

**EXPLORING CHICHEWA-INFLUENCED ERRORS IN LEARNERS'
WRITTEN ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY OF ZOMBA RURAL COMMUNITY
DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**M.Ed. (CURRICULUM AND TEACHING STUDIES - LANGUAGE
EDUCATION) THESIS**

FRACKSON JAMES MANYAMBA

UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

MAY, 2017

**EXPLORING CHICHEWA-INFLUENCED ERRORS IN LEARNERS'
WRITTEN ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY OF ZOMBA RURAL COMMUNITY
DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**M.Ed. (CURRICULUM AND TEACHING STUDIES - LANGUAGE
EDUCATION) THESIS**

By

FRACKSON JAMES MANYAMBA

B.Ed. (Humanities) - University of Malawi

Submitted to the Department of Curriculum and Teaching Studies, Faculty of
Education, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Education (Curriculum and Teaching Studies - Language Education)

University of Malawi

Chancellor College

May, 2017

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work which has not been submitted to any other institution for similar purposes. Where other people's work has been used, acknowledgements have been made.

Full legal Name

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis represents the student's own work and effort and has been submitted with our approval.

Signature: _____ Date _____

Amos Chauma, PhD (Lecturer)

Main Supervisor

Signature: _____ Date _____

Patrick Kapito, M.Ed. (Lecturer)

Co-Supervisor

Signature: _____ Date _____

Esther Kunkwenzu, PhD (Senior Lecturer)

Deputy Head of Department

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God who assisted me to secure funds for my studies through Malawi Institute of Education and Standard Bank Limited. He made a way when there appeared to be no way out for me. May his name be exalted forever.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisors, Dr. Amos Moses Chauma and Mr. Patrick Kapito, for diligently scaffolding me to come up with this work. I am deeply indebted to all the lecturers who taught me during my studies for this degree. They include Dr. Foster Kholowa, Associate Professor Allan Lipenga, Dr. Macloud Salanjira and my two supervisors whom I have already mentioned.

I express my gratitude to the Education Division Manager for the South East Education Division (SEED), Mr. McGregory Alufandika, for granting me timely permission to conduct my study in the SEED Community Day Secondary Schools. Special thanks should go to all the participants in the study for providing me with their invaluable experiences, beliefs and practices about Chichewa-influenced errors in written English. I am also grateful to my wife, Martha Mwahache, and our children: Joyce and Frackson (Junior), for encouraging me throughout my studies. They allowed me to spend some time in solitude in order to concentrate on my academic work. I wish to thank Mr. P.Z Namfuko, former Deputy Head Teacher of Zomba Catholic Secondary School for allowing me to enroll for this programme while working as a Teacher. I also thank all those who assisted me in one way or another in my endeavour to come up with this thesis. They include Mr. Lloyd Lemani and Ms Mary Yakobe of Zomba Catholic Secondary School and Ms Mary Nguluwe of Malawi Institute of Education.

Above all, I praise God for the gift of life and for sustaining me throughout the study.

ABSTRACT

This study was carried out following concerns that the influence of Chichewa undermined the quality of English written by secondary school learners in Malawi. The study aimed at exploring the Chichewa-influenced errors which learners made in their written English. Specifically, the study was set to find out the errors influenced by Chichewa which learners made in written English, factors that contributed to the learners' making of such errors and how teachers dealt with such factors to assist learners to overcome the errors. A total of four teachers of English and 40 learners were purposively selected from four rural public Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSSs) to participate in this qualitative case study. Document analysis, classroom observations, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used to generate data. The study revealed that learners made six types of Chichewa-influenced errors: use of Chichewa words, literal translation, word order, subject-verb agreement, spelling and omission. The study found that excessive use of Chichewa in English lessons, inadequacy of English textbooks and learners' poor background from primary schooling contributed to the learners' making of Chichewa-based errors. The researcher concludes that learners had low English vocabulary. Therefore, from the study findings, the implication is that only English be used in the teaching and learning of English and that teachers should assist learners to develop English vocabulary and proficiency.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF APPENDICES	xii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xiii
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Chapter overview	1
1.1 Background to the study	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	3
1.3 Purpose of the study	4
1.4 Research questions	4
<i>1.4.1 Main research question</i>	4
<i>1.4.2 Subsidiary research questions</i>	4
1.5 Significance of the study	5
1.6 Definitions of operational terms	5
1.7 Chapter summary	6
1.8 Thesis structure	7
CHAPTER 2	8
REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RELATED RESEARCH	8

2.0 Chapter overview	8
2.1 Theories of language acquisition and learning.....	8
<i>2.1.1 Behaviourism</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>2.1.2 Cognitivism</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>2.1.3 Interlanguage.....</i>	<i>11</i>
2.2 Significance of errors	13
2.3 Classification of errors	15
CHAPTER 3.....	28
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	28
3.0 Chapter overview	28
3.1 Research approach.....	28
3.2 Research design	29
3.3 Sampling and population	30
<i>3.3.1 Research site</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>3.3.2 Selection of schools</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>3.3.3 Selection of participants</i>	<i>33</i>
3.4 Methods of data generation.....	34
<i>3.4.1 Document analysis.....</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>3.4.2 Observations.....</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>3.4.3 In-depth interviews (IDIs)</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>3.4.4 Focus group discussions (FGDs).....</i>	<i>42</i>
3.5 Data analysis.....	44

3.5.1 Document analysis.....	45
3.5.2 Analysis of observational data	46
3.5.3 Analysis of data from IDIs and FGDs.....	47
3.6 Data management	49
3.7 Credibility and trustworthiness of the study.....	49
3.7.1 Pilot testing	49
3.7.2 Direct quotations.....	51
3.7.3 Peer review.....	51
3.7.4 Triangulation.....	52
3.8 Access negotiation	52
3.9 Ethical considerations.....	53
3.10 Limitation of the study	54
3.11 Chapter summary	55
CHAPTER 4.....	56
PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	56
4.0 Chapter overview	56
4.1 Contexts of the four schools	56
4.1.1 CDSS A	56
4.1.2 CDSS B	58
4.1.3 CDSS C	59
4.1.4 CDSS D	60
4.2 Specific findings	62

4.2.1 <i>Chichewa-influenced errors in learners' written English</i>	62
4.2.2 <i>Factors that influence learners to make Chichewa-based errors in written English</i>	80
4.2.3 <i>How teachers dealt with the influencing factors to assist learners</i>	90
4.3 Chapter summary	99
CHAPTER 5	100
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	100
5.0 Chapter overview	100
5.1 Conclusions and implications.....	100
5.1.1 <i>Chichewa-influenced errors in learners' written English</i>	101
5.1.2 <i>Factors that influence learners to make Chichewa-based errors in written English</i>	101
5.1.3 <i>How teachers dealt with the influencing factors to assist learners</i>	102
5.2 Implications from the study	102
5.3 Suggested area for further study	103
REFERENCES.....	104
APPENDICES	116

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: A summary of focus group discussions (FGDs) with learners	44
Table 2: A summary of specific characteristics of the teacher at school A	57
Table 3: A summary of specific characteristics of the teacher at school B	59
Table 4: A summary of specific characteristics of the teacher at school C	60
Table 5: A summary of specific characteristics of the teacher at school D	61
Table 6: A summary of the Chichewa-influenced errors observed in learners’ written English	63
Table 7: Use of Chichewa in English lessons at school D.....	83

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter of introduction from Chancellor College	116
Appendix 2: Request letter for the study to the SEED Manager	117
Appendix 3: Permission letter from the SEED Manager.....	118
Appendix 4: A sample letter to head teachers	119
Appendix 5: Questionnaire for head teachers	120
Appendix 6: A sample letter to teachers of English in Form 4.....	122
Appendix 7: Teacher consent form.....	123
Appendix 8: A sample letter of commitment for research participants	124
Appendix 9: Questionnaire for background information about teachers of English for Form 4.....	125
Appendix 10: Questionnaire for background information about learners in Form 4	127
Appendix 11: Lesson observation schedule.....	129
Appendix 12: An interview schedule for teachers	131
Appendix 13: A guide for focus group discussion with learners.....	133
Appendix 14: Sample lesson observation transcript.....	135
Appendix 15: Sample in-depth interview transcript	141
Appendix 16: Sample focus group discussion transcript with learners	145
Appendix 17: Sample essays written by Form Four learners	151

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CA	Contrastive Analysis
CAH	Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
CDSS	Community Day Secondary School
CER	Chief Examiners' Report
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EA	Error Analysis
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
JCE	Junior Certificate of Education
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MANEB	Malawi National Examinations Board
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MOI	Medium of Instruction
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education
SEED	South Eastern Education Division
SLA	Second Language Acquisition

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Chapter overview

This chapter introduces the whole thesis. It discusses the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study and the research questions. The chapter also discusses the significance of the study to the education sector. A list of terms and their definitions as used in the study is also presented. The chapter ends with an overview of the subsequent chapters.

1.1 Background to the study

In Malawi, English is the official and second language. As such Government clearly states in *The Senior Secondary English Language Syllabus* that English is an internationally used medium of communication for government, law, education, commerce and industry, among others, and that Malawians need to achieve a high level of competence in the language (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2013). The competence includes the writing skill among other communication skills like listening, speaking and reading. To achieve this core objective, the Ministry adopted the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. The focus of CLT is to promote

communication skills in learners (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). However, in order to achieve effective communication in writing, special attention is drawn to acceptable spellings, selection of vocabulary, acceptable grammar and logical flow of ideas, among others (Harmer 1983).

English is a deciding subject for the award of any certificate by the Malawi National Examinations Board (MANEB). This means that candidates with a fail in English are not awarded a certificate by MANEB even if they have good grades in the other subjects. The implication is that a grade in English contributes to the general pass rate at national examinations in secondary schools. In addition, a good grade in English is one of the requirements for one to proceed to institutions of higher learning. For example, universities in Malawi require candidates to have a minimum of six credits at the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE), one of which must be in English.

Although English is the key subject in secondary schools, Nthala (2010) observes that learners in secondary schools in Malawi reveal enormous problems in both spoken and written English. He states that the problems, among others, include spelling, vocabulary and grammatical errors. Ng'ombe (1981) observes that these problems negatively affect the communicative intent resulting in ambiguity and total loss of meaning in some cases.

One of the challenges that learners in secondary schools grapple with in their learning of English is the influence of mother tongue. For instance, secondary school teachers in

South Eastern Education Division (SEED) expressed a concern that Chichewa compromised the quality of English written by learners in the division. This was revealed at a workshop on the teaching of language and literature in secondary schools held in 2012 organised by SEED. Second, The Malawi National Examinations Board (MANEB) chief examiners' reports on form four examinations responses for English (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014) mention the influence of local language as one of the factors that affect candidates' performance in national examinations. According to the reports, mother tongue interference makes candidates lose marks. As a result, the candidates perform poorly in English. Third, Kumwenda (2007) and Zimba (2010) report that many stakeholders including journalists, parents and teachers claim that Chichewa interference is one of the major causes of the poor quality of English that is spoken and written by secondary school learners in Malawi.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Although learners make Chichewa-influenced errors in their written English, little has been done on the topic. For instance, Zimba (2010) conducted a study that focused on the influence of Chichewa on the pronunciation of English words by secondary school learners in Malawi. From the literature the researcher reviewed, no study had been done in Malawi to explore the influence of Chichewa on written English. It is against this background that the present study explores how Chichewa influences secondary school learners to make errors as they construct written English sentences.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore Chichewa-influenced errors that learners made in their written English

.

1.4 Research questions

The study was guided by a main and subsidiary research questions.

1.4.1 Main research question

The main research question was: How does Chichewa influence secondary school learners to make errors in their written English?

1.4.2 Subsidiary research questions

The following were the three subsidiary research questions which were intended to answer the main research question.

- What Chichewa-influenced errors do secondary school learners make in their written English?
- What factors influence learners to make Chichewa-related errors in written English?
- How do teachers deal with the influencing factors to assist learners to overcome the errors?

1.5 Significance of the study

The present study is significant in three ways. First, the study provides insights regarding Chichewa-influenced errors since little has been done on the issue. Second, subject teachers, curriculum specialists and other interested stakeholders, would likely use the results of this study to improve the practice of teaching and learning of English as far as Chichewa interference is concerned. For instance, the findings would help teachers find ways of minimising Chichewa interference which would help improve the academic performance of learners. Finally, the findings of this study would enhance language practitioners' knowledge of the relationship that exists between Chichewa and the teaching and learning of English as regards writing.

1.6 Definitions of operational terms

The following terms have been defined in order to allow for a clear understanding of the context in which they are used in the study.

Mother tongue: It is a language that a child acquires from birth; a language of one's ethnic group (Davies, 2003). In this study, other terms that have been used interchangeably with mother tongue are: vernacular, local language, native language, and first language.

Target language: This refers to the language being learned or taught (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982). In this study, it is used synonymously with the term "second language."

Learner language: It is the spoken or written output that a language learner produces using the knowledge of the target language (Ellis, 1997). Learner language is also

referred to as “interlanguage”, that is, the language somewhere between the learner’s first language and the target language (Selinker, 1972).

Language transfer: This is the effect that one language, particularly the first language, has on another language and this can occur at any level (Thornbury, 2006).

Positive transfer: This means that the first language has a facilitating effect on the learning of the target language (Ringbom, 1987).

Interference: This refers to language transfer that results in errors. It is also called “negative transfer” (Ringbom, 1987).

Second Language Acquisition (SLA): It is the study of how second languages are acquired or learned (Thornbury, 2006). Similarly, Ellis (1997, p.3) defines second language acquisition as “the study of the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom.”

Official language: It is a language that is given a special legal status in a particular country, state or other jurisdiction (Chauma, 2013). Typically a country’s official language refers to the language used within its government - courts, parliament and administration to run its operations and conduct its business.

1.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed the background to the study in relation to the value of English as a subject in Malawian education system and how it affects learners’ academic performance in secondary schools. The chapter has also presented the statement of the problem in relation to the negative influence of Chichewa on the teaching and learning of

English. The purpose, significance, main and subsidiary research questions of the study have also been discussed. Finally, the chapter has presented a list of operational terms and their definitions as used in the study. The next chapter reviews related literature in order to appreciate some of the studies that have been done in this area, justifying the current study in the process. The theoretical framework that informs the study is also discussed in the next chapter.

1.8 Thesis structure

The thesis is presented in five chapters. Chapter one introduces the whole thesis. Chapter two reviews related literature and research. Chapter three discusses the research design and methodology. The research findings are presented and discussed in chapter four. Finally, chapter five draws conclusions and provides implications of the study. An area for further study is also suggested in chapter five.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RELATED RESEARCH

2.0 Chapter overview

This chapter examines literature on the teaching and learning of a second language (L2) with particular reference to errors caused by negative influence from the learners' mother tongue (L1). First, the chapter discusses theories of language acquisition and learning. Then, the chapter discusses the significance and types of errors in language education. After this, the influence of L1 on the learning of L2 is discussed. Finally, the chapter presents and discusses the theoretical framework that informs the study.

2.1 Theories of language acquisition and learning

This sub-section discusses three theories of language acquisition and learning. They explain the processes on how human beings acquire their first language and how they learn a second language. The theories will act as a springboard for discussing errors in the subsequent sections. They include Behaviourism, Cognitivism and Interlanguage.

2.1.1 Behaviourism

During 1930s and 40s, linguists were influenced by Behaviourism which resulted in the publication of teaching materials based on Behaviourist theory (Larsen Freeman, 1991). According to Behaviourists, learning takes place due to the relationship between stimulus and learners' responses to it. Therefore, this theory views language as behaviour which consists of habituated responses and imitations that become words through reinforcement. Thus, the theory stresses the importance of the environment in language learning. As Brown (1994) puts it, according to Behaviourism, the environment includes both models upon which language growth depends and feedback to child's utterances, which shares and encourages growth.

