ANALYSIS OF TECHNIQUES TEACHERS ARE USING TO TEACH GRAMMAR IN GRADE SEVEN (7) IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KAZUNGULA DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN PROVINCE, ZAMBIA.

BY

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LUSAKA

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and the works of other people have been appropriately acknowledged. I further declare that this work has never been part or whole submitted to the University of Zambia or any other institution for the award of any academic qualification.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation by **Fidelis Mumba** is approved as fulfilling the requirements for the award of the Master of Education: Literacy, Language and Applied Linguistics.

Examiners' signatures

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ABSTRACT

Kazungula District is one of the rural districts in Southern Province. It is one of the poor performing districts in terms of grade 7 national results in English Language. The purpose of this study was to analyse the techniques teachers are using to teach

English grammar in grade seven (7) in selected primary schools in Kazungula District in order to improve learner performance in these schools. The objectives of the study were: to determine the teachers‟ understanding of the concept of grammar, analyze the techniques teachers are using to teach English grammar and to establish the challenges teachers are facing in teaching English grammar.The study was qualitative in nature. The interviews, focus group discussions, and lesson observations were used to collect data which was later analyzed thematically. Data were collected from the five primary schools where grade 7 teachers provided information through lesson observations and through the focus group discussions. It used descriptive design and there were 16 participants.The following were the main findings: Teachers used explicit teaching as well as group work. The notable challenges to teaching grammar were: lack of teaching materials, absenteeism, lack of adequate grammar knowledge by teachers, the language policy in which language of instruction was the local language from grade1 to grade 4. The language policy was perceived to retard the acquisition of spoken language during their lower grades as teachers used the local language in the teaching of other subjects. In view of the finding the following recommendations were made: The Ministry of Education to strengthen Continuing Professional Development in schools and in zone levels .The Ministry of Education to provide text books for use in schools.

Key words: Grammar teaching, Techniques, concept of grammar, themes.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This section presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, delimitations, limitations, theoretical framework and operational definitions.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Concept of Grammar

According to Burton .G (2020:198-201) the word grammar originates from ancient Greek „grammatike".This was one of the „liberal arts" taught in Ancient Greece and in Rome from the 15th century BC .It also meant studying Latin or Ancient Greek and not vernacular language . David Crystal (1995) viewed grammar as the business of taking language into pieces to see how it works .Penny (2000) also looks at grammar as the rules that show words are combined to produce acceptable meaningful language units. On the other hand , Larsen –Freeman looked at grammar in broader sense to mean , „ an internal mental system" , „ a set of prescriptions of language forms „ , a description of language behaviour" , and finally , „ rules of for instructional" and assessment purposes". Richards and Schmidts (2020:230) argued that grammar had come to mean „the structure of language and the way in which linguistics units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language. The above definitions show the extent to which the definition of grammar can be ambiguous.

1.2.2 Types of Grammar

Greenbaum.G (1996: 24) makes the distinction between descriptive grammar and prescriptive grammar. While the former describes the rules of language objectively, the later evaluates and guides as to what is correct or not. He also notices that every grammatical description signals a particular theoretical disposition. GreenBaum.G (1996:23) makes a distinction between reference grammar and pedagogical grammar .Reference grammar is meant to be used like a dictionary. It is meant to be consulted when needs arise. It is not supposed to be read from the beginning to the end. On the other hand, pedagogical grammar is meant to be used in class under the guidance of the teacher. However, pedagogical grammar can also be used as reference grammar. The material is graded according to the level and ability of the expected learners. Williams (2005) argued that Generative grammar was developed by Noam Chomsky in the 1950s .This grammar was species-specific as Chomsky‟s studies focused on the internallanguage or mental faculty for language .Chomsky argue that the speakers must rely on mentally represented rules and not on memory. This is seen to be useful to language teachers when it comes to analyzing students‟ unique ability and needs in the teaching and learning situation. Williams argued that functional grammar was a general theory of the organization of natural language. This theory stressed the notion of choice .It modeled grammar as set of options. It was concerned with the real language and not just with the made up examples of language that can be found in many language tests, exercises, work sheets, or traditional grammar books and the way in which is organized to make meaning. Teachers can use the knowledge to suit the objective of teaching to fulfill the needs of the curriculum and students to deliver meaning effectively using different discourses.

Ramcharan (2009) argues strongly that language proficiency determines academic performance. According to Mgqwashu (2002:4) language skills enhance a learner‟s academic performance. Mahabeer (2003:26) says language is crucial to cognitive development and has an effect on the performance of learners .Weidman (2002:5) also supports the idea that low academic language proficiency levels leads to poor performance

Studies conducted in Kazungula District in Southern Province in Zambia show that the district lags behind in terms academic performance at grade 7 level. Nyambe (2018) acknowledges the prevalence of poor grade 7 performance in English Language and attributes several factors for this. Some of the factors include: negative attitude by some Head teachers‟, absenteeism by leaners, low motivation for teachers and insufficient learning and teaching materials. Biemba (2018: 6) identified the cause of poor performance as follows: lack of quality and quantity teaching staff, poor conditions of service for teachers and shortage of learning and teaching materials. What is interesting is that none of the researchers mentioned poor English language or grammar as a contributing factor to the poor performance.

Herrell and Jordan (2020) share several techniques which can be used in language lessons. Some of the techniques suggested which can help in teaching English grammar effectively are: modeled talk, visual scaffolding, syntax surgery, communication games and mentioned Cooperative learning.

Canh & Barnard , (2009) argue that research has shown that what teachers eventually choose to employ in their classroom depends mainly on several things like the type of training they received , their subject knowledge ,and their beliefs on classroom instruction and their beliefs about their students‟ abilities and interests.

Aman (2020) points the following as some of the ways grammar could be taught:

- Explicit teaching in where rules are clearly explained.
- Implicit teaching where rules are not pointed out but are understood.
- Deductive approach where the rules are first told to students.
- Inductive approach where students identify the patterns on the their own by examining a number of examples
- Separation is where by grammar rules are taught in isolation.
- Integrating grammar rules with other learning activities.

1.2.3 The Importance of Grammar

Hashemi & Daneshfar (2018) acknowledges the importance of grammar. He points out that grammar motivates students in their path to grammar proficiency. He argues that the frequent use of tests as a means of screening those entering institutions, programme, as well as higher level education which require the participants to act and perform accurately in these situations .It is for this reason that students are expected to familiarize themselves with correct grammar. He further points out that without good knowledge of grammar , clear and effective communication may not take place .Good knowledge of grammar is a an indicator of high education whereas, poor communication skills gives negative impressions. It is undeniable that correct writing and speaking stimulates confidence and credibility.

Ur (1999) believes grammar rules enable the learners to know how to sentence patterns work. It is for this reason that grammar instruction covers sentence patterns of the language .Grammar is also linked to reading, speaking and writing.

Debata , phil, & Ph , (2013) stated that a person cannot learn a second language or foreign language correctly accurately if only through the process of unconscious

assimilation. This has led to the discovery that grammar is not acquired naturally but it has to be taught. It is for this reason that research suggests that learners who do not receive instruction seem to risk fossilizing compared to those who receive instruction.

According to Savage (2010) there are three main roles pointing to the significance of grammar. The first one is that grammar is seen as enabling skill which enables competence to develop in the area of listening , speaking, reading and writing. The second one is that, grammar is noted to be a motivator in which both students and teachers need to be motivated to learn and study grammar to assist teaching and learning process effectively. Thirdly, grammar is viewed as self-sufficiency, in which most practical goal is for the students to learn to correct their own mistakes .This is supported by Fotos (2001) who stated that grammar instruction assists English learners in becoming aware of a structure and then continue to notice it later.

1.2.4 Effects of Teacher Beliefs on Grammar Teaching

Brown & Rodgers (2020) indicated that beliefs can cause couples to wed and soldiers to fight, sicken or heal. William & Burden (2020) stated that there is a growing body of evidence to show that teachers are highly influenced by their beliefs, which in turn are closely related to their values, to their views of the world to their conceptions of their place within. William Burden (1997) indicate that beliefs are predicators of how teachers behave in the classroom .Kagen (1992) stated that it has been found that teachers‟ beliefs usually reflect the actual nature of the instruction the teacher provides to the students. Batstone (2006) teacher beliefs are of great importance for the teacher educator because they are known to be resistant to change.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Kazungula District has not been performing well at grade 7 level. The results tend to be very poor. This can be noted in Kazungula strategic Plan for 2013-2015. In addition to this the District Statistics report (DSR, 2017) also show that the district continues to underperform. According to the grade 7 results analysis for the year 2022, Kazungula District was number 12 of the 15 districts in Southern Province. In other words it was number 4 from the bottom. This means that it was only able to beat Gwembe , Namwala and Chikankata Districts. Livingstone District had the highest pass rate with 79.88% while Kazungula District had 45.56 %.How is grammar being taught? Could this performance be attributed to the way grammar was being taught?

The writing of Weideman (2002:5) gives a clue as to what the problem could be.‟ Low academic language proficiency levels have indeed been mooted as one of primary causes of the lack of academic success experienced by many learners.‟ It is therefore important to explore the techniques teachers use to teach English grammar. If English grammar is poorly taught then we cannot expect learners to do well in other subjects. English grammar therefore is key as English is the medium of instruction. It is for this reason that this study focused on what techniques teachers are using in teaching grammar in grade 7 in Kazungula District.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyse the techniques teachers are using to teach English grammar in grade seven (7) in selected primary schools in Kazungula District in order to improve learner performance in these schools.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the teachers‟ knowledge of the concept of grammar.
2. To analyse the techniques teachers are using to teach English grammar.
3. Establish the challenges teachers are facing in teaching English grammar.

1.6 Research questions

1. What is the teachers‟ knowledge of the concept of grammar?
2. How are the teachers teaching English grammar?
3. What are the challenges teachers are facing when teaching English grammar?

1.7 Significance of the study

This study was very important because the findings may help solve the current challenge of poor performance in grade 7 examinations by learners. The findings may be found useful by teachers as several effective techniques of teaching English grammar were brought out. The other beneficiaries of this study may be policy makers, officers at the Curriculum Development Centre, colleges of education, universities and may also contribute to the body of knowledge as regards teaching English grammar at grade seven level.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

The study was done in Kazungula District focusing on grade 7 teachers .

1.9 Limitations of the study

The study was only done in one district .Therefore findings cannot be generalized.

1.10 Theoretical framework

This study was supported by the Social Cultural Theory pioneered by Lev Vygotsky. This theory indicates that the origin of knowledge should not be sought in the mind but in the social interaction in which people find themselves. Under the zonal proximal Development aspect it ensures that the learners learn on their own what they can manage but where they cannot their friends in class can assist them. Therefore, scaffolding is very important in the theory of Vygotsky. It is not only the who scaffolds but fellow learners as well. Shabani (2016) outlines the key tenets in the Social Cultural Theory of Vygotsky as follows:

- Learning precedes development.
- Language is the main tool of thought.
- Mediation is central to learning.
- Social interaction is the basis of learning and development.
- Learning is a process of apprenticeship and internalization in which skills and knowledge are transformed into cognitive place.
- The Zone of proximal development (ZPD) is the primary activity in space in which learning occurs.

This theory was selected to support my study because it supports the second language learning which occurs through social interaction .This theory encourages collaborative and cooperation learning. This theory was selected because it ensures that effect learning takes place in class and outside through interaction.

1.11 Operational definition

- Grammar: Is the set of structured rules of the English language. This includes the structure of words, phrases, clauses, sentences and whole texts.
- Technique: It is implementation as that is what is done in the process of teaching. It is in line with a particular method and approach.
- Explicit teaching: The skill of teaching using lectures and demonstrations to learners.
- Learner centred teaching: A way of teaching which seeks to foster classroom cooperation rather than competition in learning.

