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FACTORS CAUSING POOR PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH AMONG GRADE TWO STUDENTS AT INKOSIKAZI CENTRAL CLUSTER AND THE EFFECTS THIS COULD HAVE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING.

BY

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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BACHELOR OF EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DEGREE.

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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to Midlands State University for the acceptance of a dissertation entitled: **Factors causing poor performance in English among grade two students at Inkosikazi Central Cluster and the effects this could have in teaching and learning.**

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Education Degree at Midlands State University by **Ncube Aretha Siphiwe (Registration Number R159321X).**

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MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION

I, Ncube Aretha Siphiwe declares that this research report herein is my own work and has not been copied or lifted from any source without the acknowledgement of the source.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Doreen Ncube and Traver Ncube, who raised and inspired me to be what I am today. Without their guidance and strict upbringing, I would not have achieved in life.

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to find the factors causing poor performance in English among grade two learners and the effects this could have in teaching and learning. This research study was qualitative in nature. Data generating instruments included interview and observation guides as well as document analysis. These instruments were chosen because they allowed the researcher to get immediate feedback and non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, voice projection and tone could be noted. They also enabled the researcher to get 'live' data as it were recorded spontaneously as it occurred on the spot, making the research study more reliable. Data were presented in tables and thematically analysed. Lack of qualified and experienced teachers, inadequate teaching and learning resources as well as students' negative attitudes were found to be some of the factors causing poor performance in English among grade two students. The researcher recommends that heads of schools should ensure that grade two students are taught by qualified and experienced teachers who are infant trained. Teachers should use and motivate students through I.C.T tools such as computers, magazines, audio players, video recorders as well as the internet in their teaching as these assist in capturing and maintaining the students' attention. Furthermore, students should own their learning and work hard to perform better

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study focused on the factors causing poor performance in English among Grade two learners at Inkosikazi Central cluster and the effects it could have in teaching and learning. It covered the background of the study, statement and justification of the problem. Assumptions, delimitations and limitations of the study were also outlined. The review of related literature and methodology were considered.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY.

Education is the key to success for any individual. It is a powerful instrument that helps people to overcome poverty. Shumba (2010) argues that, 'books maketh a man.' In simpler terms education provides a door to a better status, life and title. English is one of the most important subjects in the primary and secondary school curriculum as it stands as a vehicle to achieving education. Success and achievement in the subject qualifies one to be labelled literate. It also allows one to enter into higher learning institutions and employment. On the other hand, failure in English facilitates an overall poor performance in subjects in that target language.

The researcher as a primary school teacher (infant teacher) has witnessed a continuous low pass rate in English and other subjects taught in it such as Mathematics, Religious and Moral

Education and Environmental Science. This led the parents, Administrators and District Education officers' to be concerned. The researcher observed that some of the Grade two teachers showed a continued dissatisfaction when the results showed a low pass rate time and again. Some of the students even went to the extent of hiding their papers from their friends and parents because they were embarrassed by the results.

The result analysis of schools for the year 2016 showed the list of schools according to how they performed and most schools in the cluster studied had not more than fifteen per cent pass rate in the overall performance. This raised concern among teachers and parents, thus it was imperative to find the factors causing the poor performance in English.

Table 1 shows the trend of pass rate for the past five years in English in schools sampled.

Grade Two Results Analysis in English for School A and B.

School	Year	Number of students (enrolment)	Number of students passing with 5 units and better.	School percentage pass rate in English
A	2012	94	11	11,7 %
	2013	80	6	7,5%
	2014	98	14	14,2%
	2015	120	28	23,3%
	2016	113	22	19,4%
B	2012	80	9	11,2%
	2013	64	15	23,4%
	2014	76	9	11,8%
	2015	81	19	23,4%
	2016	80	12	15%

Table 1 clearly showed a poor performance in English. The results were relatively low considering the fact that some schools got above 90% pass rate in the subject in the same District. In 2015 and 2016, students wrote school and cluster based tests. They did not perform well. Then in the year 2015 and 2016 students wrote standardised tests from the District Offices and still they performed poorly. It was therefore against this background that the researcher sought to do this study to find the factors causing the low pass rate.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Poor performance in English continues to be a major concern for the varied educational stakeholders such as parents, teachers and administrators to mention just a few. This trend is more pronounced in the rural areas especially for the grade two students who sit for their Mid and End of year tests from the District offices. It has become a cause of concern why the subject continues to record a low pass rate time and again. This motivated the researcher to carry out a study to find factors causing poor performance in English among Grade two students.

1.4 PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION

The Primary Research question can be stated as follows:

What are the factors causing poor performance in English among Grade two students at Inkosikazi central Cluster and the effects this could have in teaching and learning?

From the primary research question, sub-research questions can state as follows:

1.4.1 Sub research questions.

1.4.1.1 What are the qualifications and experience of the teachers**?**

1.4.1.2 What are the attitudes of students toward English?

1.4.1.3 What are the resources available in the teaching and learning of English?

1.4.1.4 What teaching methods are being used by teachers?

1.5 SIGFNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

English language is important as it lays a strong foundation for a wide variety of careers such as teaching, nursing and air force. According to Paul (2012), English language has been the common language of the world from decades and is the official or co-official language from many countries and is spoken extensively as it is the medium of communication. Rita (2016) concurs that, it is the dominant business language and it has become almost a necessity for people to speak English if they are to enter a global workforce. Anyone who uses the language fairly well has a number of different abilities. He/ she can for example, listen to the radio, speak to his neighbours, read a magazine and write letters. It is therefore a call to people, especially students to master English effectively so they can use it to interact with their environment, which is, reading notices, manuals, advertisements, newspapers, watching films, listening to music and many others.

 Success in English enables students to enrol in higher learning institutions. It is the official language of communication in the country and is one of the examinable subjects in the Zimbabwean Education System. It stands as a compulsory subject in schools and it must be passed by students in order to be considered literate. According to Adeyemi (2008), a literate person is one who has acquired the knowledge and skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These are the English language basic skills. Pandhu (2013) argues that English is the

medium through which many subjects of the curriculum are taught. This means that having difficulty in grasping fully these contents may cause problems leading to negative consequences on the overall performance. Furthermore, the mastery in the skills concerned with English will facilitate the learning of other subjects in the target language. In English, learners are taught to comprehend, interpret, read and communicate effectively. They also learn to read for understanding which will assist them to excel in other subjects and in their examinations.

The importance of English has rapidly increased the need to gain a better understanding in the language as it is very much needed for further studies, journeys to other countries as well as for social and professional contact. This leaves primary school students with a mandate to be literate that is, having a distinct ability to read, write and speak. Without these macro skills being learnt and developed during English instruction, it may lead to handicap in the language and subject. English enables students to comprehend and read between the lines. It is however, embarrassing to be corrected in-front of the whole class because of incorrect use of English, thus, empowering students with skills in English motivates them to like and participate in the subject. The mastery of skills in English builds the students' confidence as they may want to participate in different activities such as reading aloud, pronouncing words and dialogue during teaching and learning.

Usman (2010) argues that most students do not perform well in English because they use the mother language in all their interactions, that is, play and communication and English is only used in the four walls of the classroom and ends there. This affects the mastery of the language and subject. Thus, educators should provide a platform for students to practice

speaking, reading and writing in English. The environment should include books, notices, story books, magazines and audio players for students to interact with and practice. Knowing English prepares the student to fit in this 21st century world where technology is the norm. Information and Communication Technology gadgets, manuals, instructions and signs are tabulated in English hence the need to be able to understand and interpret English.