Behaviourists believe that the responses of the learners to the stimulus are automatic and not a result of any deliberate thought. Learners form associations between words and objects or events in their environment. These associations become stronger as soon as experiences are repeated. If the encouragement for correct imitations is provided, the learner forms habits. For the Behaviourists, language learning and its development is a matter of conditioning by means of imitation, practice, reinforcement, and habituation, which constitute the paces of language acquisition.

However, the Behaviourist theory is inadequate in explaining how human beings acquire and learn language. For instance, Chomsky (1966) observes that language learning is of inborn nature for the most part, and therefore language is not a habit formation.

According to Chomsky, the quantity and quality of children's spontaneous imitations of adult language is limited and cannot account for the many complex sentences that children produce later as they develop language. In other words, there are infinite numbers of sentences in any language; all possible sentences would be impossible to learn through imitation and reinforcement as argued by Behaviourists. Chomsky's view leads to another theory of language acquisition and learning as explained in the following paragraphs.

2.1.2 Cognitivism

Cognitive theory views language learning and acquisition as a biological process. Chomsky (1966) argues that children are born with a mental capacity to learn language. Thus, the motivator for language acquisition is inside children; it is their natural learning ability. Cognitivists call this capacity a Language Acquisition Device (LAD), which enables the induction of rules (Chomsky, 1966). Cognitive theory is also called "Mentalist" or "Nativist" theory because all cognitive interpretation of language learning rests upon the neuro-psychological base of thought (Brown, 1994).

Although the Mentalist theory of language acquisition and learning is an improvement on Behaviourism, it is also insufficient. For instance, Bloom (1970) observes that syntactic growth cannot be exclusively biological; considerations have to be made on the meaning intention and the role of context or the environment. Therefore, the Mentalist theory has a narrow view of language when the adult role in child language acquisition is considered.

Adults have a role to play in children's learning of language. Therefore, both the environment and the inborn capacity (LAD) influence language acquisition and learning as asserted by the theory that follows.

2.1.3 Interlanguage

The Interlanguage theory views second language acquisition as a complex process. The theory accommodates both Behaviourist and Nativist ideas. According to Ellis (1997), the term “interlanguage” was coined by the American linguist, Larry Selinker, in recognition of the fact that second language (L2) learners construct a linguistic system that draws, in part, on the learner's first language (L1) but is also different from it and also from the target language. The theory of Interlanguage holds the following arguments.

The first precept of Interlanguage is that the learner constructs a system of abstract rules which underlies comprehension and production of the L2. Ellis (1997) explains that this system of rules is viewed as a “mental grammar” and is referred to as “interlanguage”. Secondly, Interlanguage theory argues that the learner's grammar is permeable. This means that the grammar is open to influence from outside through the input. It is also influenced from the inside through internal processes (Ellis, 1997).

Thirdly, Interlanguage theory argues that the learner's grammar is transitional. In other words, learners change their grammar from one time to another by adding rules, deleting

rules and restructuring the whole system. Ellis (1997) further explains that this process results in an interlanguage continuum, meaning that learners construct a series of mental grammars or interlanguages as they gradually increase the complexity of their L2 knowledge. For example, learners may initially begin with a very simple grammar where only one form of a verb is represented, but over time they add other forms, gradually sorting out the functions that the verbs can be used to perform.

Finally, the theory of Interlanguage argues that the learner's grammar is likely to fossilise. Thus, some errors become permanent and are resistant to change if not corrected. According to Selinker (1972), only about 5 % of learners go on to develop the same mental grammar as native speakers and that the majority stop some way short.

From the discussions in the preceding paragraphs, it is evident that the Interlanguage theory offers a general account of how L2 acquisition takes place. It incorporates elements from Mentalist theory of linguistics (for example, the notion of a Language Acquisition Device) and elements from the Behaviourist view of stimulus-response parameters, especially the role of the learners' L1 in L2 learning (Ellis, 1997). Therefore, both the environment and the mental processes are important in language acquisition and learning. The following section discuss the importance of errors which learners make as they learn a language.

2.2 Significance of errors

The study adopts James's (1998) and Harmer's (1983) definition that a mistake is a wrong form which occurs due to carelessness, inattention, fatigue or other problems while the producer has knowledge of the language. This means that mistakes are just slips of the tongue, the brain or the hand, and the producer is able to self-correct since he or she has the knowledge. On the other hand, James (1998) and Harmer (1983) define an error as a deviation or wrong form due to lack of knowledge. The producer of an error is not able to self-correct since he or she does not have the knowledge to do so. In other words, errors reflect gaps in a learner's knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct. In language education, errors are significant in three ways as discussed in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, a learner's errors provide evidence of the system of the language that he or she has learnt at a particular point in the course (Corder, 1967). The learner uses some system although it is not yet the right system. Therefore, errors tell the teacher how far towards the goal the learner has progressed, and consequently, what remains for the learner to learn. The teacher, therefore, knows how to help the learners perform tasks (scaffolding). Thus, as Brown (1994) puts it, "errors are windows to a learner's internalised understanding of the second language and therefore, they give teachers something observable to react to" (p.27). Errors help the teacher to know what Vygotsky (1962), a Russian Psychologist, calls "the zone of proximal development", a term which refers to the cognitive level that a child is not yet at but is capable of performing at with guidance.

Secondly, Corder (1967) argues that the making of errors by learners should be regarded as a device the learner uses to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his or her hypotheses about the nature of the target language. Corder (1967) adds that the making of errors is then a strategy employed both by children acquiring their mother tongue and by those learning a second language. Therefore, knowledge of the errors learners make helps the teacher determine how to assist them overcome the errors. It is for this reason that the present study focuses on Chichewa-related errors secondary school learners make in their written English so that the teachers can determine how to assist the learners to overcome the problem, thereby improving the teaching and learning of English.

Thirdly, Corder (1967) argues that errors are significant in that they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his or her discovery of the language. Hence, the researcher felt that there was need to study the errors that secondary school learners made related to Chichewa so that the teacher would determine how to deal with those errors. As argued by Corder (1978), in order to deal with errors, teachers must be able to account for why they occurred. Similarly, Erkaya (2012, p.3) maintains that “instructors need to understand the types of errors and why learners make such errors in order to help them to remediate the problem.”

2.3 Classification of errors

In language, an error is a construction that does not conform to the accepted norms of usage. In the case of English, these norms by which errors are judged are usually defined in terms of adult native speakers of Standard English. Tiffen (1970, p.25) defines Standard English as “the type of English that is used, comparatively with minor variations, by the educated English speakers throughout the world.” He further states that it is the kind of English that is the language of education, administration, law, commerce and the press. Therefore, any construction that deviates from the norms of Standard English is considered an error or a mistake. The following paragraphs discuss some classifications of errors in language education.

Errors are categorised in a number of ways. One of them is according to the way they depart from the norm (Thornbury, 2006). For instance, an error of omission is where an obligatory element is left out, as in **Is very hot*. In this sentence the subject has been left out, making the sentence ungrammatical. An error of addition, on the other hand, is one such as **The teacher made us to go*, where *to* has been added unnecessarily. A mis-selection error is one where the wrong item has been used. A misformation error is the wrong form of the right word, as in **She is a good cooker*. A misordering error is when sentence components are in the wrong order, as in **I like very much football*. All these examples are given by Thornbury (2006, pp.75-76).

Errors are also classified according to their possible cause. This is the particular concern of error analysis. Error analysis is “a field of second language learning research that collects, collates and explains errors, and, in this way, offer insights into the internal processes of language acquisition” (Thornbury, 2006, p.76). In this regard, there are two main categories of errors: transfer or inter-lingual errors and developmental. Transfer errors are those that result from the influence of the learner’s first language or any other language the learner knows. On the other hand, developmental errors are those that occur as a natural part of the learning process (Richards, 2001; Erkaya, 2012).

It used to be thought that all errors were transfer errors. However, according to Richards (1974), research has shown that there are certain errors that all learners appear to make regardless of their first language, and in predictable chronological order (order of acquisition). This order is the same irrespective of the learners’ first language, their age, or the order in which they are taught. Examples are morphemes such as the *-ing* ending, or the definite article *the*. According to Thornbury (2006), many of the errors made in these morphemes are due to the over-generalisation of a rule: for example, the application of the past tense *-ed* ending to verbs that are in fact irregular, as in **She bought mangoes*. Errors can also be evaluated in terms of their severity. In this respect, errors have been described by Burt and Kiparsky (1972) as being of two types: local and global errors. Burt and Kiparsky (1972) refer to global errors as those that affect the overall organisation of a sentence and significantly hinder communication. They are called “global” because of their wide syntactic scope (Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982).

Local errors, on the other hand, are those that affect single elements (constituents) in a sentence and do not usually hinder communication significantly (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982). In other words, while a global error affects the overall intelligibility of the message, a local error has a relatively insignificant effect in terms of the meaning of the sentence. According to Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982), local errors include those in noun and verb inflections, articles, auxiliaries and the formation of quantifiers. Burt and Kiparsky (1972) labelled them “local” since they are limited to a single part of the sentence (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982).

Knowledge of the characteristics and types of errors was relevant to this study. It helped the researcher in error identification and analysis since the study focuses on errors which learners made in their written English. Special attention was on those resulting from the influence of Chichewa. The following section discusses mother tongue-influenced errors in language education.

2.4 Mother tongue-influenced errors

The view that the native language plays a negative role on the learning of a second language was emphasised as early as the forties and the fifties by Fries (1945) and Lado (1957). They observed that learning a second language is a complex process which involves many inter-related factors including L1 interference. Ellis (1994) defines mother tongue-influenced errors as the incorporation of features of L1 into the knowledge system of L2 which the learner is trying to build. He further explains that typically learners begin

by transferring sounds and meanings, various rules, word order and pragmatics. Schmied (1991) also argues that with the passage of time, deviations in the target language become institutionalised and result in the development of a language with features transferred from the mother tongue.

According to Lado (1957), differences between L1 and L2 are the main sources of difficulty for the second language learner and that they can form the basis of language texts and tests, and for the correction of students learning a language. Odlin (1989) and Crystal (1997) also argue that some of the differences between L1 and L2 can cause misunderstandings and many lead to second language speech and writing that differ greatly from the discourse norms of the target language. Therefore, the importance of knowing the presence of L1 transfer in these sub-systems of language is that it enables teachers to find out techniques for dealing with the errors (Corder, 1981).

The literature reviewed in the preceding paragraphs on L1 transfer in L2 learning indicates that the learner's first language has an impact on the learning of a second language. In some cases, this results in errors being committed by the L2 learners (interference), which is the focus of the present study. What follows is a presentation and discussion of some specific studies that had been done in Malawi and other countries in relation to the negative influence of learners' native language on the learning of a second language.

Erkaya (2012) investigated errors in a corpus of 17 English essays written by 17 Turkish students at intermediate level of English proficiency. The steps followed in the study were the ones suggested by Corder (1974): sample collection, error identification, error description, error explanation, and error evaluation. After analysing participants' English essays, the researcher identified errors in lexicon, grammar, and syntax. Errors in lexicon were the most problematic ones. They were global errors; that is, they caused many of the participants' statements to sound incomprehensible.

Erkaya (2012) described the errors using Burt and Kiparsky's (1972) error classification as local and global errors. Erkaya (2012) argues that participants' local errors could have been avoided had they been aware of the differences between English (L2) and Turkish (L1), or the causes of interference from L1. In reference to errors in lexicon, most were identified as global errors. According to Erkaya, a variety of vocabulary strategies could have been introduced to participants throughout the years that they studied English to help them manage the vast amount of vocabulary that they should have learned by the intermediate level of English fluency. The present study is different from Erkaya's (2012) study in that it uses a different language as L1. In the present study the L1 is Chichewa while in the other study the L1 was Turkish.

Another study was done by Baloch (2013) who carried out an error analysis aimed at investigating the impact of Arabic in the learning of English. The focus of that study was spelling errors made by undergraduate students while using letters *b*, *p* and *e*. The study

analysed these spelling errors and observed how mother tongue (Arabic) interfered in the learning of second language (English) in terms of spellings. A list of 50 misspelled words was collected from students' written examinations scripts.

The findings of Baloch's (2013) study revealed that students made spelling errors while using letters *b*, *p* and *e*. The researcher reports that students wrote "webt" instead of "wept" and there were other cases when they used "p" instead of "b". For example, they wrote "describe" as "descripe". The researcher came up with a long list of such errors when students used "b" instead of "p" and vice versa. The study also revealed that learners could drop final "e"; for instance, they wrote "theme" as "them". Baloch (2013, p.226) argues that "the omission and addition of "e" in the final position occurred because students could not find such examples in their mother tongue and also they did not find spelling rules for "e" at the final position of words in English."

Baloch's (2013) study shows that Arabic interferes in the learning of English in terms of spelling errors. Much as the present study also examines L1 interference on English, it is unique in three ways. Firstly, the present study investigates the effects of a different L1 (Chichewa) on the learning of English particularly focusing on the errors which the learners make in their written English. Secondly, the two studies differ in terms of learners' academic levels. Baloch's research was conducted among university students whereas the present study was done at secondary school level. Finally, the two studies differ in terms of their settings. While that of Baloch (2013) was done in the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia, the present study was carried out in Malawi, an African context. Therefore, the present study is not a duplication of Baloch's (2013) study.

In Malawi, Zimba (2010) investigated the impact of Chichewa on English pronunciation in Malawian secondary schools. He observed that English pronunciation by learners had greatly declined and that first language interference had been singled out as one of the factors that affected pronunciation in second language learning. His study aimed at finding out how the problem of first language interference in English pronunciation in secondary schools could be addressed for effective communication during class activities. The sample of that study comprised teachers and learners of forms one and three in two conventional secondary schools in Kasungu district. Three methods of data generation were used: questionnaire administration, recording of learners' oral activities and classroom observations.

The findings of Zimba's (2010) study revealed that there was ample evidence that Chichewa interfered with English pronunciation which affected communication between the speaker and the listener because of mispronunciation. However, Zimba's (2010) study did not focus on written English; it only focused on English pronunciation. The present study focuses on errors learners make in written English, thereby filling in the knowledge gap. Secondly, Zimba's study was conducted in conventional secondary schools in Kasungu district whereas this one was carried out in Community Day Secondary Schools of Zomba rural.

Nthala (2010) conducted a study that aimed at investigating spelling errors made by secondary school learners in written English. The study was carried out because there was a concern that secondary school learners made a lot of spelling errors which made them perform poorly in English. He sampled a total of 52 learners in form three and eight teachers from four secondary schools in Karonga district. He used two methods of data generation: analysis of learners' written compositions for spelling errors and questionnaire administration to teachers and learners.

Nthala's (2010) study found that there were three main causes of spelling errors in the schools sampled. These include spelling rule inconsistencies in the English language, mother tongue (Chitumbuka) phonological transfer and shortcomings in the learning environment. However, Nthala's study dwelled on spelling errors while the present study focuses on errors in learners' written English in general. Secondly, the mother tongue in Nthala's study was Chitumbuka whereas in the present study, the mother tongue was Chichewa, a local language that is structurally different from Chitumbuka. Therefore, this study is not a duplication of Nthala's study.

Another study was done by Kamwaza (2011) who analysed English grammatical errors in the scripts written by students at the Polytechnic, University of Malawi. Her aim was to find out the sort of errors the students committed and to propose solutions to the linguistic problem. She conducted this study because various individuals and

organisations such as The Electricity Supply Corporation of Malawi (ESCOM) had lodged complaints concerning low level of communication skills in the Polytechnic students and graduates. The sample included first, third and fourth year students from selected programmes at the college. The data used was generated from written assignment scripts (which had not yet been returned to students), reserves of marked examination scripts and final year students' projects. The findings revealed that the majority of the errors were due to intra-lingual problems; that is, students' failure to internalise rules in the English language. However, a few of the errors could be explained as being influenced by mother tongue.

The present study is different from Kamwaza's (2011) study in that the focus of Kamwaza's study was not on Chichewa-induced errors, but on grammatical errors in general whereas the present study focused on Chichewa-related errors. Again, the levels at which the two studies were done are different. Kamwaza's study was conducted among university students which is a higher level. In contrast, the present study was done among learners of a lower level, that of secondary school.