1.12 Summary

Chapter one provided the background to the study in which what the scholars say about grammar was presented as well as what necessitated the study. The link between language proficiency and academic performance was elaborated. The statement of the problem also showed what the problem was which and the assumption of what may have caused the problem. The significance of grammar and the beliefs teachers have about grammar teaching are written in this chapter. The purpose of study, objectives, delimitation, and limitation of the study were also presented in this chapter. .Lastly, the theoretical framework highlighting Social Cultural Theory of Vygosky was also covered in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Overview

This chapter reviews the journal articles on the teachers‟ concept knowledge of grammar , the techniques teachers are using and the reasons for doing so , and lastly the challenges teachers are facing when teaching grammar.

2.2 Teachers's Knowledge of Grammar

Aman (2020) carried out a research to survey primary school teachers „attitudes towards grammar and their beliefs regarding how grammar was taught in Singapore in 2020.It was a quantitative study. The survey contained 70 items. The initial target was 100 primary school teachers but only 81 teachers responded to the survey. The data collected was analysed using the Statistical software for social Studies (SPSS).

The following were the findings in the survey: Teachers strongly agreed that grammar was important and that it had to be taught in primary schools. They also believed grammar consisted rules of the sentence construction and their correct use of tenses. In addition to this, grammar was seen to focus on both form and meaning.

On the part of teaching, teachers showed a bias towards the traditional way of teaching explicitly. Such are lessons where the teacher first gives rule explanation and demonstrates to the learners before asking them to construct sentences. In spite of teaching grammar explicitly, it was noted that learners could not apply the knowledge they learnt practically in their daily communication. The gap in this study

was that the research was just too general as regards the knowledge of grammar teaching in primary schools. The researcher did not specify the grade like say grade 7.

Bell (2016) did a study at Patience Halt Primary School in North-West England.

The case study focused on teacher‟s attitudes, beliefs and content knowledge. The research dealt with the new spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SPaG) elements of the National Curriculum focusing on the grammatical terms and concepts. This was both quantitative and qualitative research. Data were collected from June 2014 to March 2015 using the surveys, interviews and comments made during post – observation discussions and SPaG CPD sessions. The findings were that teachers largely agreed that they did not have adequate subject knowledge. Among the TS, the most known terms were noun, verb, adjectives, prepositions, subordinating conjunction, possessive pronoun and clause elements. The poorly known terms were modal verb, relative pronoun, and passive. In addition to this, most teachers also appeared to lack confidence in their knowledge. The gap in the study was that it was too general for primary school teachers and never focused specifically on the grade 7 teachers.

Research done in Australia by Jones & Chen (2012) and in New Zealand by Jeurissen (2012) found similar findings in which primary school teachers‟ knowledge about grammar was equally poor but improved with the in-service training conducted. Jones (2012) suggests that even the most experienced teachers have gaps in their knowledge. It was also noted that inadequate subject knowledge can have serious effects on the teachers‟ confidence. The gap in this study is that the researchers did not observe any lessons.

Thu (2009) did a study at a school in San Diego California. The study was both qualitative and quantitative and a 32 item questionnaire was used to collect data.

The focus was to investigate English language teachers‟ beliefs in grammar teaching. Five of the participants were female while the remaining six were male. The study revealed that teachers indicated that the formal study of grammar was necessary to master a foreign or second language .Grammar was also believed to be best taught explicitly, inductively and deductively but not implicitly. Teachers were seen to value error correction. Teachers also believed the first language had negative influence on the second language. The previous training for teachers was taken to have greatly helped them to improve their confidence and skills in teaching grammar. The gap in the study is the non- focusing on grade 7 teachers. The research was too general.

Tarigan & Stevani (2022) did a study in Indonesia .The aims of the research were to find out the factors which influenced English foreign language teachers‟ beliefs about English grammar and to assess what English language teachers thought about the role of practice in teaching grammar. The participants in the study were 27 English teachers in junior high schools and 3 senior high schools in North Sumatra , Indonesia. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in the study .Data was collected using the questionnaire and the closed ended interview, The following were the findings on the factors which influenced teachers‟ beliefs in teaching English grammar: For the students to know how to produce correct grammar with the frequency of 27 giving 100%. Secondly, to enable students understand what the speaker meant to say according to the time and used appropriate situation. This had the frequency of 26 and giving it 96%. The last one was to make students effective language users. This had the frequency of 23 with 85%.The English grammar teachers also believed that awareness of English grammar was important in the

process of learning a foreign language. The gap in the study was that the focus was not on grade 7 teachers.

Souisa & Yanuarius (2020) did a study on Senior high school teachers‟ perceptions on grammar teaching in Indonesia. The research was done in all the 15 high schools in Ambon City and 11 private senior high schools. The Data was collected using the questionnaire, and interviews guides. The research involved 63 teachers of English. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in the study.

The following were the findings: The teachers‟ perceptions of grammar teaching are based on their conceptual knowledge as they as experienced it and is based on grammar theories. The English teachers in Kota Ambon still have a good enough clear picture about the concept of grammar and grammar teaching. In other words , the finding showed that teachers „ perceptions of grammar teaching are based on their conceptual knowledge as they have experienced it and is based on grammar theories. The gap was that there was no focus on grade 7 teachers.

Abduh & Alguzi (2020) did a study on the Teacher Perceptions and Practices in Saudi Arabia. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between teachers‟ perceptions of grammar teaching and their actual practices. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in the study. Data was collected using the questionnaire and observation checklist. The participants were 23 staff members chosen randomly from the English Department at Najran University in Saudi Arabia. Teachers were observed teaching grammar classes. The findings revealed that 52.2 % took grammar to be very important.65.2 % teachers strongly agreed that grammar teaching helped students improve language skills. While 47.8 % were of the view that grammar teaching instructions should be followed by a lot of contextual practice to acquire the language. 60.9 % strongly agreed that teaching grammar items should

include both form and use. And 52.2 % claimed to be always giving students extensive explanations of the grammar rules for examinations. The researcher established that there was negative correlation between teachers‟ perceptions of grammar teaching in general and their perceptions of practices in their classes.

Petraki & Hill (2011) did a study on teacher beliefs about grammar teaching and how that affects their teaching in Australia. The study also looked at the relationship between teachers‟ background and knowledge of grammar theories. The research used both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The targets were the Teachers of English Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) graduates and local teachers .The snowball- sampling method was used to attract as many local and international participants as possible. 72 filled in the questionnaires manually and through web-based anonymous question tool, Survey Monkey. One of the key findings was low level of confidence in teaching grammar. In spite of their varied experience, only 53 % teachers felt confident to teaching grammar. While 47 % teachers acknowledged their lack of confidence. The study revealed that lack of grammar knowledge led to lack of confidence. The participants also identified the importance of knowledge of grammar terminology. Teachers who described themselves as lacking confidence also acknowledged having difficulties with terminologies. The research finding suggest that confident teachers used a variety of approaches and methods when teaching grammar .The other notable findings were good classroom preparations boosted confidence levels of grammar teachers. Lastly, teacher personal research and reflection on grammar teaching was also noted to raise the confidence of grammar teachers. The gap in the study was that the research just generally involved grammar teachers and never necessarily focused on grade 7 teachers in the primary school.

Dole etal(2021) did a study in the United states of America. The aim of the research was to investigate the upper elementary (grades 4-6) and the middle (grade 6-8)

teachers‟ views of grammar and its instruction and determine the differences in their views about grammar strategies used. Data was collected using the online survey.196 practicing teachers participated in the study. Two thirds taught the elementary levels while one third handled the middle classes. Eight districts participated in the study with 5 covering urban and suburban while 3 were rural districts. This was a quantitative study. To analyse the open ended questions the researchers coded the responses such as parts of speech , punctuation, sentence usage ,spellings , vocabulary and other English grammar concepts .The results were analyzed and presented quantitatively. The following were the findings: The majority of upper elementary and middle school teachers reported teaching parts of speech 83.9 and 90.7 respectively. Punctuation had 83.9 % for elememetary classes and 90 .7 for the middle classes. Sentence structure had 70.9 % for elementary and 90.7 for the middle classes .Few teachers included spellings as part of grammar with the following percentages; 13.7 for the elementary and 1.0 % for the middle class. The findings further indicated that the most popular teaching strategies were direct instruction , extended practice ,,min i-lessons, conferencing , discussions during reading and writing and during oral language .It was noted that 69.3 upper elementary and 71.9 for the middle indicated that it was very important to teach parts of speech. The gap in this study was the study just relied on online information .The researchers did not observe any lessons.

2.3 Techniques Teachers are using in Teaching Grammar

Lambani & Nephawe (2022) did a study in 2022 in South Africa on the use of the technique Question and answer in the teaching of English prepositions to primary school learners. The researchers used qualitative approach in this study and collected data using the semi-structured interviews and by observing lessons in class. Action

research was used as it is a process for improving educational practice , involves action, evaluation , reflection and a process to gather evidence to implement change in practices. Three rural grade 6 primary schools were sampled in the study. The criteria for sampling the rural Grade 6 teachers in the Lwamondo Circuit over the others including Dzindi , Dzondo and Mvudi were that the circuit mentioned had poor performance in comparison to the other circuits. The researchers conducted a pilot study on two teachers who were not part of the study group but shared similar views .It was observed that in the class where the narrative method was used learners were incompetent as they never answered any questions .The study revealed that the Question and Answer technique improved the learners‟ proficiency in the use of the English prepositions .The gap in the study was that it just focused on topic in grammar which is prepositions yet there are several topics under English Grammar.

Taat , Abdulbakie & Al- Saqqaf (2020) did a study at Oman University in Malaysia. The study focused on the use of lecture method and interactive techniques. The research was aimed at finding out which one between the two teaching techniques would assist satisfactorily in improving the students English language proficiency. The study used quantitative approach. Questionnaires were used to collect data from the third and fourth year students at Oman University. The research findings were that the lecture method was still preferred by some students especially the weaker ones who expected to gain more by just listening to the lecturer. The majority students favoured the interactive method. The researcher observed from the statistics generated that the lecture method had significant negative impact on the students‟ English proficiency. On the other hand, research findings suggest that while the traditional lecture method could be applied to communicate information to the students in limited time but other methods which are interactive could help improve the performance of students. The gap in the study was that the focus was only on the university students and not the primary school learners in the seventh grade.

Merla (2023) did a study in Indonesia in 2023. The research was aimed at finding out whether the deductive method in teaching English grammar by using group work had a positive effect on the academic achievement of the students of the Dual System class at politeknik ATI Makassar . The research used both qualitative and quantitative approaches .Data was collected using direct testing and through questionnaire. Pre- and post-tests were administered.The experimental group had twenty (20) and similarly the control group had twenty (20) students as well. Each group was taught for two months covering eight (8) meetings and each meeting lasted for fifty (50) minutes. The findings of the study were that the use of deductive method with the help of group work helped to improve the pre-test scores from 60.900 to 86.200 in the post-test. Researcher observed that deductive method when used with group work was successful as it allowed the students to look at the examples of the material and discussed in their group. The first gap in this study was not focusing on the seventh grade in primary school and secondly , the research just looked how to teach active and passive sentences.

FarisatmaNasmilah &Rahman (2017) did a on „Applying Group work to Improve Students‟ Grammar achievement.‟The aim of the study was to reveal if group work affected students‟ grammar achievement positively in Indonesia .The study was undertaken in 2017. The study used quantitative approach. The research involved forty (40) students and purposive sampling was used.The instrument of this study was an instructional past tense test which had forty (40) items .The procedure for collecting data used was test distribution and analysis data. In the pre-test the score was 5.58 while 7.55 was the score for the post-test. Therefore , the research finding is that group work improved the students‟ grammar competence effectively. However, the gap in this study is that the focus was not on primary school learners and in particular the grade 7 learners.