Knowledge on the dynamics of English enables teachers to improve their teaching approaches, attitudes and the quality of learning aids. They would include games, puzzles, songs and online games that would keep learners interested and motivated to learn. Having a clear understanding of English provides teachers with an understanding on how to teach the grade studied.

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions were made in this study.

1.6.1. The learning environment of the two schools sampled is similar to the other schools found in the same district.

1.6.2. The students at the selected schools are more or less the same as learners from any other school in the district

1.6.3. Teachers at the selected schools have the same or more qualifications as other teachers in the district.

1.6.4. Time allocated for English in the time table is more or less the same in all schools in the district.

1.6.5. Resources available for teaching and learning are more or less the same as in other schools elsewhere in Zimbabwe.

1.6.6. The teachers' and students' attitudes towards English are more or less the same as the teachers' and students' attitudes from any other school in the circuit.

1.7 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research study was conducted in Bubi District under the Matabeland North Province. It was restricted to two schools out of five in the Inkosikazi central cluster. The participants were two teachers from school A, one teacher from school B, as well as two teachers in charge (T.I. Cs). This gave a total of five teachers. Ten learners from school A and ten learners from school B also participated. This gave a total number of twenty grade two students.

1.8 LIMITATIONS

There were some limitations that were encountered by the researcher in carrying out the study. Below are a number of them.

1.8.1. Cost

This research study was self-funded hence, the researcher faced challenges financially to effectively and efficiently carry out the study. The researcher was paying her own fees and at the same time taking care of the family. This caused a challenge to her as this research needed a lot of money for stationery (photocopying and printing), transport to and from the University to consult and visiting the internet café for research purposes. Furthermore, for the success of this study, there was need to prepare instruments that were to be used in the generation of data to make the study feasible. However, the researcher tried to follow closely

what the supervisor advised so as to minimise on wastage of materials and financial constraints. Money was also set aside for the smooth running of the research study.

1.8.2 Time

Time is a limited resource and it demands to be used wisely. The schools under study are about 20km apart (dust road) and this caused challenges for the researcher as she needed to generate data and there was no transport. The researcher carried out the study at the same time as she was performing her daily duties at work. There was therefore a need for the researcher to balance her school work and the pressure at work. This study was to be done in one year however, this limited the time devoted to the research and it would have been of greater detail if it was to be done over a longer period of time. The researcher worked closely with the supervisor, taking heed of the comments so as to finish the research on time.

1.8.3. Respondent based bias

There was a possibility that the reliability of the research be affected by the respondents. Some of the respondents were not very honest in their responses for example, they responded to impress the researcher and moulded their behaviour to suit what was expected. Some of them responded in a way the general responded, which was not true. Some of the participants were not able to provide accurate information whereby they said that which they were expected to say but in actual fact not doing.

1.8.4 Bureaucracy

The researcher did not exercise liberty in generating data as it was affected by bureaucracy in the offices such as those falling under the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. Some necessary information was difficult to access due to the bureaucratic nature of the concerned organisation. Thus, failure to access the information affected the research. However, the researcher tried by all means to maintain good and favourable relations with the staff concerned.

1.8.5. Official Secrecy Act

The Official Secrecy Act disallows an employer from disclosing confidential information to parties not concerned, especially information related to their operations of work. This prevented the researcher in accessing information that would be of importance in as far as the research was concerned, since some participants would withhold information helpful to the study. The researcher however, intended to uphold the research ethics and became as professional as possible to conduct the research as well as ensuring that the research would be of benefit to the teaching and learning of English to Grade two students.

1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purpose of this study, three terms were defined which are qualification, experience and poor performance. The definition of these terms may assist the readers to understand the study better and clearly.

1.9.1 Experience

Schmitt (2010) defines experience as the knowledge or skill in a particular job or activity, which one gains because of doing that job or activity for a long time. Danladi (2013) defines experience as the knowledge and skill acquired over a period of practical experience in a particular field. From the two definitions, the researcher deduced that experience is knowledge and competencies acquired through doing an activity or job for a long time.

1.9.2 Qualification

Merriam (2017) defines a qualification as a special skill, knowledge or ability that makes someone suitable to do a particular job or activity. It is a condition or official requirement that must be fulfilled before a right can be acquired. Tuck (2007) argues that a qualification is the formal outcome (certificate, diploma or title) of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved

learning outcomes to a given standards and /or possesses the necessary competence to do a specific area of work. In this study a qualification was seen as a special skill, knowledge or ability that makes someone suitable for a particular job or activity.

1.9.3 Poor Performance

Poor performance is defined by Adeyemi (2008) as a consistent failure to meet specific standards and levels of performance following a period of sustained support, development and investigation. Siquera (2011) views poor performance as a decrease in performance levels. In this study, poor performance was taken as the performance that falls below a desired standard.

1.10 SUMMARY

This chapter presented on the background of the study as well as its significance. English stands as the medium of instruction and the dominant business language thus, the need for students to master its contents and concepts if they are to perform better and interact with their environment effectively. The primary research question, that is, factors causing poor performance in English among grade two students at Inkosikazi Cluster was discussed and the sub-research questions were also stated. Furthermore, assumptions made in the study were that the teachers' qualifications, resources available for teaching, time allocated as well as the students themselves are more or less the same with those of schools in other districts. In this chapter, the delimitations of the study were stated, that is, two schools out of five in Inkosikazi central cluster found in Bubi District. 20 students, three teachers and two teachers in charge were sampled. Limitations such as cost, time, bureaucracy and respondent based bias were noted and discussed. To enable readers to understand the research study key terms which are qualification, experience and poor performance were defined. The next chapter focuses on the review of related literature.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter sought to review literature on factors causing poor performance in English among young learners. The literature was reviewed under the following topics: teaching methods, teacher qualification, experience and competencies, impact of teaching and learning resources, teachers and pupils' attitudes and infrastructural facilities.

2.1 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF TEACHERS

A qualified or experienced person is one who has been doing the same job or activity for more than five years. This means that they do the same thing over and over again enabling them to see more into the subject thus finding different ways of presenting it. They become immune to the dynamic challenges brought about by the subject. They become less affected or distracted. Teachers should meet such a standard in order to produce good results. Agnes (2013) argues that teachers with good professional competence and interpersonal skills are more effective in their teaching. Helm (2007) suggests that if a model could be developed to guarantee pupil success, it would include a teacher who is highly qualified and experienced. However, from these two opinions, it can be noted that one of the most important variable that determines the success of the students in their performance is the teachers' qualification, experience and commitment.

The teacher is the implementer, assessor and evaluator of the curriculum thus, a need for them to be skilful, competent and able. It is the teachers' role to interpret the syllabus, breaking down the broad aims into smaller teachable units so as to guarantee student success in the subject. This requires a high level of competence, experience and knowledge to teach the actual material prescribed by the English syllabus. Interpreting the syllabus correctly empowers the teacher to teach relevant content to the student. Experienced teachers bring knowledge into the classroom hence their importance.

Infant students are a challenging group of learners to teach as they require a high level of competency, hence a need for properly trained and experienced teachers. Ndamba (2010) postulates that student performance relies heavily on the quality of teachers involved in the education system. In some schools, incompetent (relief or temporary) teachers are employed thus leading to a negative impact in the learners' performance. Asikha (2010) defines an incompetent person as one who is not sufficiently skilful to do something successfully. Qualified and experienced teachers come in handy to the new and inexperienced teachers as they act as mentors and an oasis of wisdom and knowledge. They can advise, direct, lead and encourage the less experienced. Adedokun (2011) is of the view that untrained teachers contribute immensely in poor performance in English language. In this view, this research seeks to establish whether the experience of teachers in Inkosikazi Cluster affect the students' performance in English.