In summary, the literature reviewed in this section indicates that mother tongue interference on second language learning has been researched by various scholars across the world. The literature indicates that the native language of learners plays a significant role in learning a second language. In some cases, the L1 influences learners to make errors in L2. However, none of the reviewed studies discusses in detail the influence of

Chichewa on written English and the factors that trigger the same in Malawian secondary schools. The current study is therefore unique for it fills in that gap. The following section presents and discusses the theoretical framework that informs the study.

2.5 Theoretical framework

This study adopts the theory of Contrastive Analysis (CA) by Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982). This is a theory about second language teaching that is based on behaviourist views of stimulus-response parameters. It states that “second language learners tend to transfer the formal features of their mother tongue habits to their second language utterances, which sometimes result in second language interference” (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p.53). The theory explains that when the language habits of the mother tongue are the same as those of the second language, learning of the second language is facilitated. If, on the other hand, the habits of the two languages are different, errors arise in the second language. This is negative transfer and impairs communication (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982).

According to Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991), before the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) was established, researchers from the 1940s to the 1960s conducted contrastive analyses, systematically comparing two languages. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) report that the researchers were motivated by the prospect of being able to identify points of similarity and difference between particular native languages and target languages. The researchers believed that a more effective pedagogy would result when

these were taken into consideration. Fries (1945) puts it this way: “The most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner” (p.9).

Lado (1957, p.1) also expresses the following as the reason as to why language materials were thought to be more efficient when based on Contrastive Analyses (CAs):

Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture - both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and culture as practised by natives.

Similarly, Weinreich (1953, p.1) asserts that “the greater the difference between two systems, the greater is the learning problem and the potential area of interference.” Weinreich (1953) also maintains that the conviction that the linguistic differences could be used to predict gave rise to the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH). The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis states that “where two languages are similar, positive transfer would occur; where they are different, negative transfer, or interference, would result” (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p.53).

Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) further point out that the field of language teaching was dominated by the prevailing view of language at that time, that of behaviourism. The behaviourists held that language acquisition was a product of habit formation. Habits

were constructed “through the repeated association between some stimulus and some response, which would become bonded when positively reinforced” (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p.55). This implies that second language learning was viewed as a process of overcoming the habits of the native language in order to acquire the new habits of the target language. Ringbom (1987) reports that this was to be accomplished through the pedagogical practices of dialogue memorisation, imitation and pattern practice.

However, the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis was later found to be inadequate. For example, Duskova (1969) observed that while CAH predicted some errors, it did not anticipate all. In other words, it underpredicted the errors. Again, some errors it did predict, did not materialise, that is, it overpredicted (Dulay & Burt, 1974; Thornbury, 2006). On the other hand, Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) argue that some of the discrepancies in the findings from these studies could be attributed to the procedures utilised. They observe, for instance, that the way an error was classified as being due to L1 interference or not, differed from one study to another.

In spite of these criticisms, contrastive analysis continued to be conducted in identifying where and when L1 influence could be expected to take place in second language learning (Larsen-Freeman & Long 1991). The researcher in the present study chose contrastive analysis (CA) as the theoretical framework since it clearly explains why second language learners make errors that mirror their mother tongue. Therefore, the researcher used this theory as a lens through which he made sense of the L1-based errors

observed in the learners' written English. He started by identifying the errors in the learners' written English work, described and explained them in terms of the similarities and differences between the learners' L1 (Chichewa) and the L2 (English) which is the main argument of CA, the theoretical framework.

2.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has reviewed some of the available literature on mother tongue interference in second language learning and in the process, justifying the need for conducting the current study. The chapter has particularly focused on theories of language acquisition and learning, characteristics of errors and their significance in language education and the studies that have been done around mother tongue interference both in Malawi and abroad. The theoretical framework that informs the study has also been presented and discussed in this chapter. The next chapter discusses the design and methodology employed in the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Chapter overview

This chapter presents a description and justification of the entire methodological basis of the study. Firstly, it describes the general study approach and design and why it is appropriate for the study. Then, it focuses on the data generation methods and tools. Sample and sampling procedures are also discussed in this chapter. Finally, the chapter discusses the methods of data analysis, ethical considerations, access negotiation, issues of credibility and trustworthiness, as well as the limitation of the study.

3.1 Research approach

The researcher employed a qualitative approach. Qualitative research refers to studies that investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situations or materials (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; Creswell, 2009). Qualitative data is mainly collected in the form of words or pictures and seldom involve numbers. As stated by Dunn (1999), qualitative approaches are distinguished by their reliance on verbal reports, descriptions and interpretation of events.

The researcher chose qualitative research approach because it tallies well with the aim of the study. The study aimed at exploring Chichewa-influenced errors which learners make in their written English and investigating the factors that contribute to the making of such errors. Therefore, the researcher felt that the appropriate study approach for this particular research was qualitative. In support of this view, Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) state that qualitative researchers are especially interested in how things occur and particularly in the perspectives of the subjects of a study. Dunn (1999) also observes that qualitative approaches disclose the richness of human experience. Therefore, since the researcher intended to explore the experiences of the participants in their natural setting, he used qualitative study approach.

3.2 Research design

The researcher employed a case study design. Creswell (2009, p.227) defines a case study as “a qualitative research design whereby the researcher explores in depth a programme, process, an event or activity; or one or more individuals.” He further points out that the researcher collects detailed information using a variety of data generation methods and the aim is to understand the case or cases in their context. Case studies involve looking at a case or phenomenon in its real-life context, usually employing many types of data (Robson, 2002). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), a case may be an individual, a role, a small group, an organisation, a community, a school or a nation. It may also be a decision, a policy, a process, an incident or event of some sort.

In the present study, the case that was investigated was the teaching and learning of English in Community Day Secondary Schools of Zomba rural with a particular focus on the negative influence of Chichewa on the errors which learners made in their written English. However, since not everything can be studied, even about one case, specific focus is required (Sarantakos, 2005). In this regard, the specific research questions help to define the focus. In the present study, the focus was on three aspects. The first one was to find out the errors influenced by Chichewa which the learners made in their written English. The second one was to examine the factors within the school that influenced the learners to make such errors. The last one was to explore the efforts the teachers made to address the challenges.

A case study design was chosen for this study because it meets the intention of the study; that is, to analyse an issue in detail. The study took a cross-sectional design. Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) define a cross-sectional design as one where data is collected within a short period of time and across different categories of people. The study focused on exploring the Chichewa-induced errors committed by learners in their written English in Community Day Secondary Schools of Zomba rural.

3.3 Sampling and population

Sampling is the process of selecting units (for example, people, organisations) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may fairly generalise our results back to the population from which they were chosen (Trochim, 2006). Purposive

sampling was used to come up with the schools, the teachers and the learners who participated in this study. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) define purposive sampling as “a technique in which researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgement of their typicality or possession of the particular characteristics being sought” (p.114).

In the present study, purposive sampling enabled the researcher to obtain samples that were knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon the researcher was investigating. As Creswell (2009) points out, purposive sampling is best when the research targets a particular group. In this study, the researcher targeted learners whose mother tongue was Chichewa. Therefore, the most suitable method of selecting the research participants was purposive sampling, targeting learners whose mother tongue was Chichewa. In support of this view, Ball (1990) points out that in many cases purposive sampling is used in order to access people who have in-depth knowledge about particular issues, maybe by virtue of their professional role, power, expertise or experience.

3.3.1 Research site

The research was done in Zomba rural. Zomba district is in the southern part of Malawi and falls under the South East Education Division (SEED). This district was chosen because of two reasons. Firstly, it is one of the districts where Chichewa is a dominating local language. Therefore, it was purposively selected since it was thought to be suitable

for the study as the study focused on errors made in English but induced by Chichewa. Secondly, Zomba was chosen because of its proximity to the researcher's place of residence. This made the study less expensive in terms of transport and other subsistence costs because the researcher had limited resources.

Secondary schools in Zomba are geographically demarcated into two: rural and urban. The study was done in the rural area because the researcher felt that the probability of finding bilingual learners who could hear and understand English and Chichewa only was higher in the rural area. Urban areas are usually inhabited by people from different parts of the country with various mother tongues. Selecting English and Chichewa bilingual learners assisted to ensure that the L1-based errors they made were not due to other mother tongues, but due to Chichewa, their first language.

3.3.2 Selection of schools

Four rural public Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSSs) were purposefully selected to participate in this study. The study was carried out in CDSSs because, according to MANEB chief examiners' reports for Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) English papers (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014), this is where the problem being investigated (mother tongue interference in written English) is most common. First, the researcher targeted schools which were located in areas where the dominating local language was Chichewa. Second, he targeted schools where the teachers of English for form four were also the ones who taught the learners the same subject in

the previous academic year. This was done in order to appreciate how the teachers' teaching practices had impacted on the errors made by the learners in their written English. The researcher got the information about the four schools from the South East Education Division (SEED) office.

3.3.3 Selection of participants

The sample consisted of 44 participants: 40 learners (10 from each school; 5 boys and 5 girls) and 4 teachers of English. This sample size of 44 was considered to be adequate in an attempt to avoid bulky information that is often difficult to interpret in qualitative studies and may lead to confusion (Milroy & Goldon, 2003). Qualitative studies usually employ small sample size because qualitative data is not easily and quickly summarised and analysed (Dunn, 1999). The head teachers of the schools also took part in providing information about their schools. They did this by filling in a semi-structured questionnaire (Appendix 5).

The study involved learners in Form four and their current teachers of English. Form four was chosen because MANEB chief examiners' reports for Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) English papers (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014) mention the problem under investigation (mother tongue influence) at MSCE level. On the part of the learners, the researcher targeted those whose mother tongue was Chichewa. A preliminary questionnaire was given to all the learners in Form four in order for them to fill in their biological and demographic information (name, age, home district, sex, their

mother tongue and any other language(s) which they could hear and understand (Appendix 10). Where the number of Chichewa and English bilingual learners was more than the required number of 5 boys and 5 girls from each class, the researcher used random sampling technique to obtain the required number among the purposively obtained sample.

Random sampling is the technique in which members of the sample are given a non-zero chance of being selected (Gorard, 2001). In other words, each member of the population has a chance of being selected to be part of the sample. In this study, all learners obtained through purposive sampling at each school were assigned a number which was written on pieces of paper. Then, the pieces of paper were placed in a basket from which 5 pieces were randomly picked separately for boys and girls in Form 4, making a total of 10 learners from each school (thus, 5 boys and 5 girls). This was deliberately done to make sure that all the learners whose mother tongue was Chichewa had an equal and independent chance of being chosen to be part of the sample.

3.4 Methods of data generation

Four methods were used to generate data. These were: document analysis, observation, in-depth interview and focus group discussion. The researcher used these methods because they are the main methods which are used in producing qualitative data (Punch, 2009; Creswell, 2009; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). In addition to these methods, semi-structured questionnaires were used to generate data

about the schools, teachers and learners who participated in the study (Appendices 5, 9 and 10). A detailed discussion and justification for each of these methods is presented in the following sub-sections.

3.4.1 Document analysis

Documents take a multitude of forms including, for example, “diaries, records, biographies, autobiographies and samples of students’ work” (Cohen et al., 2007, p.201). Documents in this study refer to English essays that were written by learners which the researcher studied and analysed. This was done in order to identify various errors related to the influence of Chichewa made by learners for a detailed analysis. This helped to answer the first subsidiary research question which sought to find out the Chichewa-influenced errors made by learners in their written English. As pointed out by Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), the relationship between the content to be analysed and the objectives of the study should be clear. In this respect, Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) hold that one way to help ensure clarity is to have a specific research question in mind beforehand and then to select a body of material in which the question can be investigated.

The researcher analysed a total of 40 English essays. He decided to analyse learners’ written work because the research question was exploring errors made in written English. Therefore, in order to come up with the errors, the researcher had to observe the learners’ written sample of English work. Among the various written pieces of work, the researcher chose to analyse essays because they are records of what students write which

reveal their competences in various aspects of language including vocabulary, register, spellings and sentence construction. Supporting the same viewpoint is Nunan (1992) who also explains that essays contain a lot of information on learner language.

The learners were asked to write an essay whose topics were given by their teachers of English at each of the four schools. The learners wrote the essays in an examination environment and were given enough time to proof-read and make any corrections before submitting the scripts. This was done to ensure that the deviant forms that would appear would be treated as errors and not mistakes. It was assumed that since the learners were advised to correct all the mistakes, they had a chance to correct those which they were aware of.

3.4.2 Observations

The second method that was used to generate data was classroom observation. Tikstine (1998, p.6) defines observation as “the systematic, and as accurate as possible, collection of usually visual evidence, leading to informed judgements and to necessary changes to accepted practices.” Observation is a tool that provides information about actual behaviour. Kombo and Tromp (2006) argue that observation as a method of generating data is useful because some behaviour involves habitual routines of which people are hardly aware.

Observation was used in this study in order to learn how the process of teaching and learning took place in the targeted classes. This helped to answer the second research question which sought to find out the factors within the school that influenced learners to make the Chichewa-based errors which had been observed in their written essays. The assumption was that what the learners produce in their written work reflects what happens in their classrooms. Observation also helped to answer the third research question which explored how teachers dealt with the influencing factors in order to assist learners to overcome the errors.

The researcher assumed the role of non-participant observer. Thus, he did not participate in the activity being observed, but rather sat on the sidelines and watched carefully the situations he was observing. The researcher preferred this type of observation because it is the least obtrusive form of observation (Patton, 1990; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). The researcher used an observation schedule to take down notes (Appendix 11). The focus was on the use of Chichewa in the English classroom, the availability of teaching and learning materials and how learners were involved in the lessons. The researcher also recorded the lessons after obtaining permission from the teacher. Later, the researcher transcribed the recorded lessons and analysed them complemented by the notes he had taken down. The overall period of observation was eight weeks. The researcher observed 6 English lessons in Form 4 at each school. In total, 24 classroom observations were done.

Classroom observation as a method of data generation helped the researcher to obtain an accurate description of the teaching and learning situations in the sampled schools. The data obtained through this method helped him to understand why the learners made the Chichewa-based errors in these schools and to appreciate the steps the teachers took to assist the learners. Thus, it enabled the researcher to gain a deeper insight and understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Through observation, the researcher got information that the participants would not be willing to provide during interviews.

The researcher spent a considerable period of time at each of the four schools in order to get familiar with the research participants. He made six observations in each class and spent two weeks at each school. This helped reduce observer effect since the research participants got used to the researcher's presence. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) contend that in order to overcome the reactivity problem, it is useful to stay around long enough to get people used to the observer's presence, because "eventually people just get plain tired of trying to manage your impression and they act naturally" (p.443). In the present study, observation activities covered a period of eight weeks – from Monday, 12th January, 2015 to Friday, 9th March, 2015.

3.4.3 In-depth interviews (IDIs)

An interview is a two-way conversation in which the researcher asks the research participant questions to generate data and learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant (Cohen, et al., 2007; Maree, 2007; Neuwman, 2011). In

other words, it refers to verbal communication between the researcher and the research participant(s). The aim of the interview is to see the world through the eyes of the participant and obtain rich descriptive data that will help the researcher to understand the participants' construction of knowledge and social reality on the phenomenon under study (Maree, 2007).

In the present study, the researcher interviewed the teachers after observing their lessons in order to learn the intentions behind the observed behavioural patterns. Punch (2009) maintains that it is good to combine observational and interview data generation techniques. For instance, he argues that “recording the behaviour of teachers or learners and then using the observational data to inform and guide qualitative interviews with these teachers or students can lead to very rich high quality data” (p.156). This is exactly what the researcher did in the present study as explained in the following section.

After classroom observations, the researcher conducted interviews with the teachers in order to check the accuracy of what he had observed and to learn from the participants those aspects which could not be observed during the lessons. In support of this, Locke and Silverman (2004) state that “to observe a teacher or a student provides access to their behaviour while interviewing allows us to put that behavior in context and provides access to understanding their action” (p.45). Similarly, Patton (1990, p.122) explains the following as a justification for interviewing participants after observations:

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe. We cannot observe everything. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions. We cannot observe behaviours that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organised the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things.