Yolageldili & Arikan (2011) did a study on the Effectiveness of Using Games in teaching Grammar to young learners in 2011 in Edirne and in Ankara in Turkey. The research was aimed at finding out four things about the technique of using games in teaching grammar. The researcher wanted to find out the Turkish teachers‟ beliefs about the pedagogical value of using games in foreign language classroom. Secondly, the research wanted to establish the teachers‟ attitudes towards using games in grammar teaching. Also to find out what the teachers think as regards the effectiveness of using games in grammar teaching to young learners. And lastly, the research also wanted to find out the extent to which teachers used the games in their lessons. Fifteen (15) teachers participated in the study .Data was collected using the questionnaire and the results were analysed statistically. 86.67% believed in the pedagogical value of games in second language teaching lessons.93.33 % believed games could be given a special place in the teaching of grammar lessons. 93.3 5 believed the games lowered the students‟ anxiety towards grammar learning and made the students to relax and generated eagerness to learn grammar.63.33 % used games in their lessons. The above results therefore reveal that teachers had strong belief in the pedagogical value of games and their attitude was positive .The teachers also thought the technique of games was very effective although they did not use it frequently. The first gap in this study was the aspect of being too general without specifying the grade .Secondly; the researcher did not observe any lessons.

Cinganotto (2019) conducted a study on the use of debate in an English Foreign language class. This was done in Italy in 2019. The aim of the study was to investigate the teachers‟ and students‟ perceptions on the use of debates in an English Foreign language class. The research used qualitative approach. Two teachers of English working in two different upper secondary schools in Italy were interviewed open ended questions were included in order to let the teachers feel free to express themselves. Students also responded to a questionnaire which they were given in the

sampled schools. The sample had 21 students who were in the second year of upper secondary school .A semi-structured interview was planned and carried out with the sample of teachers. The researcher also observed the school setting. The findings were that the both teachers and students considered debate as an appropriate strategy for teaching foreign language. It came out clearly that through debate the students improved vocabulary and applied the grammar content they had learnt. It was also noted that the use of debate gave students an opportunity to learn language in a natural and effective environment. The gap is this study is that the focus was an upper secondary students and not primary school learners. After conducting the research , the researcher was convinced that debating in a foreign language was worth trying in class as the mixing of research , discussion , engagement , competition ,cooperation and fun created a strong powerful potential language environment .

Nguyen (2021) did a study on the teaching of grammar using stories at Hanoi school in Vietnam in 2021.Hanoi is a semi-International School offering a dual program to students which included the Vietnamese curriculum together with English based program. This was a qualitative study and used case study research design.Data was collected using semi-structured interviews , classroom observations and surveys. Data was collected four (4) time in each class. The research finding s were that most grammar lessons started with a story. Teachers asked questions based on the study and explained the vocabulary before presenting the grammatical structures. Both teachers emphasized the significance of the stories in providing the context for the learners to understand grammar better. The only gap in this study was that it just focused on grade 5 and not grade 7 which is my focus of study.

Kamaludin Yoke & Rajendran (2015) did a study on the „Innovating Grammar Teaching Through Story Telling to low Inter-Mediate learners in 2015. The study was aimed at investigating the effectiveness of the applying a story –telling technique

to the teaching of basic grammatical rules and structures to low intermediate learners. A quantitative approach was used in this study and data was collected using the pre and post- tests. The experimental group had 20 students while the control group had 20 students as well. After the experiment was done , the data collected during pre and post-tests as well as the questionnaires used to analyse and tabulate data using the SPSS statistical tool. The findings were that both groups had 66.0 % during the pre-test.But the post-test results revealed that experimental group had 81.4 % while the control group had 72.8 %.The findings show that the majority of thestudents felt that the lesson was innovative and fun.The students loved the contents of the story and commented it was not stressful.They felt they could understand the principles related to parts of speech better and a deeper understanding of what they were learning. The gap in the study was that the focus was on diploma students and not grade 7 learners in primary school.

Neupane (2019) did a study to find out the „Effectiveness of Role Play in Improving Speaking Skill" in 2019. This was a quantitative study in which the control group was taught grammar using the traditional grammar techniques while the experimental group was taught grammar using the role play .The research involves forty (40) grade 10 secondary school students from Lamjung District in Nepal. Each group had twenty students. Pre- and post-tests were used get data for analysis. The post-test was administered after twenty lessons of teaching .The time for answering the questions was 10-15 minutes. The performance of students in speaking was observed using the observation checklist. The collected was analysed statistically. The results showed that the mean score of the experimental group was 14.72 while that of the control group was 10.52. Therefore, the research concluded that role play technique improved the learners speaking skill. The gap in the study was that the research targeted the secondary school pupils and not the primary school learners in the seventh grade.

Du & Nguyen (2023) did a study on the „Effects of Role-Play Games on Young Learners" Grammar Learning. The research involved 72 grades 5 from a public school in Mekong Delta in Vietnam. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in the study. A quasi-experimental design was used .Data was collected using pre-test, post-test, questionnaires and through semi structured interviews. The findings revealed that the learners agreed that the role play technique was used in their class and that they were confortable practicing English grammar using role- play games. The study also indicated that role play games generated interest in learners to learn grammar .the gap in the study was that the research was focused on grade 5 and not grade 7.

Alrayah (2018) did a study at Omdurman Islamic University in Sudan on the Effectiveness of Cooperative Learning in enhancing English Foreign Language Learners" Fluency. Elizabeth (2004) defines cooperative Learning as, „both a philosophical position and a set of teaching strategies." This is a strategy in which small groups of students use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each learner is responsible for their learning as well as helping other learners in their group .This strategy enhances team work .The study used descriptive approach .Interviews were conducted and recorded for testing fluency .The SPSS software was used to analyse the data .The results of the investigations proved that there was significant improvement between the mean scores of the experimental groups in the pre-test and post-tests .The strategies used included: Three-step interview , Think pair and share, Jigsaw ,Numbered Heads Together , Round Table , carousel Brainstorming. The link between this study and my study is that the common factor is the teaching techniques for teaching grammar. On the other hand the gap in the study is that it just focused on first year university students and not primary school teachers.

Hashemi & Daneshfar (2018) did a study on The Impact of Different Teaching Strategies on Teaching Grammar to College Students in Iran .Eighty (80) college students were selected to be participants in the study from three university centres .The research used pre-test , post –test, quizzes and questionnaire and final test to collect data. The study targeted to evaluate the efficiency of grammar teaching techniques when lessons were taught implicitly, deductively or inductively on the

English foreign Language college students. The major finding was that grammar teaching had very little influence on comprehension by learners. The study was related to my study as it focused on the techniques of teaching grammar in English .On the other hand , this study created a gap by not extending the study to grammar teaching in primary schools.

Alejangro & Ibojo (2023) did a study on the of Eclectic Approach Teaching grammar in Philipines. Rao (2018) defines Eclectic Approach as , „ Using various language learning activities and strategies .The study was conducted at Mangayon National High School using the quasi- experimental design .The research tools included pre-tests and post- tests .The research findings were that learners who received experimental treatment outscored the ones who just received the routine treatment. This study showed that students who underperformed could be motivated to do better by exploring or using the strategies that could be best suited to the individual learning styles. The study was relevant because it was focused on the teaching of grammar and could be tried at primary school level .The gap was created when it only looked at the grade 8 classes only and not primary school level.

Alrayah (2018) did a study at Omdurman Islamic University in Sudan on the Effectiveness of Cooperative Learning in enhancing English Foreign Language

Learners‟ Fluency. Elizabeth (2004) defines cooperative Learning as, „both a philosophical position and a set of teaching strategies.‟ This is a strategy in which small groups of students use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each learner is responsible for their learning as well as helping other learners in their group .This strategy enhances team work .The study used descriptive approach .Interviews were conducted and recorded for testing fluency .The SPSS software was used to analyse the data .The results of the investigations proved that there was significant improvement between the mean scores of the experimental groups in the pre-test and post-tests .The strategies used included: Three-step interview , Think pair and share, Jigsaw ,Numbered Heads Together , Round Table , carousel Brainstorming. The link between this study and my study is that the common factor is the teaching techniques for teaching grammar. On the other hand the gap in the study is that it just focused on first year university students and not primary school teachers.

Wag , chen & Zhang (2021) did a study on facilitating English grammar Learning by a Personalized Mobile-Assisted system With a self-regulated learning mechanism in New Zealand and China. The research was conducted at senior high

School In Mainland of China. The purpose was to improve students‟ grammatical knowledge, lexical knowledge. A quasi- experimental design was used involving the experimental group and the control group .The experimental group had full access to the functions of the system. The results showed that the experimental group had scored highly compared to the control group..On the other hand , the gap is that the study did not focus on primary schools.

Nurbaiti , Yunita , Syahria , & Gusman (2023) did a study in 2022 in Indonesia at the senior high schools of Mukomuko regency .The aim was to find out the most

frequently used method in teaching English grammar and the reasons for the choice made. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in this study. Data was collected using the questionnaire, interviews guide, and classroom observations checklist. Thirty-one teachers (31) teachers filled in the questionnaire, four (4) teachers were interviewed while two (2) were observed teaching in class. The study revealed that Situational Language Teaching was the most frequently used method in the teaching of grammar. One of the reasons for this choice by teachers was to motivate the students in learning the English grammar. The other one was to facilitate the students to achieve the learning objectives. To teach English grammar in a meaningful context was the other reason the teachers gave.

The gap in the study was the non- inclusion of primary schools in the study.

Bezzazi (2019) did a study on learning English grammar through flipped learning. The research was aimede at examining the effect of flipped learning on English as a Foreign Language learners „grammar . In flipped learning, the initial stage of receiving knowledge begins before attending the class. Materials are provided to learners in advance through digital platforms. In class the teacher just consolidates what the learners have already learnt by doing the tasks. The study was done in 2019 at a private university in Taiwan. The research design used was the quasiexperimental. The participants were 132 year one students. Two groups were formed for the purpose of data collection. One group was the Flipped Learning Group (FLG) while the other one was the Traditional Instruction Group (TIG). In the FLG, the students did some tasks individually before the class. Later participates in the group discussions in class. But for the TIG, the students had no prior knowledge of the new learning material. The students first discussed with their friends in the group and after the lesson they tackle the tasks given individually. The study took ten (10) weeks in which two weeks were for pre and post- tests. A 16 item survey was also

administered on the perceptions of learning grammar through flipped learning. The results were analysed quantitatively. The findings indicated that the flipped learning program was more effective in teaching English compared to the traditional methods. The survey analysis revealed that the flipped learning group participants were satisfied with the flipped learning in terms of online materials and discussions held in class. The gap in the study was that it was not extended to primary school learners more especially grade 7.

2.4 Challenges Faced by Teachers when Teaching Grammar

Aman (2020) also conducted a research on the challenges primary school teachers faced in their planning and teaching of grammar in 2020 in Singapore .It was a quantitative study. The teachers found it challenging to teach learners who had very different abilities. Some of them did not even have the basic grammatical knowledge while others may have learnt the wrong grammar outside the classroom. It can be concluded that while having learners with varying abilities was a challenge in itself but the methodology to teach such a class was also a challenge. Furthermore, grammar was seen by teachers as „dry „ subject .This meant that the subject did not have humor in itself and therefore learners found it as boring subject. The lack of teaching materials also made it difficult for the teachers to teach effectively. Some teachers lamented not having time to prepare what to teach. While others did not even have time to teach the grammar content How to assess grammar learning was brought out as challenge by teachers. Lastly, some teachers lacked subject content. For example, they did not have knowledge of grammar rules.