According to a research carried out in Nigeria by Adedokun (2011), inadequate qualified teachers cause poor performance in English. It also provided evidence that in some schools' other junior teachers are forced to teach infant learners the English language yet some of them exhibit poor abilities in oral and written expression of it. With this kind of situation,

these teachers can never teach effectively and hence poor performance from their products. This observation has made the researcher to discover whether the level of qualification and experience has an effect on the learners' performance in English.

Paul (2012) alludes that students' performance is affected by the teachers' age, experience and level of professional training. In this regard, it is of paramount importance that teachers get in service training, staff development and professional training. This enables them to overcome their shortcomings as well as cover gaps that are brought about by changes in technology and knowledge. These trainings enable teachers to update their knowledge, sharpen their skills and acquire new techniques of teaching English. It is therefore of great interest to the researcher to find out whether on-going professional development of teachers has an impact on the student performance in English.

2.2 STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH

Attitude plays an important role as it determines the students' ability and willingness to learn English. Normazidah, Koo and Hazita (2012) present factors they found out in their study, that contribute to poor performance in English and a negative attitude is one of them. Attitude plays a pivotal role in achieving success and is key as well as an important concept in language learning. Positive attitude facilitates learning. Langat (2015) suggests that students with a positive attitude towards a subject become motivated to excel in the subject because they value, enjoy and are interested in it. He goes on to say students with a positive attitude complete all assignments, do extra work and pay attention during instruction. Teachers should use teaching approaches that promote a positive attitude towards English such as

drama, word puzzles, songs, rhymes and poems. This is so that students are motivated to learn.

The social leaning theories by Bandura postulate that individuals acquire attitudes through observing, imitating and modelling the behaviours of others, thus children are good observers and imitators. They can easily imitate attitudes and behaviours of those around them. Mohamed and Waheed (2011) claim that attitudes are seen as more or less positive and encompass emotions, beliefs, values and behaviour and hence affect the individuals' way of thinking, acting and behaving which has a lot of implications to teaching and learning. Several research studies support the fact that students' success depends upon their attitude toward the subject as this determines their ability, choice of action and response to challenges. On the other side, the teachers' attitude also contributes largely to how the students behave and react towards English. Once the teacher shows a lack of interest in the subject, students will also follow suit. Furthermore, if the teacher uses teacher dominated methodologies such as the lecture method, students will easily lose focus and interest.

Though research studies show that achievement in a subject is a function of many interrelated variables which can be grouped as student, school, home factors, student attitudes are regarded by many researchers as a key factor to be taken into account when attempting to understand and explain the student achievement. A negative attitude can contribute to a lack of motivation by students. It minimises concentration and commitment to academic work. The students' negative attitude can stand as a stumbling block towards improving performance in English.

Ouma (2010) is of the view that for any learner to be proficient in English mastering the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing is necessary and it requires hard work and dedication from the students. This means that for the students to perform better in the target language, they have to work hard and be determined. Once their attitude is negative, they will not strive to succeed. Teachers should nurture favourable attitudes to benefit the students and bring out their best. It is in this study that the researcher seeks to establish the attitude of teachers and students in Inkosikazi Cluster and determine whether their attitude influences performance.

2.3 RESOURCES AVAILABLE AND INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES

Roger (2011) postulates that instructional materials and facilities are an important part of the process of learning as they provide practice and feedback in the learning track. The success of curriculum implementation requires the necessary supporting resources such as human resource, learning materials to physical structures. Teaching resources are materials that teachers use to facilitate learning and deliver lessons. These include concrete media, textbooks, chalkboards and furniture. Hornby (2010) asserts that, educational aids and resources increase the students' achievement. He goes on to say they have a great influence on the students' performance. It is therefore the teachers' duty to make sure every English lesson is accompanied by concrete learning media for learners to manipulate.

Teachers should not rely only on the textbooks given by the school instead they should aim at being resourceful, for example, downloading relevant sources from the internet that will aid learning. A photocopying machine can be used in producing as many copies corresponding to

the number of learners in the teachers' custody. This may assist students to have varied teaching and learning materials thus improving their performance in English.

A classroom library is one of the most important areas that the teacher needs to focus on as it inculcates a thirst for knowledge in the learners through reading books on display. It will enable students to develop and cultivate a reading culture. A collection of colourful and sizeable story and picture books and dictionaries can be included in the library. Ouma (2010) alludes that modern media such as audio, video tapes, computers, flash cards, magazines, programmed texts, phones, picture or audio dictionaries and newspapers are rarely used and this causes the infant learner to lose interest in the learning process. It is therefore in this regard that the researcher seeks to find out to what extent the availability of teaching media and other resources has an impact on the performance of students in English.

Teachers stand as a human resource and their presence represent the starting point of all teaching and learning activities. Failure to have teachers may cause challenges to the young learner. Teachers provide knowledge and give guidance to the learner. Ncube (2012) points out that the Education in Zimbabwe is sometimes compromised by lazy teachers and absenteeism. This leads to an insufficient use of time that affects the learner' performance. Some teachers do not get to school on time due to transport challenges, especially those in rural areas who have to travel longer distances. Some of them have second jobs of selling which inhibit them from using all the time available for teaching and learning in the classroom.

Danldi (2013) argues that the classrooms physical set up should set the stage for active and engaged learning. This implies that the learning areas, furniture and spaces should be well designed and safe. Furniture should be arranged in such a way that learners are able to move from one area to another to access different learning materials without difficulty. However, in some schools, learners are taught under trees and some in dilapidated classrooms with no furniture. Some of the rooms have no doors and windows. This disturbs the learner as they will not be comfortable, especially when the weather is not favourable (rainy/ windy).

Adedokun (2011) points out that students learn best when they are not overcrowded. Overcrowded classroom conditions do not only make it difficult for both the students and teachers to concentrate on their lessons, but certainly limit the time the teacher has to meet the students' individual needs especially during group work. It is also difficult for teachers to maintain order in overcrowded classrooms hence students take advantage of the situation to misbehave. Such a scenario may have a negative impact the teaching and learning process. This study therefore seeks to find out whether the availability of proper classrooms, teaching and learning resources and human resource have an impact on factors causing poor performance in English among grade two learners.

2.4 TEACHING METHODS USED BY TEACHERS.

Teaching methods contribute largely to the success or failure by students in a classroom situation. According to Thomas (2009), teaching methods refer to the techniques teachers use to impart knowledge to the learner. In addition, Vuzo (2010) claims that successful teaching and quality of pupil learning is closely related to the teachers' knowledge, method of instruction and understanding of the subject. This then places emphasis on the technique that

the teacher should use during teaching and learning. Shumba (2008) alludes that instruction should help students build on prior knowledge to develop attitudes, beliefs and cognitive skills as well as expand their knowledge base. The teaching methods to be employed during English instruction should aid proper learning as it influences the outcome.

Vuzo (2010) reports that it is through interactions with each other that teachers and students work together to create intellectual and practical activities that shape the form and content of the subject. Jobolingo (2012) argues that the teaching styles in many schools, however, remain traditional, teacher dominated and legitimately rigid. The research seeks to extract the extent to which grade two teachers in Inkosikazi Cluster use child-centred methods, such as games, puzzles, rhymes, songs as well as drama in the teaching and learning of English.