In this study, interviews were also used in order to understand some of the errors that had been identified in learners' essays. The researcher interviewed the learners whose essays had errors which the researcher was not certain as to what the learner meant to convey. This enabled him to identify, describe and analyse the error. The type of interview the researcher conducted with the teachers was an open-ended or in-depth interview. An open-ended interview takes the form of a conversation with the intention that the researcher explores with the participant his or her views, ideas, beliefs, attitudes, experiences, about certain events or phenomena (Maree, 2007). The researcher used an interview schedule. Patton (1990) defines an interview guide or schedule as a list of questions or issues that are to be explored in the course of an interview. The interview schedule in this study contained both closed and open-ended questions (Appendix 12). The researcher used an interview schedule in order to remain focused on the purpose of the interview.

The interview session with each participant was conducted at the end of the whole exercise at each school; that is, after observing the last lesson. The interview session was

deliberately placed at the end of the observations in order to avoid influencing the teachers from changing their teaching practices. Each interview lasted approximately thirty to forty-five minutes. As suggested by Nunan (1992), the researcher took down some notes during the interviews after obtaining permission from the participants.

During the interviews, the researcher was attentive to the responses of the participants and identified new emerging lines of inquiry which were directly related to the phenomenon under study. He probed and explored them further. The researcher audio-recorded the interviews in order to save time and to avoid missing out some of the important information. He also took down some notes so that he could review the answers and ask additional questions at the end of the interview. The researcher, for example, recorded the date and time of each interview for future reference. In total, four in-depth interviews were conducted.

When conducting IDIs, the researcher established an appropriate atmosphere such that the participants could feel secure to talk freely. For instance, he ensured informed consent, guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity and assured the respondents that the research would not cause any harm to them. In addition, the researcher established and maintained a good rapport with the participants. For instance, he was clear, polite, non-threatening, friendly and personable to the point, without being too assertive. Again, he made the interview sessions brief.

Furthermore, the researcher communicated clearly and positively the purpose, likely duration, nature and conduct as well as the contents of the interview. He also gave the participants the opportunity to ask questions and was sensitive to any emotion in the participants. Furthermore, the researcher avoided giving any signs of surprise, annoyance, criticism, impatience or anger during the interviews and helped to leave the participants feeling better than, or at least no worse than they felt before the start of the interview. Finally, the researcher thanked the respondents for spending their time interacting with him.

3.4.4 Focus group discussions (FGDs)

The fourth method that was used to generate data was focus group discussion (FGD). In FGD, the researcher asks a small group of people (usually four to ten) to think about a series of questions (Patton, 1990; Maree, 2007). The participants are seated together in a group and get to hear one another's responses to the questions and they often offer additional comments beyond what they originally had to say once they hear the other responses.

The researcher used FGDs with the learners for two reasons. First, this method activates forgotten details of experience. For instance, where one has forgotten the details, the others in the group can remind or correct him or her. Thus, research participants are able to build on each other's ideas and comments. The group situation can also stimulate people in making explicit their views, perceptions, motives and reasons. As a result, the

data produced is rich in detail that is difficult to achieve in other data generation methods (Maree, 2007). Second, conducting FGDs is time-saving. This is the case because they are often quicker than individual interviews (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Kombo & Tromp, 2006). For example, in the present study, it was time-saving and less costly to hold an FGD with ten learners at each school than interviewing them individually. Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct FGDs with the learners so as to save time and other resources while at the same time gaining a deeper understanding of their experiences as a group.

The researcher conducted one FGD with the learners at each school in order to learn from them their past experiences, motives, attitudes, perceptions and reasons in relation to Chichewa-influenced errors that had been observed in their written English. As Punch (2009) observes, the FGD is an attractive data gathering option when research is trying to probe the views, perceptions, motives and experiences of a group of people. The researcher used an FGD schedule which contained both closed and open-ended questions (Appendix 13).

The researcher faced one challenge during FGDs at each of the four schools. The learners were not able to communicate in English and this resulted in low participation and break down of communication. To deal with this challenge, the learners requested to use Chichewa and the researcher granted permission so that he could gain the rich data he

was looking for. With the use of Chichewa, the learners started to participate actively and the researcher was able to get the information he was looking for.

At each school, the FGD was held after observing the last lesson. The FGDs were deliberately conducted after classroom observations in order to avoid influencing the learners from changing their behaviour in the classroom. In addition, the researcher wanted to use the FDGs to confirm and understand better the impression he had got from the observations he had been making in the classroom. Table 1 summarises the information about the FGDs the researcher conducted.

Table 1: A summary of focus group discussions (FGDs) with learners

School	Sex of participants per group		Total participants per group	Number of FGDs
	Male	Female		
A	5	5	10	1
B	5	5	10	1
C	5	5	10	1
D	5	5	10	1
Total participants			40	

Source: Researcher generated data (2015)

3.5 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data (Sarantakos, 2005; Orodho & Kombo, 2002). In other words, it refers to making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities in relation to the research questions. Data analysis should

abide by the issue of *fitness for purpose*; meaning that the researcher must be clear what he or she wants the analysis to do as this will determine the kind of analysis that is undertaken (Cohen et al., 2007).

In the present study, all the data was organised into four categories: data obtained from the analysis of learners' essays, classroom observations, in-depth interviews as well as FGDs. The data was also grouped into two: data from the teachers and the one from the learners. What follows is a presentation and description of how the data generated through the four methods was analysed in order to find answers to the three subsidiary research questions.

3.5.1 Document analysis

In document analysis, errors were identified from 40 essays that had been written by purposively selected learners (thus, 10 essays from each school). The researcher concentrated on errors deemed to have been influenced by Chichewa. To achieve this, he used Corder's (1981) algorithm of error analysis. He also used his knowledge of English and Chichewa and the theoretical framework (contrastive analysis). The following paragraph explains the procedure the researcher followed in the analysis.

The researcher read carefully each sentence in the learners' essays and underlined the errors he observed (Appendix 17). Then, he constructed the learners' correct intended form and noted the miscorrespondence(s). After that, he wrote in the margins the description (type) of the errors. For example, he indicated whether it was related to

omission of an obligatory element, literal translation, Subject-Verb Agreement (SVA) or spelling. Finally, he translated the items into Chichewa to determine whether the error was influenced by Chichewa or not. If the translation was good, then the error was considered to be interlingual since there was interference. If, on the other hand, the backtranslated item was not good, then the researcher concluded that the error had been caused by other factors and not Chichewa interference.

The researcher faced one main challenge when analysing errors in learners' written work. In some cases it was not clear as to what the learner wanted to convey. Therefore, the analysis in this case was difficult because to describe errors the researcher has to compare learners' deviant sentences with what seems to be the normal or correct sentences in the target language which correspond with them (Ellis, 1997). In the present study, the researcher used the interview method to deal with this challenge. Thus, where the researcher was not sure of what the learner wanted to convey, he interviewed him or her to ascertain the learner's intended meaning of the construction. As asserted by Merriam (1988), the main purpose of an interview is to find out what is in someone else's mind.

3.5.2 Analysis of observational data

The researcher started to analyse observational data right from the first classroom observation. He did this because he was aware that qualitative data analysis is an iterative and reflexive process that begins as data is being generated rather than after data generation has ceased (Stake, 1995). After each classroom observation the researcher

listened to the recorded version of the lesson several times and transcribed it (made a written copy of it word for word) as soon as possible. Use was also made of the notes he took down during the observation sessions. Miles and Huberman (1984) support early analysis of qualitative data because “qualitative research rapidly amasses huge amounts of data, and early analysis reduces the problem of data overload by selecting out significant features for future focus” (p.238).

Then, the researcher read through all the data in order to familiarise himself with what had been generated. He coded the data. Thus, he put tags, names or labels against pieces of the data. The pieces were individual words, or small or large chunks of the data. The point of assigning labels was to attach meaning to the pieces of data. Principal points were highlighted, and brief notes about key statements based on the research questions were made. The researcher identified common patterns emerging in the data. The aim for generating observational data was to find out what happened in the classroom that contributed to the learners’ making of Chichewa-influenced errors and to learn how teachers dealt with those factors.

3.5.3 Analysis of data from IDIs and FGDs

Soon after each of the IDI sessions with the teachers and the FGDs with the learners, the researcher carefully and repeatedly listened to the data he recorded during those sessions. Then, he transcribed the data verbatim. After that, he analysed the transcribed data

thematically. Themes refer to topics or major subjects that come up in discussions. The researcher followed the following steps as outlined by Tromp and Kombo (2006, p.119). Firstly, the researcher perused the data and identified information that was relevant to the research questions. He then classified major issues or topics covered. He re-read the texts and highlighted key quotations, insights and interpretations. In addition, he indicated the major themes in the margins. He also placed the coded materials under the major themes or topics identified. All the materials relevant to a certain topic were placed together.

After the analysis of data from the four sources, the data was integrated. Thus, based on research questions, the data was re-grouped into three categories: A (for Chichewa-influenced errors in written English), B (for factors that influenced learners to make such errors), and C (for teachers' efforts to deal with the influencing factors). Using an interpretive approach, the data was analysed in relation to the research questions. The researcher identified common patterns emerging in each of the three groups by comparing the data. Later the three groups were translated into categories and themes. Themes are major lessons that are implied by connecting patterns of various categories (Rossman & Rallies, 2003; Seidman, 2006). The researcher developed a summary report identifying major themes and the associations between them. He also used direct quotations to present the findings.

3.6 Data management

The data generated was properly organised and kept for easy accessibility during analysis. The data obtained from learners' essays, classroom observations, IDIs and FGDs was typed and stored in separate files on a computer, flash disk and compact disk (CD). Hard copies of the data were also kept safely as a backup.

3.7 Credibility and trustworthiness of the study

According to Opie (2004), credibility is considered to be a useful indicator of goodness in case study research. Chauma (2013) also contends that issues of credibility and trustworthiness are critical in any research. Therefore, to ensure credibility and trustworthiness of the study, the researcher employed four strategies. These are: pilot testing, peer review, triangulation and use of direct quotations. What follows is a discussion and justification of each of these strategies.

3.7.1 Pilot testing

Before embarking on the actual research, strengths and weaknesses of the instruments used for data generation were pilot-tested. Rea and Parker (1997, p.28) define pilot testing as “a small scale implementation of the draft data collection instruments that assess: clarity, comprehensiveness and acceptability.” As Nunan (1992) argues, it is important for all elicitation instruments to be thoroughly tested before they are used for research. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2001) contend that during pilot testing you try out the research techniques and methods which you have in mind, see how well they work in

practice and, if necessary, modify your plans accordingly. Sudman and Bradburn (1982) also maintain that every questionnaire and other data collection instruments must be tested and refined under real-world conditions.

In the current study, the researcher conducted a pilot study at one rural CDSS also in Zomba. The school and teachers who took part in the pilot phase did not take part in the main study. The purpose of the pilot study was to try out data generation methods, instruments and other procedures. For instance, the researcher tested if the questions on the schedules for the in-depth interviews and the FGDs were clear, well sequenced and reliable. The pilot study assisted in the preparation for the main study as indicated in the following paragraph.

The pilot study revealed that the research participants were finding it difficult to understand some of the items on the interview schedule. In this case, the researcher had to simplify the wording or paraphrase the questions for easy understanding of the items. Some of the items also proved to be irrelevant to the study and had to be removed in readiness for the actual study. The pilot study also helped the researcher to have an impression of the type of information that would be collected in the main research. Furthermore, it gave the researcher practical experience in using the research instruments, thereby instilling confidence in him.

3.7.2 Direct quotations

The researcher in this study makes use of direct quotations when analysing data obtained from learners' essays, classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and FGDs. In support of the use of direct quotations, Chauma (2013, p. 75) argues that "the strength of direct quotations is that they speak for themselves as they are examples of the manifest level, that is, of what people actually said." Hancock (2002) also points out that quotations should be used because they are good examples of what people have said specifically about the category being described. Furthermore, Cohen et al. (2007) observe that it is important to report direct phrases and sentences because they help to keep the flavor of the original data and they are more illuminative and direct than the researcher's own words. Therefore, providing direct quotations from participants throughout the report adds credibility to the information.

3.7.3 Peer review

Throughout the study, the researcher invited comments from "critical friends" as one way of ensuring the trustworthiness and credibility of the study. "Critical friends" refer to small groups of peers working together to test out ideas, critique one another's work, offer alternative conceptualisation and provide both emotional and intellectual support (Rossman and Rallis, 2003). The "critical friends" in this study were fellow postgraduate students in Language Education. The feedback from the peers helped the researcher to refine his work throughout the study.

3.7.4 Triangulation

Triangulation refers to the practice of employing several research tools within the same research design (Sarantakos, 2005). It is an attempt to map out or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint. Lacey and Luff (2001, p.23) states that triangulation means “gathering and analysing data from more than one source to gain a fuller perspective on the situation one is investigating.”

Triangulation is important because it helps to increase the reliability of the research findings since it uses several points of reference (Bartlett & Burton, 2007). In the present study, triangulation was achieved in that the researcher interviewed teachers and held FGDs with learners in order to understand better the data he had obtained from classroom observations. As Cohen et al. (2000) maintain, triangulation helps the researcher to approach the object of the study from as many different angles as possible and this helps counteract various possible threats to the validity and reliability of the analysis of the findings. Similarly, Richards (2005, p.185) contends that “when a conclusion is supported by data from a number of different instruments, its validity is thereby enhanced.”

3.8 Access negotiation

Access to the institution where the research is to be conducted should be accepted by those whose permission one needs before embarking on the task (Cohen & Manion,

1994). In line with this, the researcher got a letter of introduction from the Department of Curriculum and Teaching Studies at Chancellor College (Appendix 1) before embarking on the study. Then, he wrote a letter seeking permission from the Ministry of Education through the office of the South East Education Division (SEED) Manager (Appendix 2). Permission to carry out the study in SEED schools was granted (See Appendix 3). The researcher also sought permission from the head teacher of each of the four schools (Appendix 4), and the research participants themselves (Appendices 6, 7 and 8).

3.9 Ethical considerations

The participants were informed about the aim, procedure and duration of the research and the importance of their participation. They were informed that their participation would make the implementation of the study possible and would help the researcher come up with data that would be used to understand the problem of Chichewa interference in the teaching and learning of English in secondary schools. Wassenaar (2006) states that research should benefit in some way the research participants or the society in general.

The researcher also assured the research participants that the information they provided would be used solely for the study and not for any other purposes (Appendices 6 and 8). In addition, the research participants took part in the study voluntarily (See Appendices 6, 7 and 8). As Milroy and Goldon (2003) points out, research participants must voluntarily agree to participate in the research and must know what their participation entails.

The researcher also made sure that no harm befell the research participants as a direct or indirect consequence of the research (Wassenaar, 2006; Fetterman, 1989). Therefore, this study did not cause any harm be it physical, financial or psychological. For instance, the researcher did not disrupt school activities like requesting for make-up classes or interviewing the research participants when they were supposed to attend their core functions. Again, the study did not violate the rights of the participants “such as their right to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality” (Sarantakos, 2005, p.19). To achieve this, the real names of the research participants are not mentioned throughout the study. For example, names were removed from the essays that were selected for error analysis and instead, numbers were used. Again, the real names of the schools that participated in the study are not mentioned and instead, they are just labelled as schools “A, B, C and D”.

3.10 Limitation of the study

The study was done in only four Community Day Secondary Schools of Zomba rural. Therefore, its findings will be generalisable to the four sampled schools only. As Stake (1995) argues, in case studies particularisation rather than generalisation is the central concern of researchers. A case study means generalisations within the cases studied (Chauma, 2013). In case studies “there is emphasis on uniqueness and the understanding of the case itself” (Stake, 1995, p.8).