Al-Mekhlafi A.M & Nagaratnam R.P did a study in Oman in Asia in 2011.The purpose of the study was to investigate the difficulties which both teachers and students faced in the area of teaching and learning English Foreign Language .It was

a quantitative study in which the questionnaire was used to collect data .The data was analysed using the SPSS program .The following were the findings of the study ,: The activities which were given to the learners whether in written or spoken form gave leaners challenges in the learning of grammar and in improving grammar accuracy. The writing activities were more challenging than the spoken tasks .Both diploma and degree holders acknowledged the challenges learners faced .Other findings were that learners preferred to be taught explicitly. The students found it difficult to transfer their grammatical knowledge into communicative language use .The gaps in the study were that it was a quantitative study and the researchers never stepped into the classes to observe how the teaching was done and also to interview the learners.

Vidiz , F , & Benzer , A . conducted a study in 2022 in Turkey .The focus of the study was „ opinions and Practices for Grammar Teaching in Primary schools .This was a case study in which in which the data was collected using interviews. The case study had eight stages namely , : development of sub-research questions , detection of analysis unit , designating of case study , determination of the participants , collection of data , analysis and interpretation of data and reporting of the study. This was a qualitative research as shown by the eight stages in which themes were generated, categories and codes obtained in line with the subproblems of the research. The following were the research findings: Grammar was seen to have abstract topics which made the teaching of grammar to be seen as boring by the learners. Furthermore, the teaching of grammar rules and making learners memorise them was challenging and learners easily forgot the grammar what was taught .The teachers identified the grammar books as being inadequate in terms of quality and variety of activities. In addition to this, the lack of reference books for grammar was another challenge. The learners‟ shortcomings in reading comprehension affected their learning of grammar content. The time given for teaching of grammar was also noted

not to be enough. It was also discovered that the teaching of some topics like synonyms , homophones , parts of speech such as pronouns ,adverbs , and adjectives were challenging to teach The gap in the study was that while the study focused on grammar in primary schools , the research was too general and it never specifically looked at the seventh grade.

Waseel K . A did a study in 2020 in Kabul in Afghanistan .The research was based on exploring the problems English foreign language teachers faced when teaching the English grammar in the English foreign language context .This was a document study as the researcher never went out to collect data in the field but used resources such as Elsevier , Willey , Science Direct , Research gate , Academia , Google Scholar , and Semantic Scholar. The following were the findings: Lack of encouragement was seen to be a challenge. The use of Grammar Translation Method in which the mother tongue of learners was heavily used was also seen as another challenge. The explicit / implicit technique was another challenge. The learners had difficulties in in recognizing a grammatical function. In addition to this they also had difficulties in internalizing a grammatical function so that they could use it correctly in real life situation. Ellis (2009) argued that it was challenging to learn a grammatical feature as explicit knowledge but as simple as implicit knowledge. The personal belief about how grammar should be taught was another challenge. Borg (2015) added that the teacher beliefs which influenced their teaching was at times not consistent .Other challenges noted were : handling large classes , teaching classes with mixed background , limited time in which to teach for learners to understand, lack of linguistic knowledge , lack of theoretical articulation of grammar in the curriculum , lack of experience , lack of experience in teaching grammar and lack of knowledge on understanding the needs of students . The gap in the study is that this was done in the library without going to schools to interview teachers or to observe

lessons. The study also was too general as it never specified whether the focus was primary, secondary or tertiary education.

Anilan H (2012) did a study in Turkey on holistic approach to Turkish grammar instruction in primary schools .The participants were purposively sampled. A total of 32 primary school teachers were selected to participate in the study. The main aim of the study was to evaluate the Turkish primary school teachers‟ opinions and experiences. This study was qualitative .the data were collected using written structured interviews .The following were the findings: Grammar rules were taught implicitly ,and using activities .Participants allocated a few separate class hour for the grammar teaching while others found the Turkish grammar curriculum for grades 1-5 inadequate .The teaching resources such as text books , students‟ work books and teacher‟ books were inadequate in terms of quality and hence resorted to using other materials for teaching .the gap in this study was the focus on Turkish grammar .Secondly , the research relied so much on interviews as source of data without observing lessons in classes.

Yousif (2020) did a study in Libya on pedagogical issues in Teaching and Learning English Language as a foreign language in Libyan schools. The participants were 10 secondary school teachers .Five were male while the other five were female. The main objective of the study was to determine the difficulties which the teachers faced in grammar teaching and to help them realize how to overcome the identified obstacles .This was a qualitative study .The following were the findings: Some students didn‟t like to learn grammar because of the so many rules .Some students were of low level , lack of teaching facilities , students „ negative perception of the subject and teachers‟ lack of experience after graduating. The gap is this study was the focus on secondary teaching and the collection of data without observing lessons in class.

Khairul (2018) did a study in Malaysia in on challenges in Teaching Grammar at Tertiary level The study used qualitative method. Data were collected using semistructured interviews .The study had 15 English Lecturers from the university.$ were female while 11 were male .The following were the findings: A number of lecturers indicated that they lacked experience in grammar teaching .Students had negative perception towards the learning of grammar .Some Lecturers did not know the needs of their students .Students had high expectations of teachers using ICT facilities .They saw ICT as making learning interesting as they enjoyed lessons in which teachers used ICT. The lecturers confessed they were not taught strategies for teaching grammar .Teachers also had challenges in teaching grammar rules. Lack of facilities hampered the teaching of grammar. Furthermore, teachers had negative perception of grammar teaching and this affected their teaching. Lesson preparations were also identified to be challenging. The gap in this study was that it just focused on university students and not primary schools.

Iqual, Akbar & Ahmad (2017) did a study on the problems in Teaching English learners at secondary school lvel in Vehai District .It was a quantitative study in which a standard questionnaire was used .The research targeted 150 school teachers .The following were the findings : The teachers who taught at secondary school level were not satisfied with their teaching because they lacked specialization .The use of audio Lingual Method was seen to be effective than the grammar Translation which was widely used .Teachers had the perception that the teaching of grammar was difficult .Lack of appropriate books was another challenge. The gap in this study was the focus on secondary school teaching and nor primary. Secondly, it was a quantitative study.

Nawaz , Ahmed ,Aqeel & Qureshi (20220 did a study in Bahawalpur City in Pakistan on the challenges of grammar elementary level .In this study s 30 English Speaking

Language teachers were selected to participate in this qualitative study .The following were the findings :

2.5 Summary

This chapter reviewed works of scholars in the area of knowledge of grammar and grammar teaching as well as some challenges teachers faced in the teaching of grammar. Some of the findings included teachers having inadequate knowledge of grammar, students perceiving grammar rules as hard to learn. Whereas the teaching techniques included explicit teaching, deductive teaching, teachers ,, exposition and some cooperative techniques like think pair and share ,and three step interview.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This chapter presents the methodology used during the study. It constitutes the following : research paradigm , research design , target population , sample and sampling techniques ,research instruments ,data collection procedure , data analysis and trustworthiness and ethical considerations .

3.2 Research paradigm

Siddiqui (2019) defines research paradigm as, „a collection of logically related assumptions, concepts or propositions that orient thinking and research.“ Bryman (1992) looks at research paradigm as „ a cluster of beliefs and dictates which for scientists in a particular discipline influence what should be studied , how research should be done and how results should be interpreted .“The research paradigm for my study is social constructivism. It has roots from Vygotsky who stresses the importance of interaction in the process of learning. Boyland (2019) elaborates further on social constructivism by saying:

Constructivism offers a paradigm of investigative thinking whereby the researcher journeys with the participants into a space of interpreted reality that is as personal and individual as each person in the collective sampling and as diverse as the multiplicity of lived experiences that are profiled .As individuals live in the world of their personal reality each interprets that reality in their own way, leading the researcher towards building a diverse and complex socially constructed landscape that profiles the collective experience without the presumption of universality.

3.3 Research Design

Kombo and Tromp (2006:70) defined research design as , „the structure of research. It is the „glue" that holds all the elements in a research project together."

In this research the descriptive design was used as it matched with what was to be researched.

3.4 Target Population

The target population was all the grade 7 teachers in Kazungula District teaching English grammar.

3.5 Sampling Technique

The study used purposive sampling technique. The researcher targeted two grade 7 teachers per school and five government schools and the Senior Education Standard Officer (SESO Languages). Schools were selected from different zones and that the grade 7 teachers contribute greatly to the outcome of the examinations are given at the end of each year. It is for this reason that the focus was on the grade 7 teachers and those who previously taught grade 7 learners. This was deemed to be helpful in getting a clear picture of how teachers teach especially that teachers are expected to have Continuing Professional development meetings in schools and zones which is expected to influence their teaching.

3.6 Sample Size

The target was two teachers from each school. From the five targeted schools the expected was ten. Therefore, the eleventh was going to be the Senior Standard officer. However, the response from teachers to participate in the group focus discussions was

so positive that the total number of teachers came to 15 plus one Senior Education Standard officer to make 16.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

In this study, data was collected through interview guide, focus group discussion guide, and through lesson observation guide. The interview guide helped to ask appropriate questions during the interviews. Similarly, the focus group discussions could easily go off the tract. Hence, the use of the guide .Lesson observation guide was equally important in making sure the researcher remained focused.

3.8 Methods of Collecting Data

Data was collected using interviews and lesson observations.

3.9 Data Analysis

The study used qualitative techniques to analyse data which was collected. To be precise thematic analysis was used to analyse the recorded data from the interviews and from the focus group discussions. Lochmiller (2021) defined thematic analysis as,"being principally concerned with the identification of patterns which are then reported as researcher generated themes." Whereas Christou (2022) defined Thematic Analysis as," the identification, analysis and interpretation of themes within a qualitative data set." The researcher used thematic analysis as the recorded data was transcribed and after reading through several times, the researcher identified the patterns which eventually led to the generation of themes.

3.10 Trustworthines

The researcher ensured trustworthiness was upheld by making sure member check was practiced. Members confirmed the information they have provided. Triangulation was used to maintain trust worthiness. Information collected from interviews was compared with information gathered from other instruments.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Bell ,(2015:46) describe ethics in research as „ getting the informed consent of those to be interviewed and observed .‟‟ It is for this reason that before going into schools to collect data, authority letter was provided by the University Of Zambia, School Of Education. The District Education Board Secretary for Kazungula District was informed about this research. Therefore, permission by the managers of schools in Kazungula District was sought. The purpose of the study and how the information was going to be used was clearly explained to all the stakeholders .And the researcher had to abide by the agreement .Kombo (2006:103) advises the researcher to maintain confidentiality and to be open and honest with other researchers and research subjects.The names of schools and teachers were not mentioned. Instead , codes like School A were used.

3.12 Summary

This chapter has elaborated how the research paradigm, social constructivism which guided the study. The research design, target population, sampling technique, sample and data collecting procedure were highlighted .It was also explained how data was analysed using the thematic analysis. Lastly, the chapter also covered how trustworthiness and ethical issues were handled by the researcher.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The first part gives information of the grade 7 teachers and one Senior Education Standard Officer who participated in the study .The findings are organized according to the themes that emerged in line with research questions. The following were the research questions:

1. What is the teachers‟ knowledge of the concept of grammar?
2. How are the teachers teaching English grammar?
3. What are the challenges teachers are facing when teaching English grammar?