According to a study by Jurkovic (2010), and an investigation by Suh (2010), the child-centred way of instruction in Elementary Education proved to be more effective and improving the learners' results. In the study they brought forward that results of students studying English by utilising child centred methods like games, songs, rhymes, showed higher scores in areas of listening, reading and writing than those who attended face to face instruction classes. Linder (2010) purports that child centred methodologies such as, drama, songs, rhymes, poems and discovery keep the learners engaged and participative rather than passive. He goes on to say exposure of students to practical work helps them understand and retain the theoretical concepts in practical work. Young learners learn better by doing thus, they are to be taught by discovery, inquiry and child dominated methodologies as compared to the teaching methods that promote passivity and rote memorisation.

Usman (2012) postulates that teachers mostly prefer to use traditional ways of teaching which they have been familiar with which do not necessarily aid proper learning. In this 21st century, information has been made accessible by means of the internet, computers, phones, audio players, video recorders as well as projectors. These gadgets eliminate the barriers of time and distance, creating a universal platform and opportunities for all people. Grade two learners should be afforded an opportunity to learn best when they assume responsibility over their learning by means of using the information and Communication Technology (I.C.T) tools such as computers, audio and video recorders, tapes and phones. However, according to Roger (2011) some teachers consider child centred approaches time consuming and most of them fail to take into account the dynamic nature of the English curriculum but they continue to bore learners with drills in grammar, vocabulary and work. They also shun the use of I.C.T tools disadvantaging the learner.

Ouma (2010) suggests that the use of proper and engaging teaching methods like discovery learning, drama, songs, poems and puppetry minimises teacher domination and at the same time relaying a clearer message to the student as they will be learning through doing and discovery. Students become more attentive and interested in learning making it easier to assimilate and accommodate new concepts. Teachers should have educational software installed in their computers or school computers to help students master concepts better. Educational software such as the KidsEncarta provide a child friendly interface and learning in a gaming and interesting way. It provides audio books for learners to listen to thus developing their listening, pronunciation and comprehension skills. It also provides words that learners can spell in a gaming way. This improves their word recognition skills and

spelling abilities. This educational computer software helps learners to visualise what is being learnt hence, mastery.

An anthology is a necessary document that every infant teacher should possess. Ouma (2010) alludes that it is a collection of poems and pieces of writing and it is through these collections of songs and stories that learners develop different skills in the subject. However, Thomas (2009) argues that in most cases, infant teachers do not have the anthology as a way of avoiding singing, hoping, playing, jumping and dancing to the poems and songs. Thus, depriving learners, the opportunity to learn in a gaming and fun way. Involving the young learner minimises the trouble of knowledge evaporating from the students' mind, especially if they are singing, reciting poems and dramatising stories in the teachers' anthology. In doing so learners are developing skills in speaking the language fluently, comprehension and pronunciation. It will also contribute positively to their overall performance as they will be able to write meaningful essays, stories as well as becoming independent readers who can comprehend what they are reading. It also produces a confident learner who can carry out a conversation in correct English, participate well in drama and public speaking forums.

Thomas (2009) notes that drills used by teachers, especially when it is about examination time, present a danger towards an improved performance in English. Pandhu (2013) posits that a child who cannot read and comprehend is prone to failure, not only in English but in other subjects in that target language. It is therefore the teachers' role to make sure students are given more time and practice in answering comprehension questions, writing short stores as well as spelling so as to master. From experience, some teachers just drill learners when its examination time rather than preparing the learner way before. During everyday teaching and

learning, teachers should make sure they equip the learners with the necessary skills they will need during examination time so that the students do not rely on the teachers' instruction in the last minute. The study sought to extract the frequency of practice tests and reading lessons given to the grade two learners as well as establishing whether the methods that grade two teachers use have impact on the students' performance in English.

2.5 SUMMARY

Literature was reviewed under the themes, teacher qualification and experience of teachers, students' attitudes towards English, resources available for teaching and learning and teaching methods. It was noted that one of the most important variable that determines success of the students in their performance is the teachers' competence, experience and commitment. Langat (2015) states that students with a positive attitude are motivated to excel in the subject because they value enjoy and are interested. On the contrary, students' negative attitudes can contribute to a lack of motivation thus, failure. Resources including infrastructural and human were noted to be important in the betterment of the students learning. Last but not least, the teaching methods used by teachers during instruction should aid proper learning as it influences the outcome. The focus on the next chapter is on the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents methodology used in the study. It considers the research design, population, sample as well as sampling procedures. Instruments used for generating data were interview and observation guides as well as document analysis. Data generating procedures, data management, presentation and analysis are also highlighted. Ethical considerations are outlined.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Tuckman (2012) defines a research design as a plan and structure of the investigation conceived to obtain answers to research questions. It is a plan and approach of conducting a research project. Lee (2009) is of the idea that a research design is a framework of a research project which provides the general guidelines to be followed by the researcher. He also says that it provides a framework for the generation and analysis of data. In this study, qualitative research design was used. Shank (2010) defines qualitative research as a form of systematic empirical enquiry into life's experiences to give them meaning. It is research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures. This type of research design was

chosen because it includes a focus on process versus product or outcome as well as the individuals' experiences and description of life situation. It allowed for assessment of validity through crosschecking sources of information (triangulation). Qualitative research design allows purposive rather than random sampling.

This type of design is usually carried out in a natural setting and a small number of participants are usually selected. The researcher engaged in direct observation and the experience of the individual in the natural setting to find out patterns and meaning. Qualitative research design allows the researcher to observe the actual learning as it takes place hence the ability to uncover much evidence, hence the need to use the qualitative research design.

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

According to Rouse (2015) a population is a discrete group of people that can be identified by at least one common characteristic for the purpose of data generation and analysis. Creswell (2014) defines a population as a set of elements identified for investigation based on the evaluation of research objectives, feasibility and cost effectiveness. It is the whole group of people in which the researcher obtains information from. In this case, the target population were grade two learners from two selected schools in the cluster as well as teachers.

Tuckman (2012) postulates that a sample is a representative group from the population that serves as respondents. It is a sub-set of a population that has the same attributes as the

population. The researcher sampled out 20 pupils from the two schools and 3 infant teachers as well as two Teachers in Charge.

3.4 SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Cohen and Manion (2007) view sampling as the selection of a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of the population. The researcher deliberately chose the participants using purposive sampling. According to Chiromo (2009) purposive sampling involves handpicking of participants on the basis of the researchers' judgement of their typicality. Best and Khan (2009) claim that in purposive sampling, people are deliberately selected for the important information they can provide that cannot be obtained from other sources. This type of sampling was preferred because it involved digging information from individuals who provided the richest information most interesting and fit to the characteristics of most interest to the researcher. This type of sampling is widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information cases related to the phenomenon, (Cresswell & Clark, 2011).

3.5 DATA GENERATING INSTRUMENTS

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2009) identify a research instrument as a tool which the researcher employs to generate information from different sources. In this particular study, the researcher used interview and observation guides as well as document analysis as data generating instruments.