3.11 Chapter summary

The chapter has described the study approach and design, the methods and instruments for data generation, the research site and how participants were identified, as well as how data was analysed. The chapter has also presented issues of credibility and trustworthiness of the study, access negotiation and ethical considerations. Finally, the chapter has discussed the limitation of the study. The next chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Chapter overview

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study. The study sought to explore the Chichewa-influenced errors which learners made in their written English. The findings of the study are presented in two major sections. The first section discusses the contexts of the four schools and the participants studied. The second one discusses the specific findings in relation to the three subsidiary research questions.

4.1 Contexts of the four schools

4.1.1 CDSS A

CDSS A is located about 19 kilometres away from Zomba City. Established in 1975 by the Roman Catholic Church in conjunction with the Malawi Government, the school had four blocks. The administration block, comprising the offices of the head teacher and the deputy head teacher, was attached to the school library which had a reasonable number of books for various subjects. Another block was the Staffroom for teachers. The other two blocks were used as classrooms. One block was for Forms One and Three while the other was for Forms Two and Four, a total of four classrooms. There were 178 boys and 129

girls at the school making a total of 307 learners. The school had 15 teachers, 11 male and 4 female. The teaching experiences of the teachers ranged from one to 23 years with an age range of 26 to 61. All the teachers were qualified to teach at secondary school level; thus, they were trained to teach in secondary schools holding either a Diploma or Degree in Education.

4.1.1.1 Teachers and learners for Form Four

In Form four, there were 69 boys and 46 girls, a total of 105 learners. Their age range was 16 to 23. The teacher indicated that it was an average class in terms of academic performance of the learners. Table 2 summarises the specific characteristics of the Form Four teacher who participated in the study at school A.

Table 2: A summary of specific characteristics of the teacher at school A

Gender	Male
Age	39
Mother tongue	Chichewa
Other languages	English, French
Professional grade	P8 (Grade H)
Highest academic qualification	Bachelor's Degree in Education
Teaching experience in years	8
Number of years at this school	2
Number of periods per week	16
Teaching subjects	English and Geography

Source: Head teacher's records and Form Four teacher at school A

4.1.2 CDSS B

School B is located about 22 kilometres away from Zomba City. There were two blocks at this school with one block consisting of Forms One and Three classrooms and the teachers' staffroom. The other block was for the head teacher's office to which Forms Two and Four classrooms were attached. Teaching and learning materials were scarce at this school and there was no library. Established in 1990 by the Roman Catholic Church and the Malawi Government, the school had a total of 10 teachers: 9 male and 1 female. Of these teachers, only 3 were qualified to teach at secondary school level. The others were trained to teach at primary school level. They were hired to teach in Community Day Secondary Schools due to shortage of qualified secondary school teachers. The number of learners enrolled at the school was 301 with 183 boys and 118 girls.

4.1.2.1 Teachers and learners for Form Four

In Form four, there were 34 boys and 20 girls, a total of 54 learners. Their age range was 15 to 22. According to the class teacher, the overall academic performance of the learners was average. Table 3 summarises the specific characteristics of the teacher who participated in the study at school B.

Table 3: A summary of specific characteristics of the teacher at school B

Gender	Male
Age	47
Mother tongue	Chichewa
Other languages	English, Chiyao and Chilomwe
Professional grade	PT2 (Grade J)
Highest academic qualification	Diploma in Education
Teaching experience at secondary school level in years	22
Number of years at this school	3
Number of periods	18
Teaching subjects	English and Chichewa

Source: Head teacher's records and Form Four teacher at school B

4.1.3 CDSS C

Located about 35 kilometres from Zomba City, School C was established by the Anglican Church and the Malawi Government in 1975. There were three blocks at this school with one block consisting of Forms One and Three classrooms. The administration block consisted of the head teacher's office and the teachers' staffroom. One block was for Forms Two and Four classrooms. There was no library at this school. A few textbooks were kept in the head teacher's office. The school had a total of 8 male teachers. Of these teachers, only 1 was qualified to teach at secondary school level. The others were trained to teach at primary school level. They were hired to teach in Community Day Secondary Schools due to shortage of qualified secondary school teachers. The school had a total of 287 learners: 183 boys and 104 girls.

4.1.3.1 Teachers and learners for Form Four

In Form Four, there were 33 boys and 18 girls, 51 learners in total. Their age range was 14 to 23. This was an average class in terms of academic performance of learners, according to the teacher. Table 4 summarises the specific characteristics of the Form Four teacher who participated in the study at school C.

Table 4: A summary of specific characteristics of the teacher at school C

Gender	Male
Age	43
Mother tongue	Chichewa
Other languages	English and Chitumbuka
Professional grade	PT2 (Grade J)
Highest academic qualification	Diploma in Education
Teaching experience at secondary school level in years	14
Number of years at this school	5
Number of periods per week	16
Teaching subjects	English and Chichewa

Source: Head teacher's records and Form Four teacher at school C

4.1.4 CDSS D

Established in 1990 by the Roman Catholic Church and the Malawi government, School D is located about 27 kilometres from Zomba City. There were two blocks at this school with one block consisting of Forms One and Three classrooms and the teachers' staffroom. The other block was for the head teacher's office to which classrooms for Forms Two and Four were attached. There was a library at this school with some

teaching and learning materials. The school had a total of 12 teachers: 9 male and 3 female. Of these teachers, only 4 were qualified to teach at secondary school level. The others were trained to teach at primary school level. They were hired to teach in CDSSs due to shortage of qualified secondary school teachers. The number of learners enrolled at the school was 315 with 190 boys and 125 girls.

4.1.4.1 Teachers and learners for Form Four

In Form Four there were 63 learners: 42 boys and 21 girls whose ages ranged from 15 to 24. Academically, the overall performance of the learners was average. Table 5 summarises the specific characteristics of the teacher who participated in the study at school D.

Table 5: A summary of specific characteristics of the teacher at school D

Gender	Male
Age	31
Mother tongue	Chichewa
Other languages	English
Professional grade	PT4 (Grade L)
Highest academic qualification	Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE)
Teaching experience in years	3
Number of years at this school	3
Number of periods per week	15
Teaching subjects	English and Chichewa

Source: Head teacher's records and Form Four teacher at school D

4.2 Specific findings

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study in relation to the research questions. The findings are presented thematically following the order of the research questions. The study was set to find answers to three subsidiary research questions. The first one was aimed at finding out the Chichewa-influenced errors that learners made in their written English. The second question asked for the factors that influenced the learners to make such errors. The third question explored how teachers dealt with the influencing factors.

4.2.1 Chichewa-influenced errors in learners' written English

The analysis of learners' written English essays revealed the Chichewa-influenced errors which learners made in their written English. The researcher identified a total of 240 errors that could be traced back to Chichewa, hence, they were deemed to have been influenced by Chichewa. As pointed out by Ellis (1997) and Lott (1983), we can determine that a learner's error is influenced by mother tongue if it can be traced back to the learner's mother tongue. The researcher categorised the errors into six types. Table 6 summarises the findings.

Table 6: A summary of the Chichewa-influenced errors observed in learner's written English

Error category	Number observed	Percentage
Literal translation	85	35.4
Omission	73	30.4
Word order	30	12.5
SVA	22	9.2
Spelling	18	7.5
Chichewa words	12	5.0
Total	240	100.0

Source: Researcher data analysis (2015)

4.2.1.1 Literal translation

Literal translation is word-for-word translation from one language into another (Ellis, 1997). People translate literally when they think in the mother tongue while using the target language. Thus, this translation maintains the original content without changing the structure, form or style.

Literal translation does not actually convey the same meaning to the target language-speaking audience. The analysis of learners' compositions in the present study revealed that learners made literal translation in collocations, figures of speech and in ordinary vocabulary as discussed in the following sub-section.

(a) Literal translation of collocations

Collocation refers to how words go together or form fixed relationships (Ringbom, 1987).

In other words, it is a combination of words that are commonly used together. Becoming

aware of collocations is part of vocabulary learning and all languages have a number of collocating words. In the learners' written work, it was found that some sentences sounded unnatural to the extent that the meaning was not clear because the learners failed to use a correct collocation. The researcher observed sentences like the following. 1. * "The police will tie you..." 2. * "She was climbing her bicycle at that time". In the first sentence, the main verb (tie) is a literal translation of the Chichewa verb *manga*, which was used erroneously for the verb "arrest". The verb in the second sentence is incorrect because in English a person does not "climb" a bicycle but "cycles" it. To "climb a bicycle", is a word-for-word translation of the expression, *kukwera njinga* which is correct in Chichewa.

(b) Literal translation of figurative terms and expressions

Figurative language is language that uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different from the literal (ordinary) interpretation (Ellis, 1997; Tom, 1998). When a writer uses literal language, he or she simply states the facts as they are. On the other hand, figurative language uses exaggerations or alterations to make a particular linguistic point. In the present study, learners made errors in idioms, similes and proverbs. They literally translated these items from Chichewa into English and this resulted in errors as discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

An idiom is an expression whose meaning is not predictable from the usual meanings of its constituent elements but has a separate meaning of its own (Thornbury, 2006). Knowledge of idioms and their meanings is part of vocabulary. In the present study, the

researcher observed that learners used idioms that were translated directly from Chichewa into English. In some cases this resulted in sentences whose meanings were difficult to interpret. For instance, learners wrote sentences like, *Please help me I have touched a leg. “I have touched a leg”, is a literal translation of a Chichewa metaphor, *ndagwira mwendo*, which means “to plead with someone.” “After eating my head, I have decided to leave,” is another example of literal translation by the learners in this study. One cannot “eat” his or her head. This expression reflects the Chichewa idiom, *kudya mutu*, meaning “to think carefully”.

Instances of literal translation were also observed in similes. A simile is a figure of speech that directly compares two things using words such as “like” and “as” (Ellis, 1997). Similes differ from one language to another and from culture to culture. Learners in the current study used similes that mirror those of Chichewa. For instance, they wrote *as secret as the enough abdomen of a tortoise, and *as black as burned wood. The first example is a literal translation of a Chichewa simile, *chinsinsi ngati mkhuto wa fulu*, whose equivalent simile in English is “as secret as thought”. In the second instance, the learner translated word for word a Chichewa simile, *kuda ngati chikuni chowauka*, instead of the English equivalent “as black as ebony”.

Another area in which literal translation was common in the learners’ essays was the use of proverbs. A proverb refers to a simple and concrete statement popularly known and repeated, that expresses a truth based on common sense or experience (Thornbury, 2006;

Tom, 1998). Proverbs are words of wisdom. They are part of language and culture and they differ from one language to another and from culture to culture. Proverbs cannot be translated word for word. However, the current study revealed that learners literally translated Chichewa proverbs into English to express their ideas. This resulted in errors. The following paragraph exemplifies this point.

Learners wrote sentences like these: 1. *What comes does not beat a drum. 2. * Your tobacco is the one on your nose, the one on your finger is for wind. 3. *Somebody's misfortune is somebody's fortune. 4. *Relationship is a bone; it does not rot. In the first example, the learner literally translated the Chichewa proverb, *Chakudza sichiyimba ng'oma*. In English, the equivalent proverb is: "Coming events do not cast their shadows." In example two, the learner translated verbatim the Chichewa proverb, *Fodya wako ndi amene ali pamphuno, wapachala ngwamphepo*. In contrast, a proverb in English which is equivalent in meaning with this one is: "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush". Example three is a word-for-word translation of the Chichewa proverb, *Tsoka la wina ndi mwayi wa wina*. On the contrary, in English we say: "It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good". "Relationship is a bone; it does not rot", in the fourth instance, is a literal translation of the Chichewa proverb, *Chibale ndi fupa, sichiola*. However, in English the proverb with a similar meaning is, "Blood is thicker than water".

(c) *Literal translation of ordinary vocabulary*

In this study, the term “ordinary vocabulary” is used to refer to ordinary words as compared to collocations and figures of speech. It was observed that apart from literal translations of collocations and figures of speech, learners also directly translated ordinary words from Chichewa into English. The following examples illustrate this type of error where learners, as a result of literal translation, mis-selected words to convey their ideas. 1. *When a man makes polygamy... 2. *Mr. Nkhoma was his small father. 3. *Let us make development go in front 4. *When Gwape raped Nambe, he gave her pregnancy. 5. *He could hear the smell of something burning. All these are literal translations from Chichewa as discussed in the following paragraph.

In the first example, one cannot make polygamy but practices it. “When a man makes polygamy” reflects Chichewa expression, *munthu akachita mitala*. In the second instance, the learner wrote “his small father” which is a literal translation of the Chichewa noun phrase, *bambo ake aang’ono*, meaning “a younger brother to his father”. In English, however, he is an uncle and not his “small father”. In the third example, one cannot make development go in front, but can enhance it. The learner’s construction in this regard mirrors a Chichewa expression *kupititsa chitukuko patsogolo*. In English, one “does not give pregnancy” as written by the learner in example four, but “impregnates” or “makes one pregnant”. Therefore, “he gave her pregnancy”, is a word-for-word translation of the Chichewa expression, *anamupatsa mimba*. In example five, a person

cannot “hear” the smell of something but can “smell” something. However, the learner translated word for word the Chichewa expression *kumva fungo* as “to hear the smell”.

Contrastive analysis (CA) which guided the discussion of the findings of this study, states that second language learners use their L1 structures to produce L2 utterances. In line with this, what happens in literal translation is that the learners use L1 structures as a principle of fundamental language organisation and processing. This means that they bring the form and meaning of both L1 and L2 into closer alignment and thus render usable a complex portion of L2 syntax that would otherwise be for the time being, inaccessible to them. The prior disposition of L1 has affected the learners’ L2 output. Blum-Kulka and Levenston (1983) contend that all second language learners begin by assuming that for every word in L1 there is a single translation equivalent in L2. According to Blum-Kulka and Levenston (1983), the assumption of word-for-word translation equivalence or “thinking in the mother tongue” is the only way a learner can begin to communicate in a second language. This has been clearly indicated in this study where the second language learners have adopted their L1 structures to help them in their L2 texts.

However, as Blum-Kulka and Levenston (1983) point out, mastery of the second language involves the gradual abandonment of the translation equivalence. Thus, learners have to internalise the syntactical structures in L2 independently of the L1 equivalent. They also have to be able to “think in the second language”. The learners in the present

study have accumulated structural entities of L2 but demonstrate difficulty in organising this knowledge into appropriate, coherent structures. There is a significant gap between the accumulation and organisation of this knowledge. When writing in the target language, these learners rely on their native language structures to produce a response. As the structures of L1 and L2 have differences, there has been a high frequency of errors occurring in the target language, thus indicating an interference of the native language as pointed out in contrastive analysis, the theory that informs this study. The following section discusses another set of errors committed by the learners, that of omission.

4.2.1.2 Omission errors

Omission errors occur when an obligatory element is left out and the sentence breaks the syntactic rules of the language (Thornbury, 2006; O'Grady & Dobrovolsky, 1992). The analysis of the omission errors observed in the learners' written English in the current study indicates that the learners omitted three elements. They omitted articles (a, an, or the), phrasal verb particles (prepositions) and the subject of a sentence. What follows is a presentation and discussion of these three categories of omission errors.

(a) Omission of articles

Crystal (1997) describes an article as a word that is used with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun. He further explains that articles specify grammatical definiteness of the noun, in some languages extending to numerical scope. There are three articles in English: the, a, and an.

In this study, it was found that learners omitted articles where they were required. Sentences like the following were common among the learners. 1. *Sun moves around earth. 2. *First cause is deforestation. 3. *As result, they have more children. 4. *Chona was killed because of forming movement.... In the first sentence, the learner omitted the definite article “the” before the nouns “Sun” and “earth”. The same article was omitted before the adjective “first” in the second sentence. In the third and fourth sentences, the indefinite article “a” was left out before the nouns “result” and “movement” respectively. The following paragraph accounts for the omission of articles by the learners in the current study.