4.2 Information about the Participants

There were 16 participants who participated in this study. Seven (7) were male grade 7 teachers while female grade 7 teachers were eight (8) .There was also a female officer from the provincial office. In terms of period of service, four participants had served for less than ten (10) years while twelve had served for more than ten (10) years. One (1) male had a degree in education while seven (7) females had degrees in education. The males who had diplomas in education were three (3) while only females had diploma qualifications .There were three (3) male teachers with certificate in Primary school teaching but there was no female with that qualification.

4.3 Teachers' Knowledge of Grammar

The finding about the teachers‟ knowledge of grammar was that most teachers did not have accurate knowledge about grammar. This can be seen by the themes which emerged from their responses presented in table one and the direct quotations of what they said during the interview.

Table one (1) below shows the themes which emerged from the interviews conducted to find out knowledge teachers had about the concept of grammar.

THEMES	**SUB-THEMES**
Theme 1: Teachers of English knowledge grammar.	Sub- theme 1: 1 Syntax Sub-theme 1: 2 Morphology Sub-theme 1: 3 Spellings Sub-theme 1: 4 pronunciation of words Sub-theme 1: 5 Sentence construction Sub-theme 1: 6 Way words are arranged Sub-theme 1: 7 Semantics Sub-theme 1: 8 Use of correct English Sub-theme 1: 9 Study of rules of grammar

The following were the responses from the teachers and the Senior Education Standard Officer. A teacher from School A defined grammar as " *Grammar is the system of syntax , morphology ,and structure of word. It is also the ability to use English language logically*". Whereas a teacher from school B said , " *Grammar is proper sentence usage, spellings ,pronunciations of words and sentence construction."* A teacher from School C said " *Grammar*

is use of spoken language, syntax ,and morphology." A teacher from School D said, " *Grammar is the way words are arranged, syntax and semantics."* School E said , " *Grammar is the use of correct English. That is the way I understand. It also includes understanding of native language."* GFD)

SESO , „*Grammar is the study of the rules of grammar. In grammar we look at the expressions which can be used to communicate effectively in English.*

4.4 Techniques Teachers are using to teach Grammar

The findings are that the most common techniques were question and answer, and group work. It was also noted that some of the techniques mentioned during the interviews were not used in class. Some techniques mentioned had nothing to do with the teaching of grammar .For example, THRASS deals with the teaching of reading and spelling skills. And this is more applicable in lower grades and not in grade 7.

Table 2 show the themes which emerged from the interviews.

THEMES	**SUB-THEMES**
Theme 3 : Techniques for teaching grammar	Sub-theme 3: 1 Phones Sub-theme 3: 2 Reading stories Sub-theme 3: 3 Audio Lingual Method Sub-theme 3: 4 THRASS Sub-theme 3: 5 Question and Answer Sub-theme 3: 6 Group work Sub-theme 3: 7 Demonstration Sub-theme 3: 8 Role play

The following were the responses from the Focus Group discussions on the techniques for teaching grammar :

A teacher from School A said , " *dictionary, use of phones, reading stories and word bank*."

A teacher from School B on the other hand responded by pointing out , " *letter sounds , word formation, sentence formation*. " A teacher from School C never mentioned any techniques. Whereas, A teacher from school D mentioned the following: ," *word attack, THRAS ,Question and answer, group work, demonstration, role play and inviting experts to class*."

From the above findings one would wonder whether teachers really know how to teach grammar especially for a teacher from school C which did not know any technique for teaching grammar. A teacher from School E mentioned, *"role play, spellings , Question and answer, debate and dictation.*

SESO , „*The following are the techniques which can be used to teach grammar: The pictures and drawings, the parts of speech, teaching and practicing language rules, reading sentence patterns , practicing speaking and writing. We also use songs, rhymes, and stories."*

A teacher from School A said , " *Sentence construction, role play, folktales, drama, debate and poetry."* A teacher from School B mentioned , *" role play , story telling and group discussion*."

A teacher from School C said , " reading phonics" Whereas , a teacher from School D said , „ filling in the gaps, picture reading , sentence

construction, debate and re-arranging words. “ A teacher from School E brought out , “ *presentation to the class and oral activities .”*

SESO *, „The activities which characterize the teaching of grammar are : composition writing, debates on given topics , summary writing ,sentence structural analysis, subject-verb agreement, sentence building using flash cards ,and also games."*

The following were identified as activities which characterize the teaching of grammar:

A teacher from School A said , “ *Sentence construction, role play, folktales, drama, debate and poetry.”* A teacher from School B mentioned , *“ role play , story telling and group discussion*.”

A teacher from School C said , “ reading phonics” Whereas , School D said , „ filling in the gaps, picture reading , sentence construction, debate and re-arranging words. “ A teacher from School E brought out , “ *presentation to the class and oral activities .”*

SESO *, „The activities which characterize the teaching of grammar are : composition writing, debates on given topics , summary writing ,sentence structural analysis, subject-verb agreement, sentence building using flash cards ,and also games."*

On the question how they taught grammar the following were the responses:

A teacher from School A said , ” I think grammar can be taught in different ways .There is the traditional *Audio lingual Method can be used .Though it is traditional , at times it can help .The Can you remember thing . Addition is that we teach grammar*

like when we are teaching vocabulary .Furthermore, the issue of connecting words to make correct sentences understandable .We can also use Look and say for lower grades. There is also chorusing and shared reading. ,teaching vocabulary, look and say."

On the other hand A teacher from School B said, " *By using the techniques like mind map .There, maybe you ask learners to think of a word and start*

constructing sentences .From there the story can be developed, "
A teacher from School C had this to say, "*Grammar can be taught through poems, songs, writing and reading."*

A teacher from School D on the other hand said, *" If there is a tense you want to teach, say present simple tense , ask learners to construct a sentence in Present simple tense ,and later capitalize on the verb to teach the tense and improve on the mistakes learners made. When it comes to sentence order, at times you ask the learners what they did when they woke up in the morning .You relate to real life situation .After wards you ask them what should have done first .You can also ask learners to perform an action and through that you relate to the tense you are teaching."*

A teacher from School E brought said, "spellings, *and there maybe new words to teach learners that day."*

On the techniques teachers used most, teachers responded as written below:

A teacher from School A said , " *There is the technique of drama and role play .When the children are involved in the role play they are learning grammar .Question and answer is the other technique we use most of the time*."

A teacher from School B on the other hand said, "*we use role play and mind map because it is easy for the learners to understand the concept. We also use the group work."*

A teacher School C only mentioned group work without any explanation.

A teacher School D said, "*Most of the time we like using demonstration technique because pupils don"t forget easily. Discussion is another technique we .when learners are discussing, they are actively involved .Discussion in groups is interesting to the learners."*
A teacher from School E said, *"We use Question and Answer. The way learners answer questions will show you their level of understanding*."

On the techniques least used the response was :

A teacher from School A said , " *We rarely use debate because of the language .Most pupils are not able to speak English."*

A teacher from School B mentioned dictation and went on to say , " *Children have problems with spellings.When you dictate in English language , they write in the local language Chitonga."*

A teacher from School C never said anything on this question.

A teacher from School D mentioned lecture method and said, "*We don"t use it much because learners get bored and only get few concepts."*

A teacher from School E said, " *we rarely use group work because of high enrollment in school as others may just be playing."*

On selecting the techniques the teachers said :

A teacher from School A said, "*We consider the ability of learners. Which one can give us quicker feedback? In other words we select the one which can make the learners understand. "*

A teacher from School B said, " *After we have evaluated our lesson , we see if ¾ of the class were able to pick the concept then chances are very high that next time that technique will be used."*

A teacher from School C never said anything on this one.
but a teacher from school D said, "*When we prepare a lesson we look at what will make the learners get the concept .This helps the teacher to achieve the objective of the lesson .We also look at the levels of the learners .This is what influences the choice of the technique we choose for our lesson ."*

A teacher from School E said , *" we look at the content that we want to teach. It determines the technique we are to choose*."

On the question to find out if the techniques they used were successful , the responses were:

A teacher from School A said, "*As I earlier said, we know the techniques which can give us immediate feedback. In other words we avoid those techniques which may not make learners learn effectively*."

A teacher from School B explained as follows, "*What is there is that they have provided evidence that learners were able to participate and were successful."*

A teacher from School C said nothing on this one. But a teacher from School D explained that, "*When we are teaching action verbs, we ask learners to perform an action. It becomes easier for the learners to understand. Then we link the action with the verb. This is why our techniques can be said to be successful."*

A teacher from School E explained differently by saying, *" I will say the techniques are successful because after marking and after discussing the questions at the end of the teaching , the results are generally good. There are others who no matter what you do they don"t learn .School is not for everyone, hope you understand that."*

On the steps when applying the techniques teachers had this to say:
By looking at the responses from different focus groups, it can be noted that the question may have been misunderstood. Most groups merely stated the steps in the lesson procedure.

A teacher from School A explained that, "*Initially there should be some kind of teaching. You don"t just begin by asking questions. There should an explanation or explicit teaching in class. Questions should follow later. The lesson should begin with what they know."*

A teacher from School B came up with the following: *" There is an introduction part in the lesson. Under development there will be activities after the teacher has explained. Later, the conclusion comes and finally the evaluation of teaching. "*

A teacher from School C remained mute on this question while school D said,

"The first is introduction for the lesson followed by development where the activities are done and ending with conclusion and lesson evaluation."

A teacher from School E on the other hand said, "*The steps will vary.one of them is reading a story followed by asking leaners questions or brainstorming."*

The following is the way teachers thought their learners perceived the grammar techniques:

A teacher from School A said, "*The response by learners is good because they are able to answer the questions the teacher is asking*."

A teacher from School B explained that, "*It depends on upon the learners" understanding. There are certain aspects which learners may find difficult to understand."*

A teacher from School C said , " *The response of learners is good and that is why we keep using those techniques."*

A teacher from School D also explained differently by saying, "*Sometimes it depends upon the pace of the learners .For faster learners, the response is good but for slow learners" response is poor. This is what forces us to vary the techniques."*

A teacher from School E gave detailed explanation as follows , " *Most of the learners especially those who are doing well are comfortable with the techniques we use .The challenge is with those who are not doing well. That is why when you ask a question they try to hide by making themselves busy so as to avoid answering questions. In comprehension, you ask learners questions based on the story read, the learners are able to answer the questions. But when you ask them to retell the story using their own words, those who are not good at grammar usually don"t do well. They would wonder, what words should I use? You get my point."*

4.5 Challenges Teachers are Facing when Teaching Grammar

The findings show that the teachers had similar challenges especially that all the sampled schools were rural schools.

Table 3 shows the themes which emerged from the interviews.

THEMES	**SUB –THEMES**
Theme 4 Teaching Obstacles to English Grammar	Sub – theme 4 : 1 Lack of teaching materials Sub – theme 4 : 2 Rural setting Sub – theme 4 : 3 Absenteeism Sub – theme 4 : 4 High enrollment
	Sub – theme 4 : 5 Lack of adequate grammar knowledge by teachers Sub – theme 4 : 6 Lamentation on the new language policy in schools

The following were the challenges teachers brought out:

A teacher from School A said , " *We don"t have teaching materials like in teaching grammar, we need text books and dictionaries."*

A teacher from School B, on the other said, "*We lack teaching materials. You find that you only have one book to be used by the pupils."*

A teacher from School C was the only school which never mentioned the lack of teaching materials.

A teacher from School D said they needed story books for learners to learn grammar as they read stories.

A teacher from School E said, "*You find that where the teacher is supposed to give the learners books to read, the books are not there. So the learners have to rely on the reading by the teacher*."