3.5.1 Semi-structured Interview Guide.

A semi-structured interview guide is useful in getting the story behind the participant's experiences as it allows the researcher to get immediate feedback. Creswell (2014) views a semi-structured interview guide as a list of questions the researcher will ask the participants. It provides guidance on what to do or say next. It is unique in the sense that the researcher can pursue in-depth information around a topic. Chiromo (2009) argues that it is through interviews that one gets to evaluate the authenticity of a subject's answer by taking heed of non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, voice projection and tone. Chikowore (2013), points out that, through planned interviews, detailed information could be generated to facilitate proper analysis of a problem. Semi-structured interviews were open and unclear statements were clarified. Face to face interviews used in this study allowed the researcher to probe further questions regarding the teachers' personal qualifications and their methods of teaching. Immediate or instant responses were given.

The researcher took down notes as the participants responded. Participants were recorded using a phone during face to face interview. However, the researcher observed the research ethics of informed consent before the participants were recorded. The researcher did not take the participants by surprise to ensure validity, but booked an appointment with them and hence they were not inconvenienced. The interviews were conducted after lunch time such that lessons were not disturbed. The researcher gathered concerns of both students and teachers with regards to the study's focus.

3.5.2 Classroom Observation Guide

Chiromo (2009) explains that, observation is the process of ascertaining what people think and do by watching them in action as they express themselves in various activities and situations. Observational research is "successful" to the extent that it satisfies the research

questions (R.Q) by capturing relevant events and participants along with the constructs of interest. The observation guide served to keep the observer on track in order to answer the RQ and the facilitation of data generating process. It reminded the researcher to observe key points as well as the impetus for a reflexive exercise in which the observer reflected on her own the relationships. Roller and Lavrakas (2015) describe direct observation as an important method for generating 'live' data about individuals or subjects understudy. Data is live in the sense that it was recorded spontaneously as it occurred on the spot, making the research more reliable. The researcher gained more insight on the behaviours exhibited by the students and teachers and had a better understanding of the reasons of the behaviour. High response was guaranteed when observation was employed as a method of generating the data.

Classroom observations enabled the researcher to generate detailed data as she was a participant observer and at the same time a complete observer where the participants are aware that they are under observation. Pictures and videos of what was being observed were taken to ensure validity. Secondary data sources including document analysis were also used. The researcher viewed the participants documented work to make sure the responses were in line with what was generated from the interview and observation guides.

3.5.3. Document Analysis

Bowen (2009) defines document analysis as a form qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment issue. It was a preferred method because it is an effective and efficient way of generating data. Brown (2009) states that documents are stable, "non-reactive" data sources, meaning that they can be read and reviewed multiple times and remain unchanged by the researchers' influence or research process. Since document analysis provided supplementary research data, it made it

useful and beneficial to my study. This instrument was particularly used because documents contain data that no longer can be observed and provide details that informants have forgotten. Questions that need to be asked or situations that need to be observed can be pointed at thus, a critical and comprehensive research was carried out.

However, an initial concern to consider was that documents were not created with data research agendas and therefore require some investigative skills. The researcher was aware of the unnecessary information and paid closer attention to the relevant information provided in the documents. Brown (2009) alludes that some documents may not be available or easily accessible and this might cause challenges for the researcher. The researcher kept this in mind, while analysing documents, for the potential presence of biases in the document.

3.6. DATA GENERATING PROCEDURES

Firstly, the researcher collected a letter of introduction from the Chairperson of the Faculty of Education at Midlands State University. This letter assisted her to get permission from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education at Bubi District Education Offices to visit the sampled schools. The researcher was given contact details of concerned parties such as the target school heads. At the selected schools, the researcher was introduced to the Teacher in charge and Deputy Head by the school Head. The Teacher in charge then introduced the researcher to the grade two teachers and students. Observations and interviews were carried out in a conducive and friendly atmosphere that more data were generated.

3.7 DATA PRESENTATION

Kalpesh (2013) refers to data as the form of facts, images and recordings. This data can be presented in various ways depending on the type of data generated. Data generated from interviews, observations and document analysis was compiled and presented in a way that it was easy to interpret and understand. In this particular study, the researcher presented data in the form of tables. Shubham (2017) postulates that data presentation is the heart of the research document as it justifies the entire research. Microsoft Excel and spreadsheet were used in presenting the data.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Galetto (2017) explains data analysis as a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggestions and conclusions. In simpler terms, it is a process for gaining information to make better decisions. It involved asking questions about what happened, what is happening and what will happen. In this study, thematic data analysis was used as it was one of the most common forms of analysis in qualitative research. Braun and Clarke (2008) define thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data. This approach emphasises on pinpointing, examining and recording patterns (or themes) within data. It was simple to use and allowed for flexibility. The researcher got rich, detailed and complex description of data.

3.9. DATA MANAGEMENT

Isaac (2015) defines data management as the organisation, preservation and sharing of data generated and used in a research project. Galetto (2017) is of the idea that data management is an administrative process that involves acquiring validity, storing, protecting and processing required data to ensure the accessibility, reliability and timeliness of data for its

users. Data are fragile and can be easily lost and so in this study, the researcher managed data generated through backing it up in flash discs and an external hard drive. This helped the researcher manage the data effectively.

3.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Every profession has its own code of conduct that guides its members during their operations. The same applies to researchers. Ethical considerations are principles that guide and govern the researcher in carrying out a study. In this study, the researcher upheld confidentiality, informed consent, privacy, protection from harm and deception.

3.10.1. Confidentiality

Chiromo (2009) argues that, confidentiality is whereby the participants' responses or information is kept between the researcher and the participants. However, participants should be assured that their responses are treated in the most confidential way. It is the researcher's duty to make sure that external people do not get access to the information provided by the participants. In such a case, participants gave accurate information.

3.10.2. Informed Consent

Louise, Day and Gill (2017) postulate that research should as far as possible be based on participants' freely volunteered informed consent. This implied a responsibility to explain fully and meaningfully what the research was about and how it would be disseminated. The participants were informed about the research before they decided to take part in it and they were made aware of their right to refuse to participate. They were told why they were chosen as participants in the research. Instruments and methods to be used were brought to their attention before anything else was done, for example, they were going to be recorded or taken videos using electronic media such as phones then, they should agree to it. According to Chiromo (2009), no information should be withheld from the participants and that they should take part in the research willingly. The procedures to be followed during the research

process were explained. The researcher gave the participants an assurance that they were free to decline or withdraw their consent and discontinue participation in the study anytime without prejudice.

3.10.3. Privacy

Hyman (2008) defines privacy in terms of a person having control over the extent, timing and circumstances of sharing oneself (physically, behaviourally or intellectually.) with others. Humans have the right to privacy and to choose the extent to which they would share or withhold information about their behaviour, attitude and opinions. Therefore, researchers should not coerce their participants to releasing information which they think would impinge on their privacy**.**

3.10.4. Protection from harm.

Chiromo (2009) alludes that participants should be protected from physical, social, emotional and spiritual harm. For example, the researcher never threatened participants or intimidated them. What happened in the research process was between the researcher and the participants, and that the researcher did not go about telling other participants about a weakness they observed in participant A's class. This would crush the participant socially as he/she would be looked down upon or laughed at. The researcher considered all possible consequences of the research and balanced the risks with proportionate benefit as Burns and Grove (2008) postulate that discomfort and harm can be physiological, emotional, social and economic in nature.

3.10.5 Anonymity

In this research study, the participants' real identity was not revealed. This enabled the participant to feel free to open up without fear of being victimised as well as anonymous as possible. Pseudo names or codes were used where the participants' identity was required.

3.10.6 Deception

Elsevier (2012) defines deception as any action designed to mislead others by distorting, falsifying or misinforming individuals so that they are manipulated to react in a certain manner. The researcher told the participants the truth. This enabled her in attaining and acquiring reliable and unbiased data.