In reference to the theory of contrastive analysis that guides this study, when the habits of the learners’ mother tongue are different from those of the second language, learners commit errors in the second language. Therefore, the omission of articles observed in the learners’ written work can be attributed to the difference between English and Chichewa in terms of the existence of articles. As pointed out by Doke (1967) and Kholowa (2002), while articles exist in English, they do not exist in Chichewa. This argument is exemplified by the following translation of English into Chichewa given by Kholowa (2002, p.38): English: I know the goat which was killed. Chichewa: *Ndikudziwa mbuzi imene inaphedwa*. In the English sentence, there is an article “the” which has not been translated into the Chichewa sentence. The reason is that Chichewa and all Bantu languages do not have the equivalent articles (Kholowa, 2002).

The findings on the omission of articles in this study, concur with what Oller and Redding (1971) found in a study which they conducted in Finland to investigate the influence of Finnish on the learning of English. After analysing 150 English essays written by learners at the beginning level whose first language was Finnish, they found that there were a great number of omissions of articles where they were required. According to Oller and Redding (1971), the reason was that the learners' L1 does not have articles, while English has articles. In support of this view, Ringbom (1987, p.95) contends that "the omission of articles at the early stages of learning reflects the Finnish learner's problems of finding a reference frame for this category." Therefore, the researcher in the current study feels that the learners also omitted articles in English because they did not find a reference frame for this category since articles do not exist in their mother tongue, Chichewa. The following section discusses the omission of the subject of a sentence.

(b) Omission of sentence subject

The subject of a sentence is the person, place, thing, or idea doing the action or being described (Crystal, 1997). The structure of a basic sentence in English is subject, verb and Object (SVO). Ideally, every sentence is supposed to have a subject. However, learners in the current study omitted the subject where it was required as shown in these example sentences. 1. *Firstly, is used for firewood. 2. *Also is home of animals. 3. *Can also occur due to ignorance. 4. *Is shown when the employees received little money. Each of these four sentences does not have a subject and is not acceptable in

English. These omission errors are deemed to have been influenced by Chichewa as discussed in the following paragraph.

As per the contrastive analysis theory, individuals tend to transfer the formal features of their mother tongue into the second language and that if the structures of the two languages are different, errors arise. Therefore, the researcher in the current study concludes that the learners omitted the subjects of the sentences due to the difference between Chichewa and English in terms of how words are formed. In both English and Chichewa, a basic sentence must have a subject. However, in English the subject is always written as a separate word (O’Grady & Dobrovolsky, 1992; Crystal, 1987). In Chichewa, on the other hand, it is possible not to include the subject of a sentence as a separate word.

Instead, the subject is indicated by a subject marker which is included in the verb. The reason is that in Chichewa, words are most often composed by sticking together a number of morphemes (Kholowa, 2002). Kholowa (2002) further explains that most verbs in Chichewa are composed of much longer strings of bound morphemes. She gives as an example the verb *tinalankhulananso* which means “we talked to each other again.” She explains that this verb has these morphemes: *ti-* (we), *-na-*(past tense), *lankhula*, (talk) and *-nso* (again), while in English it is composed of more than one word. Chichewa belongs to the agglutinating type of language (Hussein, 2012). Thus, affixes are added to a word to derive new words and each morpheme added to the word, shows a grammatical

function. For example, the verb “*sindidzakupatsa*” (I will not give you) comprises five morphemes added to a verb root *-pats-* and each morpheme having a different grammatical function. Thus, *si-* is a negative marker; *-ndi-* is a subject marker; *-dza-* is a time marker, *-ku-* is an object marker; *-pats-* is the verb root; and *-a* is a final vowel (Hussein 2012). Hence, the learners leave out the subjects in the English sentences as if they were Chichewa sentences and this makes them ungrammatical.

(c) Omission of phrasal verb particles (prepositions)

Phrasal verbs are made up of a verb and other elements (a particle or a preposition) which co- occur forming a single semantic unit (O’Grady & Dobrovolsky, 1992). Usually the single semantic unit cannot be understood based upon the meanings of the individual parts in isolation, but rather it is taken as a whole. In other words, phrasal verbs are multi-word verbs. Learners in the current study left out one element of phrasal verbs as indicated in the following example sentences which they wrote. 1. *Some people care this market. 2. *People suffer many diseases. 3. *That time he was looking his money in the house. 4. *He jumped the fence as he was running away from the gateman. What follows is an explanation of these errors.

The learner in the first sentence omitted the preposition “for” after the verb “care” and in the second sentence, the learner omitted the preposition “from” after the verb “suffer”. In the third and fourth sentences, the prepositions “for” and “over” were left out after the verbs “looking” and “jumped” respectively. In line with the contrastive analysis theory,

learners transfer the formal features of their mother tongue into second language utterances. Therefore, the researcher attributes the omission of the verb particles to the difference between English and the learners' mother tongue (Chichewa). The difference is that while the particles exist in English phrasal verbs, they do not in Chichewa. For instance, the phrasal verb "care for" takes the preposition "for" in English. On the contrary, in Chichewa it means *samalira* where the preposition does not exist. Therefore, according to the theory of contrastive analysis, the learners omitted the prepositions in the phrasal verbs because they did not find a reference frame in their mother tongue.

4.2.1.3 Errors in word order

Word order refers to the sequence of words in a sentence especially as governed by grammatical rules. Misordering of words may result in ungrammatical sentences and may affect the meaning of such sentences. In the present study, the researcher found that learners misordered the position of a noun and its modifier. These errors are exemplified in the following paragraph.

The learners wrote sentences like these: 1.* I will buy a shirt white... 2. * This composition was describing market Jali. In the first example, the learner wrote "shirt white" instead of "white shirt". The researcher considers a "shirt white" as a literal translation of the Chichewa noun phrase, *malaya oyera*, which has resulted in misordering of the words. Similarly, in the second example sentence, the word "Jali" functions as an adjective and should, therefore, come before the qualified noun, "market."

According to the contrastive analysis theory which informs this study, second language learners commit interlingual errors in structures that are different from those of their mother tongue. Hence, the misordering of nouns and their qualifiers committed by the learners in the current study can be attributed to the difference that is there between Chichewa and English in terms of word order between a noun and its modifiers. The difference is that in English all modifiers come before the noun they modify while in Chichewa, all modifiers come after the noun they modify (Kholowa, 2002; Orr & Scotton, 1980).

The results on errors in word order agree with LoCoco's (1975) study that was conducted among American college students learning Spanish and German in the United States of America. The aim was to find and compare the L1-influenced errors which students committed. After analysing the students' compositions, LoCoco found more word-order errors in German than in Spanish.

Krashen (1981) states that the greater word-order differences between English and German as compared to English and Spanish accounts for the differences in frequencies in interference word-order errors. He explains that Spanish students were more often correct in using English surface structures in utterance initiation due to the greater surface similarity between English and Spanish.

4.2.1.4 Subject -Verb Agreement (SVA)

Subject and verb agreement (SVA) refers to the relationship between the subject of a sentence and the verb in terms of number (Richards, 2001). In English, the subject and the verb must agree in number. Thus, both must be singular or both must be plural.

In this study, however, it was observed that learners made errors in SVA when using copulative verbs (is and are). The following are example sentences written by the learners. 1. *The causes of deforestation is that.... 2. *Animals is a source of protein. In sentence 1, the noun “causes” and the verb “is” do not agree in number. The noun is in plural form while the verb is in singular. In the second sentence, the noun “animals” is in plural form and does not agree with the verb “is” which is in singular form. The analysis of the errors committed in SVA revealed that learners incorrectly used the singular verb “is” instead of the plural form “are”. This occurred where the verb meant “ndi” in Chichewa.

In reference to the theory of contrastive analysis, second language learners tend to transfer the formal features of their mother tongue into second language utterances. The researcher, therefore, concludes that the learners made such an error due to the difference between English and Chichewa. In Chichewa, the copulative verb *ndi* does not change with regard to whether the subject is singular or plural. For instance, we can say: *Mtengo ndi wofunika kwambiri* (A tree is very important). In this sentence, the subject *mtengo* (tree) is in singular form and the verb *ndi* (is) is also singular. However, even if the subject is pluralised, the verb remains in singular form. Thus, *mitengo ndi yofunika*

kwambiri (Trees are very important). In English, on the contrary, the verb “is” changes to its plural form “are” if the subject is in plural form. However, the learners use their knowledge of Chichewa in the English construction and consequently, make errors.

Supporting the argument in the preceding paragraph is Ellis (1997). He explains that when writing or speaking the target language (L2), second language learners tend to rely on their native language (L1) structures to produce a response. Ellis (1997) adds that “if the structures of the two languages are distinctly different, then one could expect a relatively high frequency of errors to occur in L2, thus indicating an interference of L1 on L2” (p.56).

4.2.1.5 Spelling errors

Spelling refers to the correct way of writing a word (Dechert, 1983). In order to achieve effective communication in writing, acceptable spelling plays an important role (Harmer, 1982). However, in the learners’ essays the researcher observed words that were misspelled and reflected Chichewa words. The misspelled words fell into two categories: those that looked like English but mirrored Chichewa and those that were written solely in Chichewa form. This observation is illustrated in the following section.

(a) Mixture of English and Chichewa syllables

The learners in this study mixed English and Chichewa syllables in one word. For instance, they wrote *kolify* for “qualify”, where the first two syllables *koli* are written in Chichewa while the final syllable “fy” is written in English. The learners also wrote the

word *consekwency* for “consequence” whereby the third syllable *kwe* is presented in Chichewa form instead of the English form “que”. From the contrastive analysis point of view, learners transfer the features of their mother tongue into the second language. In this case, they transferred Chichewa syllables into English words. Hence, they made spelling errors.

(b) English words presented in Chichewa form

It was also observed that the learners in some instances wrote English words solely in Chichewa form. This occurred especially in words used in Chichewa but borrowed from English. For instance, they could write *ankolo* for “uncle”, *tochi* for “torch”, and *feteleza* for “fertilizer”. These words were written using Chichewa syllables following the way they are pronounced in Chichewa. Hence, they are not acceptable in English. The learners, according to the theory of contrastive analysis which emphasises the role of the learners’ L1 in L2 learning, transferred their knowledge of writing Chichewa words into English words, committing spelling errors in the process.

The results discussed in the preceding paragraph concur with Nthala’s 2010 study that investigated spelling errors committed by secondary school learners in Karonga district in the northern part of Malawi. After analysing learners’ written essays, he found words that reflected the structure of their mother tongue (Chitumbuka) and he concluded that they were interlingual errors. What follows is a presentation and discussion of the last type of errors observed in learners’ written work in the current study.

4.2.1.6 Use of Chichewa words

Learners are not allowed to use vernacular words in their English work. However, the researcher in the current study identified a number of Chichewa words in learners' English compositions. It was observed that learners used a single word, a group of words or a whole sentence that was in Chichewa as illustrated in the following paragraph.

The learners wrote sentences like: *The man was walking *monyada* very much, where the Chichewa adverb *monyada* was used instead of the English counterpart “boastfully”. Another example is the sentence, *I bought a *gwanda*, in which the Chichewa word *gwanda* was used to refer to “a short-sleeved shirt”. In the sentence, *People sometimes cultivate *m'mbali mwa mitsinje* due to lack of land, the learner used the Chichewa phrase *m'mbali mwa mitsinje* for “along river banks”. Another example sentence is: *He drank beer and *analedzera kwambiri*. In this case, the Chichewa expression *analedzera kwambiri* was used instead of “he was intoxicated with beer”. In addition, the learners could write a whole sentence in Chichewa. For instance, they wrote: **Ndinapita kukamuchezera* for “I paid him a visit” and **Mutu umodzi susenza denga*, a Chichewa proverb which means that it is better to consult others for one to have knowledge. In English, the equivalent proverb is, “Two heads are better than one.”

In line with the contrastive analysis theory, learners in this study transferred the features of their mother tongue into second language utterances. Thus, they used Chichewa words instead of English. This implies that they had limited vocabulary.

For instance, Bennui (2008) reports of a similar study that was conducted to explore the errors influenced by Thai on learners' written English. He found that some learners used Thai words in English compositions and concluded that the errors were due to the learners' limited vocabulary.

In summary, from the analysis of learners' written compositions it was observed that the learners made six types of errors based on Chichewa. These are: literal translation, word order, Subject-Verb Agreement (SVA), omission, spelling and use of Chichewa words. These have been considered in this thesis as interference errors because they could be traced back to the learners' mother tongue, Chichewa. As defined by Lott (1983, p.256) interference errors are "errors in the learner's use of the second language that can be traced back to the mother tongue." The next section gives the answer to the second research question which sought to find the factors that contributed to the learners' making of such Chichewa inter-lingual errors in their written English.

4.2.2 Factors that influence learners to make Chichewa-based errors in written English

To answer the second subsidiary research question which sought to find out the factors that influenced learners to make Chichewa-based errors, the researcher observed English lessons, conducted in-depth interviews with the teachers and FGDs with the learners. After analysing the data, the researcher identified the contributing factors and classified them into four. These were: excessive use of Chichewa during English lessons,

inadequacy of prescribed English textbooks, lack of activities that could help learners develop English vocabulary and proficiency and learners' poor background from primary schools. These factors are discussed in the next sub-sections.

4.2.2.1 Excessive use of Chichewa during English lessons

During observations the researcher noted that there was excessive use of Chichewa in the English classroom by both teachers and learners. This was common in all the four schools. When giving answers and asking questions, the learners could use Chichewa freely. When they were put in groups to discuss what they were learning, almost all the groups conducted their discussions in Chichewa. The teachers saw this but none of them said anything to encourage the learners to use English. The teachers themselves also used Chichewa freely in their lessons as illustrated in the following example.

In one of the lessons which were observed at school C about types of nouns, the teacher entered the classroom and greeted the learners. He told them that they were going to learn types of nouns. Then he said, “John, *tapita kustafulumu ukatenge choko, ukawauze kuti ndakutuma ndine. Ufulumire chifukwa tizikudikira iweyo*” (John, can you go to the staffroom and get some pieces of chalk, tell the one you find there that I am the one who has sent you. Hurry up because we will be waiting for you here). In addition, in the course of the lesson, a learner asked the teacher to clarify the meaning of abstract nouns. In reply the teacher said, “Abstract nouns *ndi mayina a zinthu zosakhudzika, zinthu zoti*

sizimaoneka komanso sitingazigwire, monga 'ulemu' ndi 'chisoni.'” (Abstract nouns are names of things we cannot see or touch, such as “politeness” and “grief”).

The teacher continued explaining the other types of nouns in Chichewa for about ten minutes. In this class Chichewa was almost the metalanguage (the language of instruction in a language classroom). Furthermore, in that particular class the learners were put in groups of five to share ideas and come up with three other examples of each of the types of nouns that they had learnt. Almost all the groups conducted their discussions in Chichewa and only reporting was done in English. This finding concurs with Ndalama's (2005) and Lipenga's (2011) observations that usually group work activities are conducted using local languages and that this has resulted in the increased use of local languages in the English classroom.

The use of Chichewa in the English classroom is also exemplified by the following excerpt of a lesson observed at School D.

Table 7: Use of Chichewa in English lessons at school D

Teacher's actual utterances	Translated version of the teacher's utterances (by the researcher)
<i>Lero tiphunzira za kayankhidwe ka comprehension, ndiye muwerenga nkhani imene ili papeji 53. Mukhale m'magulu mwanu ndipo pasapezeke wochita zachibwana, paja ndinu ana osakonda sukulu.</i>	Today we are going to learn reading comprehension, so you are going to read the story on page 53. Be in your groups and everyone must participate, I know most of you do not like school.
(Learners go into their groups to read the passage).	
<i>Mukamaliza kuwerenga muyankhe mafunso amene ali pamapeto. koma muchite kukambirana kuti muthandizane ndipo pasapezeke wolembe yekhayekha, mwamva?</i>	After reading, answer the questions at the end of the passage. You should discuss the answers in your groups so that you help one another. Nobody must do the activity individually. Am I making myself clear?
(Learners read the passage silently).	
<i>Ngati mwamaliza kuwerenga, discuss the answers to the questions.</i>	If you have finished reading, discuss the answers to the questions.

(Learners discuss the answers but almost all the groups do the discussions in Chichewa).
[Lesson observation, School D, 20th Jan, 2015].