A teacher from School A , " *Our learners cannot express themselves in English,"*

A teacher from School B said, "*They should change the language policy. The usage of local language from grade 1 to 4 has brought language barrier when they reach grade 5.You find that you teaching English in Zambian language because if you keep using English the learners get lost. The teaching of oral language at the lower level does not seem to help at all"*

A teacher from School C also amplified the usage of local language at the lower section in primary schools by saying ," *This is the child who was taught in at lower section in Chitonga , „* ***Nkapu****".But in grade 7 this child will say bring „****Nkapu*** *„, instead of cup ."*

A teacher from School E elaborated their position as follows, "*The greatest challenge is the use of the local language at lower section in primary schools. This has affected the teaching of grammar in English. The learners get so much into local language in such a way that they fail to switch to English later. You find that English words will be written in Chitonga .Even when ask a question in English, the learner will answer by mixing English and the local language (Chitonga)."*

A teacher from School A identified rural setting as challenge to the grammar in the sense that most parents and guardians in rural areas are unable to speak English and

consequently they cannot help their children in English grammar. It is for this reason that a teacher from School A said, " *We fail to give homework in English grammar to our pupils looking at the situation in villages .Most parents and guardian don"t speak English and so cannot help or teach their children .They only learn grammar in class that is all*." School D echoed a similar view when they said, "*Children who come from homes where there is no English , learners end up learning two things at school. The English language and the concepts.*"

A teacher from School A noted that the teaching and use of homographs even by teachers was a challenge in the teaching of grammar. It is for this reason that the school said, "*Currently, the rules of grammar which keep on changing give us problems. Since it is our second language even us teachers fail to pronounce them correctly. These are words which are pronounced differently although spelt the same depending upon the usage in the sentence*." These words are called homographs. For example, the word **ring** can refer to what is put on a finger or where boxers fight from.

A teacher from School B brought out one challenge which was different from the rest." *Some books if you check were poorly written by publishers. It is like they were not written by teachers looking the mistakes which we notice. For example in Chitonga , one lesson on food groups proteins were swapped with carbohydrates* . *"*However, no example was given from the books for teaching grammar.

A teacher from School C identified mother tongue interference as a challenge to the teaching of grammar.For example a word"**had**" tend to be pronounced as **'ad**".The other example is the word **has**. **He has** becomes **,he as.**

A teacher from School D noted that the inability of learners to read was also a big challenge to teaching grammar.

School E observed that high enrollment in schools was a challenge to the effective teaching of grammar. It is for this reason that the school said, *"Remedial work is difficult because of high enrollment in class. At times we can have 80 pupils in class*."

SESO , said on challenges said :

> *One of the challenges the teachers face is teaching the concept of paragraphing. They usually fail to make learners get the concept of paragraphing. The other one is failure to help learners construct meaning sentences which are grammatically correct. Devising activities that facilitate the learning of grammar is another challenge. They do not expose the learners to a lot of activities that may help them learn grammar with ease*
>
> *.Teachers also show signs of limited knowledge in grammar patterns. Teachers don"t give clear explanation to the learners in some aspects of grammar like irregular verbs and spellings.*

4.5 Suggestions to improve the teaching of grammar

Teachers gave very common challenges. This can be seen in the direct quotations.

Table 4 showing the suggestions improve the teaching of grammar.

THEMES	**SUB –THEMES**
Theme 5 How to improve Teaching English Grammar	Sub – theme 5: 1 In-service training Sub – theme 5: 2 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Sub – theme 5: 3 Teacher Group Meetings Sub – theme 5: 4 Grammar competition in schools Sub – theme 5: 5 Production of local teaching materials Sub – theme 5: 6 Provision of procured teaching materials

The following were the suggestions brought by teachers:

Some suggestions were brought out by more than two schools. The first one was the need to provide in-service training to the grammar teachers .On this one a teacher from school A said, "*Those involved in the teaching of grammar maybe were trained a long time ago and those techniques are gone, so they just need frequent in-service training from colleges*."

A teacher from School B also added their voice by saying , " *We need to have some training organized by the district or people involved in the training of teachers .It is*

not easy to teach children in rural areas to speak English .In towns children learn to speak English from their homes at an early stage .Therefore , we need retraining." The same school went on to say , *" There should be teacher Grade Meetings for teachers to help each other in teaching grammar*."

A teacher from School C also strongly recommended the idea of holding meetings for capacity building as they said, "*There should be Teacher Group Meetings at school level so as to enhance the effective techniques to use in the teaching of grammar."*

The second common suggestion was about the provision of learning and teaching materials to schools . A teacher from School A said , " *There is need to provide learning and teaching materials especially modern technology like computers so that when rural pupils see how their friends do it the other side, they also get motivated to do the same*." The same school went on to suggest that , " *Cellphones should be seen as teaching and learning materials .It should not be an office for a learner to come to school with a cell phone* ." A teacher from School A further suggested having a variety of books in the school as they said, "*We need a variety of books say in the library. Through these books learners can improve in grammar and reading skills. I can remember we used to have books with variety of stories. We need not only textbooks but also story books. Look at what is happening in the teaching of literacy in the local languages .Teachers are being encouraged to write simple stories. The same should be done for teaching at the upper section in primary schools.*" A teacher from School A went on to suggest that, "*we should emphasize on the use of reading theatres and listening to folk stories."*

A teacher from School B suggested the acquisition of textbooks to all learners." *The Ministry of Education should provide textbook in such a way that each pupil has their own copy*."

A teacher from School C also expressed the need to use books not just by pupils but also for teachers to prepare adequately for their teaching .School E also echoed the need to supply schools with materials for teaching grammar.

The third common suggestion is the request to change the language policy so that from early childhood education the language of instruction should be English.

A teacher fromSchool A suggested that schools should not just compete in quiz , debate and in games but a new kind of competition need to be introduced. And this is the completion is knowledge of English grammar. The assumption is that this will help to improve the learning of English grammar.

A teacher from School B thought of seeing churches coming on board as well through the reading of bible in English. The school thought this could be applied not only in towns but also in rural areas.

A teacher from School D further suggested that learners need to be encouraged to speak English while in school premise because most of them have no opportunity to speak English at home in their villages

SESO suggested:

> *Teachers should be engaged in studying concepts of grammar and how to teach. Teachers to first engage learners in activities to practice construction of sentences using the different eight (8) parts of speech. Teach learners what constitutes a paragraph and how to write a paragraph. Through CPD, teachers can share notes on effective ways and techniques of teaching grammar.*

4.6 **Lesson Observation One (1)**

Topic: Nouns (Plural)

The teacher greeted the pupils and after that wrote some words on the board for the learners to identify the nouns. The learners were asked to discuss in groups and later group leaders reported to the class .The answers were correct and the teacher went on to explain the irregular nouns and how they change in plural .For example from baby to babies, life to lives. Teacher wrote on the board the exercise for the learners to do individually .The following were the words to be changed into plural:

1. Bird
2. Loaf
3. Child
4. City

   Answers given were :

   1. Birds
   2. Loaves
   3. Children
   4. Cities

   As the pupils were doing the work, teacher went round marking .Afterwards, the teacher went through with the learners in the exercise which they did. The teacher explained to the learners which answers were wrong and approved the correct ones.

4.7 Lesson Observation two (2)

Topic: conjunctions

Teacher greeted the class and thereafter asked them to construct sentences using the present perfect tense . After revising the previous lesson the teacher wrote on the board two sentences:

Musa is going to school. Chipo is going to school.

Teacher asked the learners to be in groups and join the two sentences using appropriate connectors. The learners discussed and reported to the class using their group secretaries. The learners later were given an exercise to do individually.

1. *He felt very tired .He went for work.*
2. *It was a very big injury .He did not go for training.*

   Answers given were;

   1. He felt very tired but he went for work.

   2. It was a very big injury and he did not go for training.

   Teacher went round marking and later went through the work with learners.

The main findings from the lessons were that teachers spent more time explaining to the pupils .it is for this reason that even if learners were given activities to do in groups they had to rush because of time. Most of the techniques teachers brought out during the group Focus discussions were not applied in the lessons. The most common techniques were the group work, Question and answer and pair work. The learners were given tasks and asked one member to be the secretary and present during the plenary. The groups were too big to be effective as some learners never said anything during their discussions. We were not able to record the lessons due to lack of space in the phone.

4.8 Summary

This chapter presented the findings from the interviews which were conducted as well as from the lessons observed. It covered the teachers‟ knowledge of the concept of grammar, techniques teachers were using when teaching grammar, challenges teachers were facing as regards the teaching of grammar and later they provided some suggestions.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Overview

This chapter presents the discussion of the themes which emerged in line with the objectives. Below are the objectives which were outlined for this study:

1. To determine the teachers‟ knowledge of the concept of grammar.
2. To analyse the techniques teachers are using to teach English grammar.
3. Establish the challenges teachers are facing in teaching English grammar.

5.2 Objective one: To determine the teachers' knowledge of the concept of grammar.

The research done in this study showed how teachers differed in the way they defined grammar. Some teachers defined grammar as merely being syntax. Yet syntax is something else although the two appear similar. Syntax is more concerned with word order in sentences. Grammar was earlier defined by Penny (2000) as „*rules that show words are combined to produce to produce acceptable meaningful language units*.‟ Some teachers defined grammar as morphology. This is interesting because it is well known that morphology deals with word formation and this is very different from

grammar. The definition of grammar as spellings is another illustration of teachers which showed lack of grammar knowledge.

Spellings come in when letters are put together to form a word. Similarly, the definition of grammar as semantics also indicates that a lot of basic content in grammar is not known by our teachers. Semantics merely looks at the meaning of words, phrases and sentences. One serious observation made on the responses from the definition of grammar was the non-mentioning of the grammar topics provided in Grade 7 Syllabus. For example, grade 7 grammar topics are: Nouns, adjectives, adverbs, active and passive voice, direct and indirect speech, and conjunctions. It is therefore tempting to speculate that the grade 7 teachers were not using the provided school syllabus to prepare schemes of work but instead were using pupil‟s books to do that. The above explanation given could imply that grade 7 teachers in Kazungula sampled schools lacked English grammar content.

The study by Bell (2014) indicated that teachers in North-western England agreed that they did not have adequate grammar knowledge. The studies done in Australia by Jones (2012) and in New Zealand by Jeurissen (2012) showed that even the most effective teacher of grammar had some notable gaps in their knowledge of grammar.

5.3 Objective two: To analyse the techniques teachers are using to teach English grammar .

Before looking at how teachers responded to the question, how do you teach grammar? It is important to look at what happens during the time both primary and secondary school teachers are being trained. At that time topics such as Audio Lingual Method , Situational Approach ,Communicative Approach and Task Based Approach to mention a few are taught to the language teachers to be. The reason is that these are topics which should give insights into how they are going to teach and

be in a position to justify their choice of techniques teaching. The justification for giving students knowledge in all these approaches and methods is give them a wide choice so that they are able to choose the technique which best suits the topic to be taught. Now let us turn to responses given by the teachers and see if there is any relationship between their answers and the training given to the teachers at college or university.

A number of techniques which teachers suggested like reading phonics, word attack and letter sounds are for teaching reading at the lower primary .THRASS (Teaching Handwriting Reading and spelling Skills) was one of the techniques mentioned to be one of the techniques they use to teach grammar. Yet this is very clear that it is the methodology primary school teachers use to teach reading, handwriting and spellings. With this revelation it becomes almost impossible to teach grammar effectively.