3.11 SUMMARY

This chapter presented on the research design that was used by the researcher and gave reasons why it was chosen. One of the reasons it was chosen, was because it allowed for assessment of validity through crosschecking sources of information (triangulation). Furthermore, the sample used was noted as well as the sampling procedure used, that is, purposive sampling. Semi-interview and classroom observation guides as well as document analysis were used as the data generating instruments. The researcher gave information on how the data was to be presented, that is in the form of graphs, charts and tables. Data was managed through backing it up in flash discs and an external hard drive. Ethical considerations were discussed at length and the ones that the researcher upheld were confidentiality, informed consent, privacy, protection from harm, anonymity and deception.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the study based on data generated from students, teachers and teachers in charge. The data were generated using interview and observation guides as well as document analysis. It was presented and discussed under the themes: teacher qualification and experience, students' attitudes, teaching and learning resources and teaching methods. The biographic data exposed the age, sex, qualification and experience of the participants.

4.1 BIOGRAPHIC DATA

The biographic data is shown by Table 4.1

Table 4.1 Biographic data of the Participants

Category	Students	Teachers	Teacher in Charge (T.I.C)
Sex	10 females and 10 males	2 females and 1 male	2 females
Age	7years- 2males 2females 8years-4males 3 females 10years- 3males 3femaes	45 years -female 36 years- female 39 years- male	40 years-female 30 years-females

	12years- 2males 1female		
Qualification		All possess a Diploma in Education	Diploma in education Bed Ndebele Diploma in education
Experience		6 years-female 11 years- female 9 years 5 months-male	7 years 12 years

Table 4.1 reveals that there was a gender balance among the students. However, among teachers and the teachers in charge there was no gender balance. The students were very young and needed guidance from the teachers who were mature enough to teach, guide and supervise them.

4.2 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Through interviews, two out of three teachers (67%) confirmed that they were qualified and experienced to teach junior students but they were teaching grade two students. Only one teacher out of the three (33%) confirmed to have qualifications and experience to teach English to grade two students. Both teachers in charge (100%) concurred with what the teachers had said.

The researcher analysed the teachers' files and found out that what the teachers had said during the interviews was true. The teacher in charge's files concurred with what they had said. Two of three teachers (67%) were not qualified to teach the group understudy, that is, infants. Only one teacher (33%) was qualified and experienced to teach infants.

During lesson observations, the researcher noted that these teachers were not able to motivate and reduce themselves to the level of the grade two students. Students were bored with lots of vocabulary and questions yet these students needed their attention to be aroused and be captured through interesting and captivating teaching approaches such as songs, games and drama. The lessons were teacher centred which showed inexperience in handling grade two students who learn as they play.

The students' exercise books revealed the low marks they were continuously getting in different exercises and it was proof enough that the teachers were failing to deliver concepts to the students effectively.

Ndamba (2010) postulates that student performance relies heavily on the quality of teachers involved in the education system. Infant trained teachers should teach the infant classes while the junior trained teachers teach juniors. However, in the cluster understudy, junior trained teachers were teaching infant classes due to the shortage of teachers as government is not employing. Furthermore, Adedokun (2011) argues that inadequate qualified teachers contribute to a poor performance. This was evident as students kept getting low marks close to zero, in most of their exercises. According to Paul (2012), students' performance is affected by the teacher's age, experience and level of professional training. This implies that for teachers to be effective in their teaching, they need to be involved in in-service trainings and workshops that will broaden their knowledge and skills on how to teach effectively. Experienced teachers use tried and tested approaches to point out students' challenges hence the possibility of raising pass rate (Mangwaya, Mangwaya & Tsumele, 2016). The teachers' qualification and experience work hand in hand in improving the students' performance.

Qualifications and inexperience therefore stand as factors causing poor performance in English among grade two students.

4.3 STUDENTS' ATTITUDES.

When students were interviewed, twelve out of twenty (60%) had a negative attitude towards English. They claimed that it was hard and difficult to understand.

One student said:

I do not like English. It is very difficult.

All teachers (100%) interviewed confirmed what the students had said. They confirmed that students have a negative attitude towards English because it is hard and difficult for them to comprehend.

 One teacher said:

Students do not like English because they are laughed at by others when they try and fail during instruction.

From the two teachers in charge, one (50%) said:

 students have a negative attitude towards English because in the classrooms they are being taught English in the mother language (L1) yet their tests are in English. It makes it difficult for them to grasp the contents and concepts of English. Its use is not practiced orally and in writing.

The researcher observed students being passive and not active participants during teaching and learning. They were fidgeting, playing and some displayed a lack of interest in what the teachers were saying. One and the same students kept participating and the teacher failed to motivate the rest of the students. The teachers ended up using the mother language (L1) in trying to explain to the students so they could understand what was being said. This concurred with what one teacher in charge had said.

She said:

it is difficult for students to master English especially when their dominant language is the mother tongue. Unless it is practiced, in and outside the classroom, they would grasp it better.

Students remained confused and bored throughout the lessons and some of them did not have writing tools and exercise books to write on. The teachers had to provide papers for them. A few students pushed textbooks to others because they did not want to be asked to read for others as they could not read. This concurred with what the teachers had said that students do not want to participate during English lessons.

From the documents analysed, the researcher discovered that the students' exercise and notebooks were dirty and some of them had torn pages. These notebooks were not enough as some were left home. Students got marks below half in most exercises and work given. Corrections were not being done or checked by the teacher. The teachers' reading and individual progress record books where not updated as they had gaps and missing marks f exercises and tests. The reading record revealed that only a few students were readers and the rest non-readers.

This was a clear indication that students were having a negative attitude towards English as they continually got low marks. Waheed (2011) argues that students' success depends upon their attitude toward the subject as this determines their ability, choice of action and response to challenges. These students were not trying enough to improve their performance in English as some hid their exercise books. Ouma (2010) is of the view that for any student to be proficient in English mastering the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing requires hard work and dedication from the students. This implies that for students to perform better in the target language, they have to have a positive attitude, work hard and be determined to

succeed. Students with a positive attitude towards a subject become motivated to excel because they value, enjoy and are interested in it (Langat, 2015). They pay attention, complete all assignment and work given as well as doing extra because they have an intrinsic push and motivation to do so. Students' negative attitudes are a factor causing poor performance in English among grade two students.

4.4 TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Eighteen out of twenty students (90%) confirmed that flashcards, charts and textbooks were the materials used during instruction. Two out of the twenty students (10%) identified laptops as a teaching and learning resource that teachers used. All teachers (100%) confirmed and concurred with what the students had said during interviews. One out of three teachers (33%) concurred with what the students said when he said:

I use the laptop, flashcards and textbooks to teach English to the students.

Both teachers in charge (100%) confirmed what the students and the teachers had said.

One of the teachers in charge said:

We are working on establishing a computer lab so that learners can use computers during instruction. Teachers use flashcards, charts and textbooks for teaching.

During observations, the researcher noted that textbooks, flashcards and charts where being used to a greater extent. However, the textbooks were not of the updated curriculum and the textbook-pupil ratio was one textbook is to three students. In their groups, students did not have cards to manipulate. The teachers were in possession of the flashcards and cards. There was no concrete media used or pictures. The teachers talked to the students facing the

chalkboard. Some of the cards were stuck on the chalkboard such that some students could not see what was written. The classroom libraries were not packed with age appropriate materials. Instead there were plenty of newspapers. Sentence strips were in tins which had sharp edges which could be of danger to the students once they try to reach for them. Photocopied papers for students to read where placed in the library corner. However, they were few and some were torn. The students were overcrowded because they were sharing chairs and tables. Those who were not on chairs sat on the floors and it made it difficult for them to learn.