From the observation as indicated in Table 7, the researcher concluded that one of the factors that influenced the learners to make Chichewa-based errors in their written English was the excessive use of Chichewa in the English classroom. During FGDs, the researcher asked why the learners used Chichewa anyhow in English lessons. In response, 26 out of the 40 learners (thus, 65%) explained that they used Chichewa during English lessons for two reasons. First, Chichewa was easier for them to use than English. Second, their teachers of English often used Chichewa as medium of instruction and the

learners followed suit. This is what one learner emphasised and is representative of the views of the 40 learners:

Ifeyo timayankhula Chichewa chifukwa ndi chiyankhulo chimene ife tinachizolowera. Ngakhale aphunzitsi athu amadziwa kuti ife sitingathe kuyankhula chizungu chokha. Aphunzitsi athu amayankhulanso kwambiri Chichewa kamatiphunzitsa. Kale panali lamulo loti tiziyankhula chizungu chokha pasukuklu pano koma lamuloli linangofa lokha poona kuti sizimatheka ngakhale pang'ono. (We speak Chichewa because it is the language that we are familiar with. Even our teachers know that we cannot speak English only. The teachers also use Chichewa frequently when teaching us. In the past there was an “English only” rule at this school but it died a natural death as everyone saw that it was not working). **[Learner, FGD, School D, 26th Feb, 2015]**

During FGDs, the researcher asked further what effects the use of Chichewa had on the teaching and learning of English. The majority (80%) of the learners reported that Chichewa facilitated the teaching and learning process. This is what one learner explained and is representative of the views of the 40 learners:

Chichewa chimathandiza kuti tizimva kuti aphunzitsi akuti bwanji komanso chimatithandiza kuti tizidziwa kuti mawu awa kumasulira kwake ndi uku ndiye zimenezo zimathandiza kuti nafenso tidzathe kuyankhula chizungucho kutsogolo. (Chichewa helps us understand what the teacher is teaching us. It also helps us to know the meanings of various words and this will enable us to speak English in the future). **[Learner, FGD, School C, 20th Feb, 2015]**

The preceding quotation implies that the learners also used Chichewa in English lessons because they had limited English vocabulary, so they fell back on their local language as

a resource. However, when the researcher asked them whether they were allowed to use Chichewa when writing in English, the majority of the learners (70%) reported that they were not allowed to do so and if they did, they lost marks.

Although the use of mother tongue in the English classroom helps learners understand easily as indicated by both learners in this study, the method is not the most suitable. For instance, Larsen-freeman (1986) observes that the use of local language in English lessons is ineffective since it deprives learners of an opportunity to practise the English language. It also denies them the input they require to learn English. Therefore, the use of Chichewa in the English classroom partly explains why errors related to Chichewa were rampant in the essays written by the learners in the present study. As pointed out by Corder (1978), one of the factors that plays a part in causing mother tongue-related errors is the formality of the learning situation and the method of teaching. In this case, the grammar-translation method (GTM) is deemed to be one such factor that triggers the making of Chichewa-based errors by the learners in the schools that participated in the present study.

4.2.2.2 Inadequacy of prescribed English textbooks

The second factor that was observed during lessons was the inadequacy of prescribed English textbooks. The researcher observed that learners in all the four schools had little chance of accessing English teaching and learning materials in the classrooms. This observation was confirmed during FGDs whereby 75% of the learners reported that most

of the times they were not exposed to written English due to lack of textbooks. They explained this when the researcher asked them to give the reasons as to why they made Chichewa-based errors in their written English. The following statement is representative of the responses of the 40 learners.

Ifeyo timalakwitsalakwitsa English chifukwa china ndi choti pasukulu pano palibe mabuku oti tiziwerenga. Ndiye nthawi zambiri chizungu chathu ndi chongomva mwina aphunzitsi akamayankhula komano maspelling a mawuwo ifeyo sitimawatani, sitimawaona mapeto ake timangolemba mmene tingaganizire si nanga sitidziwa, eetu sir. (We often make errors in English because there are no books at this school for us to read. As a result, we just hear others like our teachers as they speak English. However, we are not exposed to the written English. Consequently, we do not know the spelling of the words we hear and when writing we just write the words anyhow due to lack of knowledge). **[Learner, FGD, School A, 22nd Jan, 2015]**

The learners' concern as depicted above is genuine. As Richards (2001) puts it, "one of the roles of teaching and learning materials is that they serve as a reference source for learners on language items like grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation" (p. 253). Thus, materials may provide the major source of contact the learners have with the language apart from the teacher. Hence, lack of these materials poses a challenge to the teaching and learning process.

Similarly, Brown (1994) asserts that learners gain a wider exposure to the L2 if they are reading various types of reading texts. In this way, they expand their vocabulary knowledge, implicitly learning grammar and the organizations of texts, and enrich their

ideas in various walks of life. In order to write quality paragraphs (or essays), learners' lexical knowledge or vocabulary is also vital. Words carry meanings and help learners communicate with their readers effectively.

Lack of words usually creates a breakdown in communication because vocabulary knowledge and writing performance correlate significantly. Therefore, the learners in this study used structures from their mother tongue to communicate and made interlingual errors in structures where the L1 and L2 are different as per the contrastive analysis theory that informs the current study.

4.2.2.3 Lack of activities that promote the development of English vocabulary

The third factor that contributed to the learners' making of Chichewa-related errors in the sampled schools was lack of activities that help learners develop English vocabulary and proficiency. These are activities like debates, role-play, simulations, quiz competitions, interviews and poem recitations (AbiSamra, 2003; Lipenga, 2011). The researcher observed that these activities were not done in these schools.

During FGDs, the learners acknowledged lack of these activities putting the blame on their teachers. For instance, 65% of the learners (26 out of 40) argued that there were no writing clubs and that debates, quiz competitions, and written exercises were not frequently done because the teachers did not give them. For instance, this is what one of the learners expressed:

Pasukulu pano palibe ma writing clubs ndipo madibeti, quiz komanso ntchito zoti tizilemba kuti tizipanga practice chizungu aphunzitsi athu samatipatsapatsa. Ndiye ifeyo nthawi zambiri timalemba chizungu

pamayeso pokha komano nthawi zina timachisakaniza ndi Chichewa, si nanga mawu ambiri sitimawadziwa. Komanso m'kalasi timalankhulanso kwambiri Chichewa chomwecho. Ndiye tikamalemba, timangolembanso zachichewachewa. (At this school, there are no writing clubs and our teacher does not regularly give us written exercises, debate topics, and quiz for us to practise English. As a result, most of the times we write English in examinations only. However, we sometimes mix it with Chichewa since our level of English vocabulary is low. Furthermore, we often use Chichewa in the classroom. So, our English is marred with features of Chichewa).
[Learner, FGD, School A, 22nd Jan, 2015]

The quotation shows that in addition to lack of communicative activities, learners in the sampled schools were rarely given written English exercises. This contributed to the learners' making of errors. As Brown (1994) points out, one of the main reasons of writing errors committed by second or foreign language learners is lack of practice in writing. Thus, writing practice under guidance and encouragement enhances the learners' performance in English writing. Hence, the researcher in the present study feels that it was important for learners to practise English writing frequently so that they could enhance their writing performance.

4.2.2.4 Learners' poor background from primary schools

The study also revealed that the learners had poor background from their primary schooling. They were not adequately exposed to written English. During IDIs, all the four teachers expressed a concern that the learners committed Chichewa-interlingual errors

partly because they had poor writing background from primary schooling. The following sentiments represent the teachers' view:

The learners we receive in CDSS are of low quality. In primary schools they did not do well. They had poor background in writing English. As a result, they carry the problem over to us. We do try our best but with little improvement because they are already spoiled. **[Teacher, IDI, School D, 9th March, 2015]**

The learners vindicated the teachers' viewpoint. The majority of them (80 %) also reported that at primary school they had poor background in English. They indicated that their teachers taught them in Chichewa and they were not exposed adequately to written English at primary school level. Therefore, the researcher considers poor background from primary schooling as one of the factors that contributed to Chichewa-influenced errors observed in the learners' written English in the present study. This agrees with Mbano (2004) who also found that there was poor writing background right away from primary school. Mbano (2004) further observes that even when the learners were selected to secondary school, their pieces of writings contained undeveloped writing style which in most cases lacked originality of ideas, coherence and conclusions.

In summary, responding to the second research question, four factors were identified as those that triggered the making of Chichewa-based errors in learners' written English. The factors include the excessive use of Chichewa in the English classroom by both teachers and learners, inadequacy of prescribed English textbooks for learners, lack of

activities that enhance the development of English vocabulary and proficiency and learners' poor background from primary schooling. The findings of this study illustrate that the problem originates from how the teachers and learners go about with teaching and learning which reflect on learner performance in their written English. The following section presents and discusses the findings on the third research question.

4.2.3 How teachers dealt with the influencing factors to assist learners

The third subsidiary research question sought to explore how teachers dealt with the various influencing factors in order to help learners overcome Chichewa-interlingual errors in written English. The researcher did this through classroom observations, in-depth interviews with the teachers and FGDs with the learners. However, he found that the teachers did not do much to help learners overcome the errors as explained in the following paragraphs.

4.2.3.1 How teachers dealt with the use of Chichewa in English lessons

The study revealed that teachers tolerated the use of Chichewa in English lessons because of four reasons. The reasons were: teachers' attitudes towards learners' ability to cope with English as a medium of instruction (MOI), teachers' capacity to advance English as a medium of instruction, general capacity of the schools to promote English as a medium of communication and the use of Grammar Translation Method (GTM). The following paragraphs explain how these factors promoted the use of Chichewa in the schools.

*(a) Teachers' attitudes towards learners' ability to cope with English as
MOI*

The teachers' attitudes towards learners' ability to cope with English as a medium of instruction promoted the use of Chichewa in the sampled schools. During interviews all the four teachers reported that they allowed their learners to use Chichewa because if they were strict in using English only, there was no participation in the lessons and learners could complain that they had not learnt anything by the end of the lessons. This is what one teacher expressed and is representative of the views of the four teachers who participated in the study:

You know what, Sir, the students we have here do not understand English and if you are strict in using the Queen's language, they do not participate in the lessons and they will walk out of the class without having learnt anything. In the past I used to teach in English only but what could happen is that most of the students would come to me complaining that they did not grasp anything in my lessons because I used English only. That's why I just started to mix Chichewa and English so that the learners should be able to understand [**Teacher, In-depth interview, School B, 6th Feb, 2015**].

(b) Teachers' capacity to advance English as a medium of instruction

The study also revealed that teachers allowed the use of Chichewa in English lessons because they were limited in their capacity to advance English as a medium of instruction. All the four teachers reported during in-depth interviews that it was difficult for them to teach in English only because they were used to Chichewa and not English. The following verbatim quotation from one of the teachers illustrates this point:

Sir, to be frank, it is not easy to teach in English without code-switching. You know Chichewa is the language we are familiar with, so even if we can try to teach in English only, most of us cannot manage. We, ourselves, also struggle to sustain a conversation in English without using the local language [**Teacher, In-depth interview, School B, 6th Feb, 2015**].

(c) General capacity of the schools to provide conducive environment for English as a medium of communication

The third factor that encouraged the use of Chichewa in the sampled schools was the general capacity of the schools to provide conducive environment for English as a medium of communication. For instance, it was observed that Chichewa was used for communication not only in class but also outside the classroom. This is what one of the teachers had to say when the researcher asked him during IDI to explain why he allowed his learners to use Chichewa freely in an English lesson:

Sir, honestly speaking, at this school we cannot manage to use only English as a medium of instruction. As a school, our main language is Chichewa. We have been trying to speak English only at this school. But you know what, Sir? Both teachers and learners see this as a burden and this policy just dies a natural death. Even when teaching the other subjects like Mathematics, Geography and History teachers here often use Chichewa. I think we Africans cannot manage to use English only as if we are Americans. [**Teacher, In-depth interview, School A, 22nd Jan, 2015**].

The learners also reported that they could not do much to increase the use of English due to the nature of their schools as Community Day Secondary Schools. The following quotation represents the learners' views:

Ndi kovuta kuti tizilankhula kwambiri chizungu chifukwa cha mtundu wa sukulu yathuyi. Ife timakhla kuno nthawi yochepa ndipo timabwerera kunyumba. Tikapita kunyumba, timalankhula Chichewa chokhachokha. Ndiye ngakhale tizilankhula kuno chizungucho, sizingathandize kwenikweni since we go back home daily. *Bola anzathu ogonera komweko akhoza kumalankhula bwino chizungu.* (It is difficult for us to speak English frequently because of the type of our school. We are at school just for a short period of time and we go back home where we speak Chichewa only. So even if we speak English here, it will not help us much since we go back home daily. Our friends in boarding schools are better off in terms of using English). [**Learner, FGD, School D, 26th Feb, 2015**]

(d) Use of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

With the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), the first language is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language (Stern 1983). This method gives more importance to translating sentences and parts of lessons. Teachers give sentences and parts of lessons to students to translate from L1 to L2 and L2 to L1. It is assumed that the learner will be able to translate precisely and learn L2. Bilingual word lists as well as dictionaries are of much help to teach vocabulary. Learners also memorise words of L2 and their meanings in L1.

In the current study, the researcher noted during lesson observations that teachers used to translate items from English into Chichewa. The teachers explained during IDIs that they taught using this method as one way of assisting the learners to overcome Chichewa-influenced errors in English. This is what one of the teachers indicated and is representative of the views of the other three teachers who participated in this study:

Sir, when teaching I translate words, phrases, clauses, figurative terms and expressions and sentences which I feel to be difficult to learners. I translate them into Chichewa and I explain how they are different from English and Chichewa. The aim is that learners should be able to know the differences between English and Chichewa in terms of grammar, vocabulary and structure. **[Teacher, In-depth interview, School B, 6th Feb, 2015]**

However, the researcher feels that although the Grammar Translation Method has the potential to help learners, the method is not the best option. The reason is that this method contributes to L1 interference among the learners since teachers use the learners' mother tongue profusely to explain lessons in L2. As Brown (1994) observes, if a teacher of L2 reverts readily to the mother tongue, the learners are likely to do the same and there is danger in that the lesson may turn into using L1 as the mode of communication. As a result, learners will lack the input they require to learn the language and they are denied the chance to practise using the target language. In the end, mother tongue features will be rampant among the learner language as was the case in the present study.

4.2.3.2 How teachers dealt with inadequacy of prescribed English textbooks

During in-depth interviews, the teachers explained that lack of textbooks was a big problem in their schools. Asked how they dealt with the issue, the teachers explained that they used three strategies: presenting the issue to the administration to procure more textbooks, putting learners in groups and making use of photocopied materials. These strategies are discussed in the section that follows.

(a) Presenting the issue to the school administration

All the four teachers explained that they had been asking the administration to procure more prescribed textbooks for English but the books were not procured. For instance, this is what one of the four teachers reported which is typical of the explanations of the other teachers:

Sir, the issue of books here is serious. The library is just full of books of subjects that are not taught here such as History and Social Studies. For English, on the other hand, we just have only few and it becomes difficult for the learners to access them. As a result, the students do not read the books on their own. As a result, most of them do not see the spellings of words and hence they just write them as if they are Chichewa words. I have been reporting to the head master the issue of lack of English books but for 3 years now no single book has been bought to improve the situation. So, what am I to keep on pushing things? I have just left the issue. **[Teacher, In-depth interview, School B, 6th Feb, 2015]**

(b) Use of photocopied materials

The majority of the teachers (75 %) reported that they asked learners to photocopy a whole book or part of it. However, the teachers were quick to lament that most of the learners were not able to do so due to financial constraints and lack of interest. Even the teachers themselves said they were not able to photocopy the materials due to lack of funds. For instance, this is what one of the teachers expressed:

Sir, sometimes I ask my learners to photocopy part of a book or the whole book if they can manage. Some of the learners do so but most of them are not able due to two reasons: lack of money and lack of interest for school. Of course, I also help with photocopying but most of the times I do not manage due to poor salaries. You know, Sir, with our meagre salaries we even find it hard to feed our families. If I ask the administration, they do not buy the books. Even photocopying, they will tell you the school has no money for that [Teacher, In-depth interview, School D, 9th March, 2015]

(c) Putting learners in groups

During interviews all the four teachers reported that one of the ways they used to deal with lack of textbooks was to put the learners in groups. However, the researcher noted during lesson observations that this strategy did not work well because the groups were too large. For example, at school B the learners were told to be in groups but in each group there were more than ten members sharing one textbook. As a result, some could not even see what was being read. As asserted by Kauchak and Eggen (2007), effective use of group work requires careful planning and organisation to make sure that the

learning activities and interactions contribute to learning. Davis (1999) observes that the groups of between 4 and 6 learners work best and are recommended.