Teachers at one school mentioned the use of mobile phones or computers as a technique that could help teach the learners grammar effectively. This school was hoping to get donations to implement this technique. This finding matched well with study by Wag (2021) in china and New Zealand in which the study focused on whether grammar learning improved through the use of Personalized MobileAssisted System. The experimental group scored higher mean than the control group. Secondly , Bezzazi (2019) did a study to see if flipped learning improved the learning of grammar. As earlier explained, in a flipped classroom, learners are given materials and tasks before the class. The findings revealed that learning was more effective in a flipped classroom. These materials are provided to learners through online means. This includes using cell phones. For the Zambian situation this can work even using a cellphone without internet. This can be done by simply sending materials through Short Message System (SMS).There are very few families who do not own cell

phones. There is one feature in the flipped classroom which matches well with Lev Vygotsky‟s Social cultural Theory of Cognitive Development. After doing the tasks individually, the learners discuss in groups .At this point, the weaker ones learn from their friends the work they cannot do on their own. This is proper application of Zone of Proximal Development and the concept of scaffolding.

There is the mention of Audio Lingual Method quite alright but the teacher connected it to the teaching of comprehension. Richards and Theodore (2009) described a technique as that which is implementation .And it is expected to be in line with the method and the approach .Therefore, what was expected under Audio Lingual Method was to mention techniques like Question and Answer drills or dialogue. There are different types of drills. The substitution table is very useful when learners are doing guided practice.

The study by Nguyen (2021) on the teaching of grammar through stories revealed that stories provided the context for the learners to understand grammar better. In the study by Kamaludin (2015) , the finding showed that while the experimental group had 81.4 % the control group scored 72.8.%.This shows how stories can help in teaching grammar effectively. These findings match so well with the findings in my study where teachers mentioned story as a technique for teaching grammar.

Lambani (2022) did a study in Lwamondo Circuit in South Africa on the effectiveness of the, technique Question and Answer when teaching prepositions. The results showed remarkable improvement. This study is therefore supporting the finding from my study in which teachers identified Question and Answer as a technique for teaching grammar effectively.

Group work is one of the techniques the teachers brought out as a technique for effective teaching of grammar. Usually, in a group we find learners with different

abilities. Most teachers used group work in their teaching. It is interesting that some teachers never used this technique. For most schools despite high number of learners, the teachers were able to put the learners in workable groups.

Therefore, we can see the application of Vygotsky‟s theory mentioned earlier. In the study by Merla (2023) on the use of deductive method together together with group work.The findings showed that the mean score moved from 60.900 to 86.200. In another study , Nasmilah (2017) did a study in Indonesia on the effectiveness of Group work and the result was that in the pre-testthe mean score was 5.58 while the post-test was 7.55. This shows how group work can improve students‟ grammar competence effectively.

Demonstration was another technique teachers identified. Thompson (2001) explained how Grammar could be taught in class with ease. This is by using PPP strategy. This is where the first step is presentation followed by practice and lastly production stage. Under presentation, the new structure is presented using either actions, pictures, drawings, dialogue or real objects to mention a few .under practice, the learners practice in pairs or smaller groups using substitution tables, or selected drills. Lastly, it is written work by individual learners. It should be pointed out that 40 minutes is enough to teach using this technique .As can be noted, during presentation stage the teacher explains and gives examples .

In the study by Neupane (2019) on the Effectiveness of Role Play , it was noted that the mean score for the experimental group was 14.72% while that of the control group was 10.52%. Similarly, Du (2023) on the study „Effects of Role Play on Young Learners Grammar Learning‟ found that the technique generated interest to learn grammar. It can be seen that this technique brought out in my study matches with some studies done elsewhere.

The study by Yolageldili (2011) on „Effectiveness of Using games in Teaching Grammar to young learners revealed that 86.67% believed in the pedagogical value of games in the teaching of grammar while 93.35% believed games lowered the anxiety towards grammar learning. The other finding was that although the teachers valued greatly the technique, they rarely used it in their classes. This matches well with my lesson observations .No one ever used the technique of games. On the other hand, once this is used in a grammar class , we expect to see a lot of social interaction which matches well with Vygotsy‟s theory .

Cinganotto (2019) did a study in Italy to establish whether debate was an appropriate technique to teach grammar in a second language class. The findings were that both the teachers and the students considered debate as an appropriate technique for teaching grammar as students improved in vocabulary and applied the content they learnt in class. Furthermore, it was observed that students learnt the language in a natural and effective environment. Therefore, this research finding matches with the response I got from the teachers about using debate to teach grammar.

In a study by Taat (2020) the research revealed that the lecture method or teachers exposition was still being preferred by some students especially the weaker ones. The other finding was that while the traditional lecture method could be applied to communicate information to the students in limited time but other methods which are interactive could help improve the performance of students. This revelation is in line with Vygotsky‟s theory of learning effectively through social interaction. The lecture method is appeared to be the most used technique. It was feasible in all the lessons I observed. Even when the teacher used learner centred technique , the learners were not given ample time to learn from each other as the teachers dominated the lessons.

It is true that consideration on the ability of learners was important when planning the next lesson .In the same vain how the learners performed in class previously may give the teacher an insight into choosing the appropriate technique for the next lesson. It is also true that of all the techniques were kept in bank, the teachers picked the one which appeared to make teacher teach effectively .The content truly also determines what technique would be helpful therefore, the above points are very important when it comes to selecting the techniques to be used in class.

From the lessons observed what came out clearly was that teachers used teacher centred techniques but gave learners little time to use the new language being taught. The teacher did not seem to care about the slow learners. The strong belief that school was not for everyone meant that the teacher was only ready to teach the learners who were fast learners which should not be the case. Once the teacher has given the rule explanation, guide the learners in practicing and later the learners do free practice before doing an exercise, the learners can get the concept being taught by the teacher.

Most teachers misunderstood the question. The teacher ought to explain and give examples for the learners to see what ought to be done. Similarly, if Think write pair and share technique is used, the teacher need to ask learners to answer first individually before on a piece of paper or book before comparing their answers in pairs. While the learners are doing that, the teacher should be going round seeing what is being done. Later sample answers from two or three pairs.

The teacher does not ask the learners after the lesson if the techniques used helped them to learn. In most cases teachers don‟t want learners to comment or complain on how they teach as most teachers get offended by such .But it is a good practice to ask learners on how the teaching was particularly the techniques used. Unfortunately, this is not emphasized during the training of teachers in colleges. There is need to inform our student teachers that asking learners to comment on the techniques we use

in class is not a sign of weakness as this can help teachers to get ideas from learners as well.

Objective three: Establish the challenges teachers are facing in teaching English grammar

5.4 Challenges Teachers are facing when teaching grammar

The following were the challenges which were brought out during group focus discussions:

Lack of teaching and learning materials can seriously hamper the effective teaching of grammar .The learners are not supposed to just hear from the teacher explaining the grammar concepts but should be able read further from the pupils books. Furthermore, it is in the pupils books where there are exercises which the learners can during the production stage of the grammar lesson .The same books can have dialogues which can be used to elicit or emphasize the new grammar concepts. The grammatical concepts learnt by pupils can also be during intensive and extensive reading. Therefore, if there are no books it becomes difficult for the leaners to learn effectively as explained. In the study by Aman (2020) in Singapore, lack of teaching materials was identified as a challenge. Similarly, the study by Yousif in Libya revealed that lack of teaching materials in schools

The second common challenge brought out by the Focus group Discussions was the current language policy implemented in primary schools where from grade 1 to 4 the language of instruction is the local language and English only becomes the language of instruction in grade 5.

The complaint about the language policy was prevalent in all the schools. The argument on the surface seems to be very convincing. However, our teachers did not

understand the language policy as it should be applied. In the first place, the local language is only the language of instruction from grade 1 to grade 4.This means that the only time when the learners are not learning English is when they are in grade 1. When I checked in the syllabus for English, I found that there were clear topics to be taught from grade 2 up to seven. And if these topics were effectively taught there would not be a problem of learners failing to speak English when they reach grade 6 or 7.The syllabus showed that grammar topics were taught not just under the section of grammar but also under the heading Listening and speaking. Each time teachers were teaching listening g and speaking they were also teaching grammar .And through reading lessons grammar is enhanced. The complaint raised about the language policy is a tip of an iceberg. There is need to investigate how listening and speaking is taught in schools and if at all grammar is taught as outlined in the syllabus. At the time of collecting data the policy being followed in primary schools was using the familiar language as a language of instruction but now the policy has been changed to using English as a medium of instruction from grade 1 to 4.

Rural setting was seen as a challenge to the grammar teaching in the sense that most parents and guardians in rural areas were unable to speak English and consequently they could not help their children in English grammar.

The argument by teachers can easily convince someone but teachers is need to look at it from other angles as well .It is not true that all the people in villages never went to school and so could not speak English .Some people have gone to villages after retirement .Furthermore, some people in villages may have gone up to grade 9 or 12 and because of that they can easily help their children who are in grade 6 or 7.The view is that teachers need to promote cooperative learning among the learners .This means that if homework is given in English and the learners have no one to help them

at home , learners can on their own discuss in pairs or small groups and come up with answers .There no justification for not giving homework to learners in grammar .If learners can discuss in pairs and in small groups in class , why can they do that at home .Learners can do homework at home or can do it while at school.

The teaching and use of homographs even by teachers was a challenge in the teaching of grammar.

These words are called homographs. For example, the word **ring** can refer to what is put on a finger or where boxers fight from.

It is important to address this concern of lack of teachers lacking adequate grammar knowledge. The syllabus for English at primary school level has some lessons on homographs. This may not be the only problem. There could homophones as well as homonyms. These are some of the topics which student teachers learn at college when doing semantics. However, it is important to ensure that what is taught in primary schools is well covered during training in colleges. It has been observed by some lecturers in colleges of education that when training teachers the lecturers don‟t refer to the school syllabus when teaching .There is need to harmonize the school and college syllabus and Poorly written books. This matches with the study done by Waseel (2020) in Afghanstani where lack of linguistic knowledge by teachers was identified as a challenge.

The concern on the quality of books currently used in schools should not be ignored. Even if no book for English was given as an example but there is need to assess the types of books and their suitability in implementing the syllabus. This finding in my study matches with the study by Vidiz (2022) in Turkey. Teachers identified grammar books as being inadequate in terms of quality and variety of activities.

Mother tongue interference as a challenge to the teaching of grammar .For example a word"**had**" tend to be pronounced as **'ad**".The other example is the word **has**. **He has** becomes **,he as.**

The above concern is genuine but it should not worry teachers as it may be impossible for both learners and teachers to attain the accent of the native English speakers. The main focus for teachers is to ensure that the rules of grammar are followed.

The above concern can be viewed differently. If the learners were taught grammar effectively, it would make them read without challenges as they would understand whatever they were reading.

With the new policy on free education in Zambia tend to be very large .One of the findings in my study was the issue of over enrollment. This matches with the study by Anyiendah (2017) in Kenya where the introduction of free education led to the influx of learners in primary schools.

5.5 Suggestions to improve teaching of grammar

Some suggestions were brought out by more than two schools. The first one was the need to provide in-service training to the grammar teachers .

A teacher from School C also strongly recommended the idea of holding meetings for capacity building as they said, "

The above suggestion could help improve the teaching of grammar .Colleges of education could come up with programs for in-service teachers during the holidays. Secondly, by ensuring that continuing Professional development meetings include the teaching of grammar. Similarly, the Languages Teachers Association conferences at district and national levels to cover grammar teaching as well during conferences.

The second common suggestion was about the provision of learning and teaching materials to schools .

Some schools suggested technology could supplement towards the effective teaching of grammar. The use of computers could help greatly .In the absence of computer, cellphone would be used. The learners may not need complicated cellphones but just a simple phone which can send and receive messages. And if possible audio messages as well .This can help even the learners who are in rural areas. New materials to be taught could be sent to learners on phones. Learners can read and listen to audio recordings sent .This techniques would motivate learners to learn because it is linked to play method. Learners may see it as a way of playing with the phone .This could work because currently even the most remote rural areas have cell phones .They are charged using solar gadgets. It is worth trying. This could a way of apply the concept of flipped classroom which was covered in the Literature review.
A teacher from School C also expressed the need to use books not just by pupils but also for teachers to prepare adequately for their teaching .School E also echoed the need to supply schools with materials for teaching grammar.