The schemes of work concurred with what the researcher observed however, concrete media was listed in the teachers' schemes of work as media that was to be used, but it was not used practically. The inventory record revealed why the students were sharing textbooks. Most of the books were destroyed by termites.

According to Hornby (2011), educational aids and resources increase the students' achievement as they have a great influence on their performance. Modern media such as video tapes, audio recorders, magazines, computers, are rarely used in teaching and learning (Sa'ad,2007). This affects the students negatively because their attention and interest need to be aroused by different types of media. Overcrowded classroom conditions do not only make it difficult for both the students and teachers to concentrate on their lessons, but certainly limit the time the teacher has to meet the individual needs especially during group work. Lack of proper teaching and learning resources is a factor causing poor performance in English among grade two students.

4.5 TEACHING METHODS

Through interviews, eleven out of twenty students (55%) confirmed that their teachers use questions as their teaching methods. Four out of twenty students (20%) confirmed that their teacher used songs during instruction. Three students (15%) claimed that they learnt through games. Two students (10%) alleged that their teachers used pictures in teaching them. Two out of three teachers (67%) confirmed what was said by the students. They said they used participator methods like games, songs and questions to teach their students. However, the other teacher spoke otherwise.

He said, I use teacher dominated methodologies to a greater extent and child centred methods to a lesser extent because these students are young and need to be guided by me. So if I wait for them to play and discover for themselves it becomes time consuming for me.

One of the teachers in charge concurred with what one of the teachers said. She said:

Teachers use drilling and teacher dominated methodologies in their teaching causing the students to be passive learners.

The researcher noted that teachers used teacher centred methods in teaching, which concurred with what was said by the students and teachers through interviews. They kept asking students questions and the students looked timid and confused failing to answer the questions. The teachers ended up asking the questions in the mother language. There was no connection and interaction between the teacher and students. The slow learners were being left behind during instruction and the teacher kept focus on the few students who were giving answers.

The teachers' schemes of work had discussions, questions, games and songs listed as the teaching methodologies they would use in teaching. However, the researcher noted that some of the methods were not employed. Chikowore (2012) argues that teacher centred methods inhibits successful learning. One of the important factors leading to a better performance in

student learning is active learning where students discuss and share ideas (Shumba, 2008). This is also supported by Vuzo (2010) who reports that it is through interactions with each other that teachers and students work together to create intellectual and practical activities that shape the form and content of the subject. Instruction should remain child centred and participative.

Jobolingo (2012) argues that the teaching styles in many schools, however, remain traditional, teacher dominated and legitimately rigid. Usman (2012) is of the view that teachers mostly prefer to use traditional ways of teaching which they have been familiar with which do not necessarily aid proper learning. In this 21st century technology is the order of the day, and teachers should use media that captures the students' attention and keep them interested such as using computers, audio players and video recorders during instruction. Teacher dominated teaching methodologies are a factor causing poor performance in English among grade two learners.

4.6 SUMMARY

This chapter presented and discussed on the factors that cause poor performance in English among grade two learners and these where a lack of qualified and experienced teachers, students' negative attitudes, lack of proper teaching and learning resources as well as teacher dominated methodologies. Interview and observation guides as well as document analysis assisted the researcher to be able to generate the data. The next chapter will consider the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher gives details the summary of what the researcher did throughout the research study, as well as conclusions and recommendations.

5.2 SUMMARY

The researcher was motivated to carry out this research study because of a continued poor performance in English among the grade two learners. Different stakeholders like teachers, parents, administrators and the District Schools Inspectors' concerns were raised as to why students continue to perform so poorly in English, the official language. Pandhu (2013) argues that English stands as one of the most important subjects in the primary and secondary school curriculum as it is a vehicle to achieving education. This study was of significance because English lays a strong foundation for a wide variety of careers such as teaching, nursing and air force and its mastery builds the students' confidence as they interact with their environment, reading notices, manuals, advertisements, newspapers, watching films,

listening to music and many others. However, in carrying out this study, the researcher incurred some limitations including cost, respondents based bias and time just to mention but a few. The project was self –funded and it was a challenge to manage the money for fees, stationary printing and photocopying, sending the project through DHL as well as accessing the internet. Some of the respondents were not very honest in their responses and the researcher used triangulation to verify data

Literature was reviewed using the sub-research questions as themes. Agnes (2013) argues that teachers with good professional competence and interpersonal skills are more effective in their teaching as they are able to see more into the subject thus finding different ways of presenting it. In addition, students' negative attitude also contributes largely to how they perform. Langat (2015) postulates that students' attitudes play a pivotal role in achieving success and is key as well as an important concept in language learning. Ouma (2010) argues that for any learner to be proficient in English, mastering the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, one must be a hard worker with positive attitude and dedication.

Furthermore, teaching resources used by teachers to facilitate learning and deliver lessons increase the students' performance (Roger, 2011). However, inadequate teaching and learning resources contribute to the poor performance in English among grade two learners. Jobolingo (2012) argues that the teaching styles in many schools however, remain traditional, teacher dominated and rigid.

The qualitative research design was used in carrying out this study. According to Shank (2010) it is a form of systematic empirical enquiry into life's experiences to give them

meaning. It was chosen because it allowed for assessment of validity through crosschecking sources of information (triangulation). The researcher sampled out 10 students from each school, 3 infant teachers as well as two Teachers in Charge using purposive sampling which enabled the researcher to dig information from individuals who provided the richest information most interesting and fit to the characteristics of interest to the researcher. Data were generated using interview and observation guides as well as document analysis and were presented in the form of tables. An external hard-drive was used in backing the data up.

The researcher upheld confidentiality where the participants' responses and information was kept between the researcher and the participants. Informed consent was also upheld as the researcher explained fully what the research was about and how it was carried out.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS.

The following are conclusions:

5.3.1. The teachers who were teaching grade two students were not qualified and experienced to teach the grade understudy. They possessed diplomas in education but qualified to teach junior students, that is from grade three to seven.

5.3.2. The students' negative attitudes towards English made it difficult for them to grasp the concepts in English. There was little commitment from the students and this determined their level of success as they were not motivated to learn.

5.3.3. Unavailability of teaching and learning resources hinder the effective teaching and learning. Charts and word cards do not necessarily aid learning, especially to the grade two students who need colourful, age appropriate, interesting materials during instruction so that their interest is aroused and attention captured. The number of furniture and textbooks

contributed to how the students performed because they were not enough and students had to share the little they had.

5.3.4. Teacher centred methodologies were used in teaching grade two students. These methods were not effective to this group understudy as they learn through play. Students did not benefit because they are not active participants in their own learning.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations drawn from the data.

5.4.1 Educational Administrators.

- There is need for proper staffing in the infants' department where only infant trained, experienced and qualified teachers teach only infants and junior trained teachers teach the junior students.

- The administrators should supervise the teacher in charge as well as the infant teachers so as to ensure that effective learning is taking place.

- School heads are to make sure each class has a functional classroom library with age appropriate and varied materials for students to read and use thus developing a reading culture.

5.4.2 Educators

- Grade two teachers should motivate students through the use of Information and communication technology (I.C.T) tools such as computers, magazines, audio players, video recorders as well as the internet. These assist in capturing and maintaining the students' attention.

