokoua, V. (2015). *Investigating EFC reading problems and strategies in post basic schools and university foundation programme: A study in the oman context*. Sultan Qaboos University: sultanate of Oman.
- Setianingsih, I. (2017). *Factors affecting the English reading literacy of junior*

- high schools students. Bantul district; Indonesia University .
- Shiotsu, T. (2012). *Components of L2 reading*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Silavwe, A., Mwewa, T., and Mkandawire, S. B. (2019). Understanding the Concept of Functional Literacy by Selected Residents of Lusaka District of Zambia. *Journal of Lexicography and Terminology*, 3 (2), 1 -30.
- Somroo ,P. (2019). Exploring problems in reading text comprehension and discourse; *understanding of learners at intermediate level*. University of Sindli. Pakistan.
- Sparks, J. R. (2012). Language/discourse comprehension and understanding. In N.M. Seel(Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Learning Science* (pp. 1713-717). Springer.
- Stephen, M. (2022). *Foundations of international nations*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Torres, R.(2016).Factors affecting the reading comprehension of Intermediate level leaners;Basis for an Intervention program in Philippines. Malolos city.
- Walter. R. (2007). Educational Research. An Introduction (8th ed). Boston Pearson, Allyn and Bacon. Icombo.
- Wakumelo, M., Mwanza, D.S & Mkandawire, S. B. (2016). The Toponymics of Post Colonial Zambia. Street Naming Patterns in Lusaka. In G. Mheta (ed). *The Postcolonial Condition of Names and Naming Practices in Southern Africa* (pp. 270-288). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Weidman, A. & Van Ransburg, C. (2002). Language proficiency: current strategies, future remedies, *Journal for Language Teaching*, 36(1&2), 152-164.