There are materials which schools cannot provide but the Ministry of Education can provide. But there are teaching which schools can generate to facilitate learning. In the absence of story books to reinforce the grammar taught, learners can be guided to write short stories .The teacher can guide learners to improve on their work and the best stories could be put in the class library.

The third common suggestion is the request to change the language policy so that from early childhood education the language of instruction should be English.

The suggestions on the change of language policy was adequately covered under the challenges.

A teacher from School A suggested that schools should not just compete in quiz , debate and in games but a new kind of competition need to be introduced. And this is the competition in knowledge of English grammar. The assumption is that this will help to improve the learning of English grammar.

The above suggestion is worth trying. The learners enjoy anything that is linked to competition .So , inter-class and inter-school competition in grammar would make the learning of grammar enjoyable .The beneficiaries of this technique are the learners involved in the competition as well as those in the audience.

School B thought of seeing churches coming on board as well through the reading of bible in English. The school thought this could be applied not only in towns but also in rural areas.
The above suggestion is already applicable in towns. But in villages it is impossible to compel churches to use English in churches when most of their members may not be comfortable.

School D further suggested that learners need to be encouraged to speak English while in school premise because most of them have no opportunity to speak English at home in their villages.

This is another workable suggestion. This can work well if the teaching is such that learners are given ample time to practice new language in class .It becomes possible for learners to further practice when there are with their friends in and out of the classroom.

5.6 Summary

This chapter discussed the findings on the teachers‟ knowledge of the concept of grammar, the techniques teachers were using to teach grammar as well as the challenges the teachers were facing in teaching grammar. The discussion of the findings were a reflection of the theoretical framework that guided the research .Furthermore, the discussion took into accounts the literature which has been reviewed.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

The previous chapter presented the discussion of the findings. This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study. This is in line with the objectives of the study written below:

1. To determine the teachers‟ knowledge of the concept of grammar.
2. To analyse the techniques teachers are using to teach English grammar.
3. Establish the challenges teachers are facing in teaching English grammar.

6.2 Conclusion

To determine the teachers' understanding of the concept of grammar.

The data collected showed that teachers had little knowledge of grammar as most of the responses which they gave may have been merely memorized in the past. The teachers did not seem to know the topics in the school syllabus outlined for teaching grammar.

To Analyse the techniques teachers are using to teach English grammar.

The teachers used common techniques for teaching grammar like Question and answer, discussions, group work and pair work. There is need for teachers to be reoriented in the teaching of grammar in which new techniques could be introduced to them.

To Establish the challenges teachers are facing in teaching English grammar.

The teachers brought out a lot of challenges which should never be ignored like lack of teaching and learning materials. Rural setting disadvantages the learners because they tend not have things like computers and television set which help their friends in town to learn English unconsciously. Some rural learners come from distant place and this promotes absenteeism

6.3 Recommendations

1. The Ministry of Education to enhance CPD activities on the teaching of grammar
2. The Ministry of Education to provide teaching and learning materials.
3. Teachers‟ group should be encouraged to share information on grammar teaching.

6.4 Suggestions for Future Research

It could be a good idea to also do further research in the teaching of grammar but this time focusing on how grammar is assessed. The focus could even be grade 5 or six.

6.5 Summary

This chapter presented the conclusion and recommendations on the three aspects of the study namely; teachers‟ knowledge of the concept of grammar, the techniques teachers are using to teach grammar and the challenges teachers were facing in their teaching of grammar.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1:Research consent

UNZAREC FORM 1b

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

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HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSENT FORM

(Translated into vernacular if necessary)

TITLE OF RESEARCH:

REFERENCE TO PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET:

1. Make sure that you read the Information Sheet carefully, or that it has been explained to you to your satisfaction.

2. Your permission is required if tape or audio recording is being used.

3. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary, i.e. you do not have to participate if you do not wish to.

4. Refusal to take part will involve no penalty or loss of services to which you are otherwise entitled.

5. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of services and without giving a reason for your withdrawal.

6. You may choose not to answer particular questions that are asked in the study. If there is anything that you would prefer not to discuss, please feel free to say so.

7. The information collected in this interview will be kept strictly confidential.

8. If you choose to participate in this research study, your signed consent is required below before I proceed with the interview with you.

Appendix 2: Voluntary Consent

I have read (or have had explained to me) the information about this research as contained in the Participant Information Sheet. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I now consent voluntarily to be a participant in this project and understand that I have the right to end the interview at any time, and to choose not to answer particular questions that are asked in the study.

My signature below says that I am willing to participate in this research:

Participant's name (Printed): ……..

Participant's signature: …… Consent Date: ……

Researcher Conducting Informed Consent (Printed) Fidelis Mumba

Signature of Researcher: …….. Date: 18/05/23

Signature of parent/guardian: ……. Date: ……

Appendix 3: Interview Guide for Teacher

Focus group discussion for grade 7 teachers

Iam a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia pursuing a Master of Education in Literacy , Language and Applied Linguistics. Am conducting a research on **" Analysis of Techniques Teachers are Using to teach Grammar in grade7 in Kazungula District**."

You have been purposively selected to participate this study because your opinion will build on the knowledge of the use of teaching grammar techniques. The information provided will treated with the highest confidentiality.

District : …… Date of interview :…….

School :…… Sex of participant:……..

Background information

1. What are your highest qualifications?
2. How long have you been teaching English?

Concept of Grammar

3. What do you understand by grammar?
4. Why is Grammar important?
5. What techniques did you learn in college/university to teach grammar?
6. What activities do you think characterize the teaching of grammar?

Techniques teachers are using to teach grammar

7. How do you teach grammar?

8. What techniques do you use most? Why?
9. Which techniques do you use least? Why?
10. How do you select techniques?
11. Do you think your techniques are successful? If so , how? If not why?
12. How are the steps in applying the techniques?
13. What is your learners‟s response towards these techniques?

Challenges teachers face when teaching grammar

14. Do you face any challenges in using techniques to your learners? If yes, what are they?
15. Any suggestions in terms of techniques to improve teaching grammar?

Appendix 4:

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SENIOR EDUCATION STANDARD

OFFICER LANGUAGES (SESO)

Iam a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia pursuing a Master of Education in Literacy , Language and Applied Linguistics. Am conducting a research on " **Analysis of Techniques Teachers are Using to teach Grammar in grade7 in Kazungula District**."

You have been purposively selected to participate this study because your opinion wll build on the knowledge of the use of teaching grammar techniques. The information provided will treated with the highest confidentiality.

District : …… Date of interview :…….

School :…… Sex of participant:……..

Background information

1. How long have you been in this position?

Concept of Grammar

2. In your understanding what is grammar?
3. What techniques do you know for teaching grammar?
4. What activities do you think charactrise teaching grammar?

Techniques Teachers are using to teach Grammar

5. Are teachers using techniques to teach grammar?
6. Which techniques do the teachers use ?
7. Explain how the teachers use these techniques.

Challenges Teachers are Facing

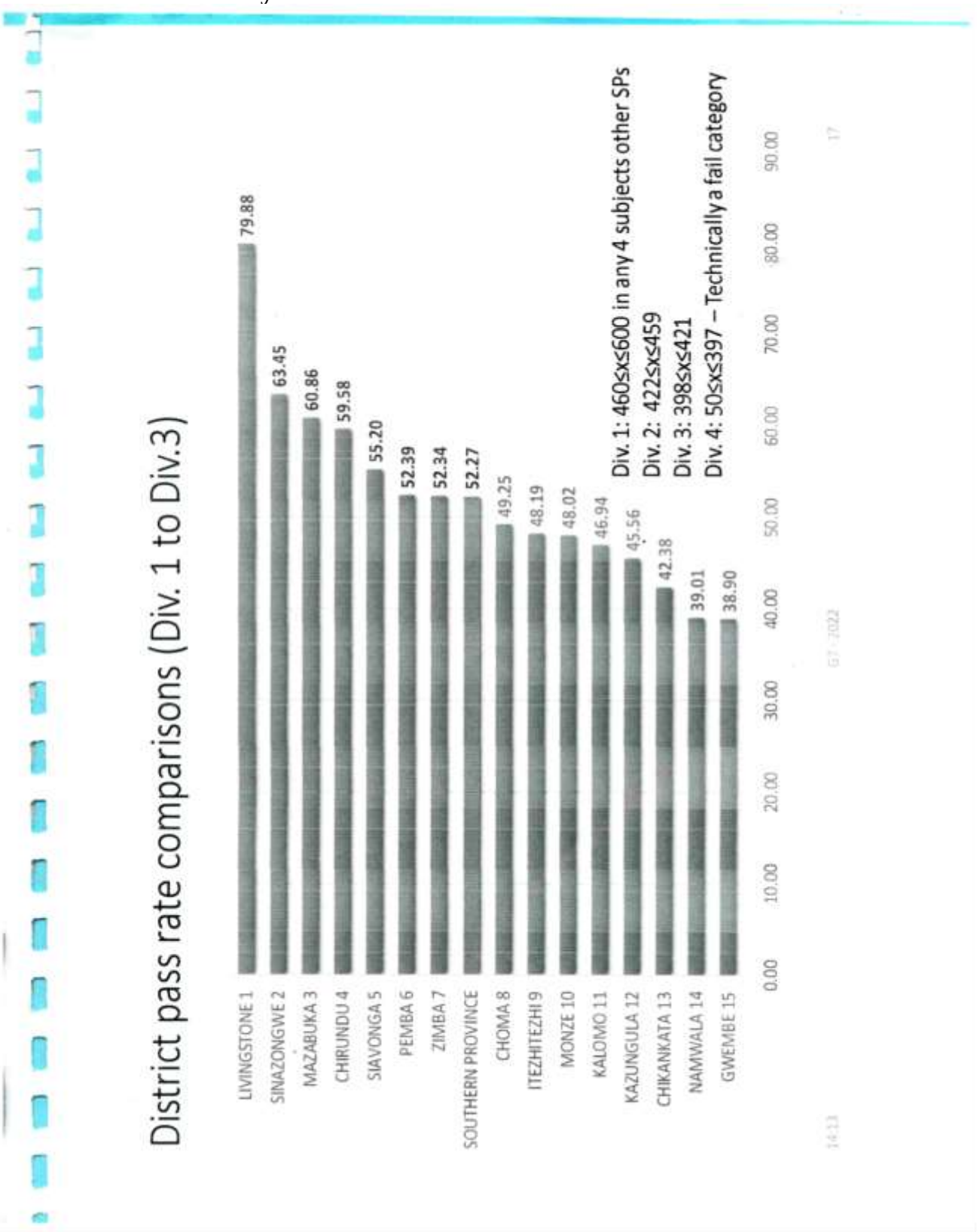
8. What challenges do the teachers face when teaching learners grammar?
9. Any suggestions of in terms of techniques to improve teaching grammar?

Appendix 5: Checklist for Lesson Observation

The researcher will check and review the lesson plans on teaching grammar.

Name:…… Date :……

Class observed : …… Code of teacher observed:……

Competences
1. General organization
• Lesson plan-Bio data • Introductory activities • Appropriateness of the content
2. Presentation of Lesson
• Pupils‟ ability to follow the lesson • Teacher‟s ability to capture the class attention • Use of appropriate methodology • Timing of the lesson
Teaching Techniques
• Dialogue • Pair work • Graphic organizer • Translanguaging • Rally robin • Swap meet • Think pair and share • Think write pair and share • Group work

Grade 6 Results Analysis