- Tele-collaborative learning is another method teachers can employ, whereby they create online groups on platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and twitter to share

downloaded materials as well as to discuss on how best they can help their students to perform better.

- An anthology is a requirement from the Ministry of Primary and secondary education for all infant teachers and the teachers in charge should supervise and see to it that teachers are in possession of one.

- Teachers can use digital discs with songs and rhymes that will help students learn in a gaming manner.

- Continuous assessment to be done by the teachers to review the progress of each student, the effectiveness of teaching methods as well as the achievement of laid down objectives.

- Child centred methods should be used. Methods such as dramatization, debates, quiz, spelling bee, discovery, storytelling, songs, rhymes, poetry and role play expose students directly with the body of knowledge which empowers them with necessary skills in reading, speaking, listening and writing.

5.4.3 Students

- Students are to contribute to their own learning whereby they can collect old plastic bottles, boxes as well as kaylite containers for their teachers to use. These materials can be used to store their sentence strips, work cards and word cards for the students to read.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER FROM COLLEGE

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

P. BAG 9055
Gweru
Zimbabwe

Telephone: (263) 54 60404/60337/60667/60450
Fax: (263) 54 60233/60311

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS,
MANAGEMENT AND CURRICULUM STUDIES

19 March 2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer.....NCUBE ARETHA SIPHIWE....................is a
B.Ed/MED/PGDE student at this University. She / He has to undertake research and
thereafter present a Research Project in partial fulfilment of the degree programme.

In this regard, the university kindly requests both your institution and personnel's
assistance in this student's research endeavours.

Your co-operation and assistance is greatly appreciated.

Thank you

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY
Dept of Educational Foundations,
Mngmnt. and Curriculum Studies

1 9 MAR 2018

P. BAG 9055, GWERU
ZIMBABWE
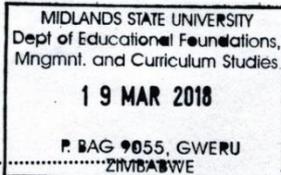
....
Dr. C. Manyumwa
(Chairperson – Educational Foundations Management and Curriculum Studies)

APPENDIX B

LETTER FROM MINISTRY

All communications should be addressed to
"The Provincial Education Director"
Tele-Fax: 67574
E-mail: matnorth12@gmail.com

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
Matabeleland North Province
P O Box 555
Bulawayo
Zimbabwe

03 April 2018

Midlands State University
P Bag 9055
Gweru

Attention: Ncube Aretha Siphiwe (Ms)   Student No. R159321X

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRYOUT A RESEARCH PROJECT: BUBI DISTRICT: MATABELELAND NORTH PROVINCE

Reference is made to your letter dated 19 March 2018, requesting for permission to carry out a research project entitled *"Factors causing poor performance in English among Grade 2 learners"* in Inkosikazi Central Cluster at Majiji and Kokolombeni Primary Schools in Bubi District, Matabeleland North Province.

You are hereby granted permission to conduct your research in the above mentioned district. However, your research should not in any way disturb the smooth running of teaching and learning activities in schools.

You will be required to furnish the Province with a copy of your findings after the research.

NB: Before proceeding into schools, please ensure that you pass through the District Schools Inspector – Bubi.

Manjere B. (Mrs)
A/Provincial Education Director – Matabeleland North.

cc: **District Schools Inspector – Bubi.**
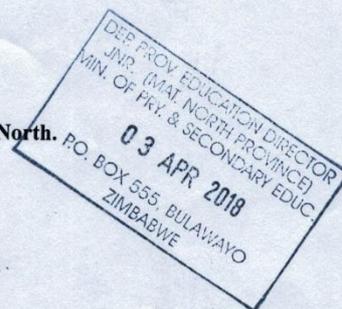
APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS IN CHARGE (T.I.C)

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS IN CHARGE (T.I.C)

My name is Ncube Aretha Siphiwe, a student at Midlands State University studying a Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education. I am carrying out a research on factors causing poor performance in English among grade two students at Inkosikazi Central Cluster. The research is done in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the programme studied. You are therefore kindly requested to answer the following questions in honesty. Your responses will be treated in confidentiality and will be used only for this study.

1. What is your qualification and experience in teaching?

2. What is your attitude towards English?

3. What resources are available for teaching English?

4. What teaching methods are used in teaching English?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GRADE TWO TEACHERS

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GRADE TWO TEACHERS

My name is Ncube Aretha Siphiwe, a student at Midlands State University studying a Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education. I am carrying out a research on factors causing poor performance in English among grade two students at Inkosikazi Central Cluster. The research is done in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the programme studied. You are therefore kindly requested to answer the following questions in honesty. Your responses will be treated in confidentiality and will be used only for this study.

1. What is your teaching qualification and experience?

2. What are the attitudes of students towards English?

3. What resources are available in the school that you use in teaching English?

4. What methods do you use in teaching English?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GRADE TWO STUDENTS

NTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GRADE TWO STUDENTS

My name is Ncube Aretha Siphiwe, a student at Midlands State University studying a Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education. I am carrying out a research on factors causing poor performance in English among grade two students at Inkosikazi Central Cluster. The research is done in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the programme studied. You are therefore kindly requested to answer the following questions in honesty. Your responses will be treated in confidentiality and will be used only for this study.

1. What experience do your teachers have in teaching English?

2. What is your attitude towards English?

3. What resources are used by your teachers in teaching English?

4. What teaching methods are used by the teachers in teaching English?

APPENDIX F

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

Date: ……………………

Time: ……………………

School: …..……………..

Class…………………….

Documents to be analysed

1. Teacher's files
a) Qualifications
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

b) Experience
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

2. Attendance Register
Student's attendance

a) Present
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

b) Absent
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

School Clock book
Teacher's attendance

a) Present
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

b) Absent
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

3. **Schemes of work**
   a) Learning media used

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………..………………

   b) Reference textbooks used

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………..

   c) Teaching methods planned

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. **Inventory Record book**

   Resources available

   a) Furniture

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

   b) Textbooks

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

   c) Gadgets and non-curriculum reading
      books…………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

5. **Master timetable**
   a) Reading time

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   .
   b) Library time

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

6. **Record of student's marks**
   a) Reading record book

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

b) Readers

…………………………………………61……………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

c) Non readers

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

d) Homework

books……………………………………………………………………………………….

APPENDIX G

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION GUIDE

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION GUIDE

My name is Ncube Aretha Siphiwe a student at Midlands State University studying Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education. I am carrying out a research on factors causing a poor performance in English among grade two learners in Inkosikazi Central Cluster. The study is being done in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the programme being studied. May you kindly allow me to observe your lesson?

Date :…………………………………………….

School :………………………………………….

Class :…………………………………………..

Time :…………………………………………..

Lesson title and Topic :………………………………………..

Writing tools

    a) Pencils

      …………………………………………………………………………………

      …………………………………………………………………………………

    b) Exercise books

      ....

      ....

Teaching and learning resources used

    a) Library

      …………………………………………………………………………………

      ………………………………..:……………………...

    b) Textbooks

      ....

      ....

c) Non curriculum reading materials and class displays

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Use of English in teaching and learning

a) Teacher

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………….
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

b) Students

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………

Nature of teaching methods used

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

APPENDIX H

TURNITIN REPORT

TURNITIN REPORT

factors causing poor perfomance in english among grade 2 learners and effects this could have in teaching and learning