From the discussion on how the teachers dealt with the issue of lack of textbooks, it is evident that the teachers in these schools only relied on prescribed textbooks for English. However, the researcher feels that a language teacher should not only rely on prescribed textbooks. Rather, he or she should be able to make use of authentic materials such as newspapers, video selections, photographs and other materials that could be used in the classroom for teaching and learning. In addition, the researcher feels that the teachers could make use of the available textbooks as long as they are in English. In three of the schools, for example, there were a good number of textbooks for other subjects like History and Social Studies as pointed out by the teachers who participated in the study. An effective teacher could make use of these to teach language. In support of this idea, Richards (2001, p.252) observes that “the use of authentic materials in the teaching of language provides exposure to real language rather than the artificial texts found in created materials that have been specially written to illustrate particular grammatical rules and discourse types.”

4.2.3.3 How teachers handled activities that promote English vocabulary and proficiency

The researcher found that teachers did not engage learners in activities that promote the development of English vocabulary and proficiency because of their attitudes towards the

type of learners they had. The following response by one of the teachers depicts this point and is representative of the explanations given by the other three teachers. The teacher gave this answer during in-depth interview when he was asked to explain the activities he employed to help the learners develop their English vocabulary and proficiency.

To me, it is very difficult because it is like a chain from the primary schools and the type of the students that we receive here are generally of poor quality. They passed MANEB examinations of course, but those of good quality go to boarding secondary schools while the residues are the ones who come here. So, we will definitely have problems. Imagine I have been trying to conduct debates here with the learners but most of them run away and only two or three students out of fifty are willing to participate. So, what can we do? Tie them? No. So I just leave them; they do not like school here. Talk of quiz, they run away from that. Even if you tell them to write something most of them will not write. They don't like writing activities here. **[Teacher, In-depth interview, School C, 20th Feb, 2015]**

The teacher's response above shows that he loses the morale to assist the learners to improve the quality of their English and he feels the situation is inevitable due to the type of learners at the school. In relation to this, Lipenga's 2011 study also revealed that primary school learners in sampled schools in Zomba were not adequately exposed to activities that promote the development of speech proficiency such as discussions, debates, role plays, interviews, story-telling and drama. However, the researcher in the present study feels that the teachers should not give up. They must assist the learners to improve their English.

In summary, responding to the third subsidiary research question which explored how teachers dealt with the factors which influenced learners to make Chichewa-based errors, the study found that teachers were not effective in this respect. First, they encouraged the use Chichewa in the teaching and learning of English. Second, instead of using the available textbooks for other subjects and authentic materials to teach English, the teachers unsuccessfully clung to the use of prescribed textbooks for English which were not adequate. Third, they did not engage the learners in activities that promote the development of English vocabulary and proficiency.

4.3 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented and discussed the findings of the study. Firstly, it has presented the contexts of the sampled schools. This has been followed by a presentation and discussion of the specific findings in relation to the three subsidiary research questions which the study was set to answer. The next chapter presents the conclusions and implications of the study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.0 Chapter overview

This chapter presents a summary of the conclusions and implications on the key findings of the study presented in Chapter four. Finally, the chapter outlines a suggested area for further research.

5.1 Conclusions and implications

The purpose of the study was to explore the Chichewa-induced errors which learners make in their written English. The main research question was: How does Chichewa influence learners to make errors in their written English? The study was guided by three subsidiary research questions. These were: What Chichewa-influenced errors do learners make in their written English? What factors influence learners to make Chichewa-related errors in written English? How do teachers deal with such influencing factors? All the questions were answered as summarised in the following sections.

5.1.1 Chichewa-influenced errors in learners' written English

On the first research question which aimed at finding out the Chichewa-induced errors made by learners in their written English, the study concludes that learners made errors of different types. The researcher categorised them into six: use of Chichewa words, spelling, literal translation, misordering of sentence constituents, subject-verb agreement (SVA) and omission. It was observed that they made these errors in structures that are different from those of Chichewa as stated in the theory of contrastive analysis that guided the study.

5.1.2 Factors that influence learners to make Chichewa-based errors in written English

The study concludes that four factors contributed to the making of Chichewa-based errors by the learners in the sampled schools. The first one was excessive use of Chichewa in the English classroom. The second factor was inadequacy of English textbooks for the learners. The study found that teachers did not use other materials to teach English. Instead, they just relied on prescribed textbooks for English which were inadequate. As such, the learners were not exposed to the written form of the English language. Thirdly, activities that promote the development of English vocabulary and writing skills such as debates, role-plays, interviews and simulations, were not done in the sampled schools. Finally, the study found that learners had poor English background from their primary schooling. Therefore, they had low English vocabulary. Consequently, they relied on their mother tongue (Chichewa) to convey their ideas as they wrote in English. Hence, their English mirrored the features of Chichewa.

5.1.3 How teachers dealt with the influencing factors to assist learners

The study revealed that teachers did not deal with the influencing factors effectively. First, they promoted the use of Chichewa in English lessons. Second, they did not make use of available materials written in English to expose learners to English. Instead, they kept on using only prescribed textbooks which were not adequate. Finally, the teachers did not involve learners in activities that could help them develop English vocabulary and proficiency.

5.2 Implications from the study

Based on the findings, the following are the implications of the study:

- Teachers should refrain from teaching English in Chichewa because this deprives the learners of not only the opportunity to practise English but also the input they require to learn the language. In addition, the teaching of other subjects except Chichewa and French should also be done in English and not in mother tongues.
- Teachers of English should not only rely on prescribed textbooks for English; they should also use the available textbooks for other subjects as well as other authentic materials to teach English.
- Teachers of English should discuss teaching methodologies both at departmental and cluster levels in order to share their knowledge, experience and expertise on the teaching of the subject.
- Schools should encourage writing so that learners practise using the

vocabulary acquired. For example, the teachers can form Writers' Clubs where they are not established. In addition, teachers should teach, give and mark long pieces of writing such as compositions, letters, reports and literature essays regularly and give feedback. This would help learners improve their vocabulary and writing skills.

- Policy makers should ensure a more robust teaching of English at the lower levels so as to reduce some of the carry over errors.

5.3 Suggested area for further study

The current study only dwelled on Chichewa inter-lingual errors but Malawi is a multi-lingual country. Therefore, the researcher suggests that a similar study could be conducted with a different mother tongue such as Chitumbuka, Chiyao or any other local language in order to explore errors which learners make in English due to their knowledge of such a mother tongue.

REFERENCES

- AbiSamra, N. (2003). Error analysis: Arabic speakers' English writings. In M. Kamwaza (2011). *Analysis of English grammatical errors among university students: A case study of students from selected programmes at the Polytechnic*. Unpublished masters dissertation, University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba.
- Baloch, S.B. (2013). L1 (Arabic) interference in learning L2 (English): An analysis of English spelling used by Arabic speakers at undergraduate level - A case study. *European Scientific Journal*, 9(16), 226-232.
- Bartlett, S., & Burton, D. (2007). *Introduction to education studies (2nd ed.)*. London: Sage.
- Bell, J., Bust, T., Fox, A., Goody, J., & Goulding, S. (eds). (1984). *Conducting small-scale investigations in education management*. London: Harper and Row Publishers.
- Bennui, P. (2008). A study of L1 interference on the writing of Thai EFL students. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research*, 4 (2), 72-102.
- Berg, B. (1998). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences (3rd ed.)*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. (2001). *How to research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

- Blum-Kulka, S., & Levenston, E.A. (1983). Universals of lexical simplification. In C. Faerch and G. Kasper (Eds). (1983). *Strategies in interlanguage communication*. London: Longman.
- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Bryman, A. (2008). *Social research methods (3rd ed.)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burt, M.K., & Dulay, H.C. (1975). *New directions in second language learning, teaching and bilingual education*. Washington DC: Library of Congress.
- Chan, T. (1975). Error analysis, contrastive analysis, and students' perception: A study of difficulty in second language learning. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 13, 119-143.
- Chauma, A.M. (2013). *Primary school teachers' experiences in teaching mathematical concepts in Chitumbuka*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba.
- Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1986). *Research methods in education*. London: Croom Helm.
- Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education*. London: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research methods in education (5th ed.)*. London: Routledge.
- Corder, S.P. (1967). The significance of learner's errors. In J.C. Richards (1974). (Ed.). *Error analysis: Perspectives on second language acquisition (pp. 19-27)*. London: Longman Group Limited.

- Corder, S. P. (1974). *Error Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Corder, S.P. (1978). Error analysis, interlanguage and second language acquisition. In V. Kinsella (1978). (Ed.). *Language teaching and linguistics: Surveys*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Corder, S.P. (1981). *Error analysis and interlanguage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Creswell, J.W. (2000). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods approaches (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods approaches (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Crystal, D. (1987). *The Cambridge encyclopaedia of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (1997). *The Cambridge encyclopaedia of language (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Davies, A. (2003). *The native speaker: Myth and reality*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Dechert, H.W. (1983). How a story is done in a second language. In C. Faerch and G. Kasper (Eds). (1983). *Strategies in interlanguage communication*. London: Longman.

- Doke, C.M. (1967). *The southern Bantu languages*. London: International African Institute.
- Dulay, H., & Burt, M. (1974). Natural sequences in child second language acquisition. *Language learning*, 24, 37-53.
- Dulay, H., Burt, M., & Krashen, S. (1982). *Language two*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dunn, S.D. (1999). *The practical researcher: A student guide to psychological research*. London: McGraw-Hill Company.
- Duskova, L. (1969). On sources of errors in foreign language learning. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 7, 11-36.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *Understanding second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (1997). *Second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Erkaya, O.R. (2012). Vocabulary and L1 interference: Error analysis of Turkish students' English essays. *Mextesol Journal*, (36), 1-11.
- Fetterman, D.M. (1989). *Ethnography step by step*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2004). Five misunderstandings about case study research. In C. Seale, G. Gobo, J. Gubrium & D. Silverman (Eds.). *Qualitative research practice* (pp. 10-18). London: SAGE Publications.
- Fraenkel, J.R., & Wallen, N.E. (2003). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (5th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

- Fries, C. (1945). *Teaching and learning English as a foreign language*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Gorard, S. (2001). *Quantitative methods in educational research: The role of numbers made easy*. London: Continuum.
- Hancock, B. (2002). *Trent focus for research and development in primary health care: An introduction to qualitative research*. Nottingham: Trent Focus Group.
- Harmer, J. (1983). *The practice of English language teaching*. Essex: Longman.
- Hussein, F. (2012). *Translation of Chichewa health materials: Towards a dynamic equivalence account*. Unpublished masters dissertation, University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba.
- James, C. (1980). *Contrastive analysis*. Essex: Longman.
- Kamwaza, M. (2011). *Analysis of English grammatical errors among university students: A case study of students from selected programmes at Polytechnic*. Unpublished masters dissertation, University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba.
- Kankuzi, S., & Molande, B. (2003). *Methods of teaching English II*. (Unpublished).
- Kholowa, J.Y. (2002). *Linguistics and African languages, module 5: Descriptive analysis of Bantu languages*. (Unpublished).
- Kholowa, F.A.C. (2007). *Early literacy development opportunities for rural pre-*

school children in Malawi: Case study of four pre-schools in Zomba district. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba.

Kombo, D.K., & Tromp, D.L. (2006). *Proposal and thesis writing: An introduction.* Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.

Krashen, S.D. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning.* California: Pargamon Press Inc.

Kumwenda, B. (2007). Challenges facing the education sector. *The Nation Newspaper*, January 22, 2010, inside issue: pp1-5.

Kunje, D., & Chimombo J. (1999). *Malawi: A baseline study of the teacher education system. Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER).* Sussex: Centre for International Education, University of Sussex Institute of Education.

Lacey, A., & Luff, D. (2001). *Trent focus for research and development in primary health care: Qualitative data analysis.* Sheffield: University of Sheffield, Trent Focus Group.

Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics across cultures.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

Larsen-Freeman, D., & Long, M.H. (1991). *An introduction to second language acquisition research.* London: Longman.

Lipenga, M.L. (2011). *Teacher practices for developing English language speech proficiency in selected primary schools in Zomba district.* Unpublished masters dissertation, University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba.

- Locke, L. F., Silverman, S. J., & Spirduso, W. (2004). *Reading and understanding research*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- LoCoco, V. (1975). An analysis of Spanish and German learner's errors. *Working Papers on Bilingualism*, 7, 96-124.
- Lott, D. (1983). Analysing and counteracting interference errors, *ELT Journal*, (37)3, 256- 261.
- Malawi National Examinations Board (2009). 2009 Malawi School Certificate of Education Examinations, *English language chief examiner's report*. Zomba: MANEB.
- Malawi National Examinations Board (2010). 2010 Malawi School Certificate of Education Examinations, *chief examiner's report for English*. Zomba: MANEB.
- Malawi National Examinations Board (2011). 2011 Malawi School Certificate of Education Examinations, *chief examiner's report for English*. Zomba: MANEB.
- Malawi National Examinations Board (2012). 2012 Malawi School Certificate of Education Examinations, *Chief examiner's report for English*. Zomba: MANEB.
- Malawi National Examinations Board (2013). 2013 Malawi School Certificate of Education Examinations, *Chief examiner's report for English*. Zomba: MANEB.
- Malawi National Examinations Board (2014). 2014 Malawi School Certificate of Education Examinations, *Chief examiner's report for English*. Zomba: MANEB.

- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1995). *Designing qualitative research (2nd ed.)*. London: Sage Publication Inc.
- Mbano, B. (2004). *The teaching of writing in large classes: A study of how writing in English is taught in community day secondary schools*. Unpublished masters dissertation, University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba.
- McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (1993). *Research in education: A Conceptual introduction (3rd ed.)*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Merriam, S.B. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Miles, M.B., & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis. (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Milroy, L., & Goldon, M. (2003). *Sociolinguistics: Method and interpretation*. Malden-Ma: Basil Blackwell.
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, (2013). *Malawi senior secondary English teaching syllabus*. Malawi Institute of Education: Domasi.
- Munn, P., & Drever, E. (1999). *Using questions in a small-scale research*. Edinburgh: SCRE.
- Ndalama, L.V. (2005). *Communicative teaching and learner participation: A case study of selected secondary schools in Blantyre*. Unpublished masters dissertation,

University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba.

- Ng'ombe, J.L (1981). *An investigation into the communication syllabus for second year students of Agriculture at Bunda college*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of London, London.
- Nisbet, J., & Watt, J. (1984). Classroom studies. In J. Bell, T. Bush, A. Fox, J. Goodey., & S. Couliding (Eds). (1985). *Conducting small-scale investigations in educational management* (pp 125-130). Cambridge: Harper Education Series.
- Nunan, D. (1992). *Research methods in language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nthala, G.B. (2010). *Recurrent errors in English language spellings: A study of form three students' written work in selected secondary schools in Karonga district*. Unpublished masters dissertation, University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba.
- Odlin, T. (1989). *Language transfer: Cross-linguistic influence in language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Grady, W., & Dobrovolsky, M. (1992). *Contemporary linguistics analysis: An introduction*. Toronto: University Calgary, Corp Clark Pitman Limited.
- Oller, J.W., & Redding E. (1971). Article usage and language skills. *Language learning*, 21(1), 85-95.
- Opie, K. (2004). *Doing educational research: A guide to first-time researchers*. London: Sage.

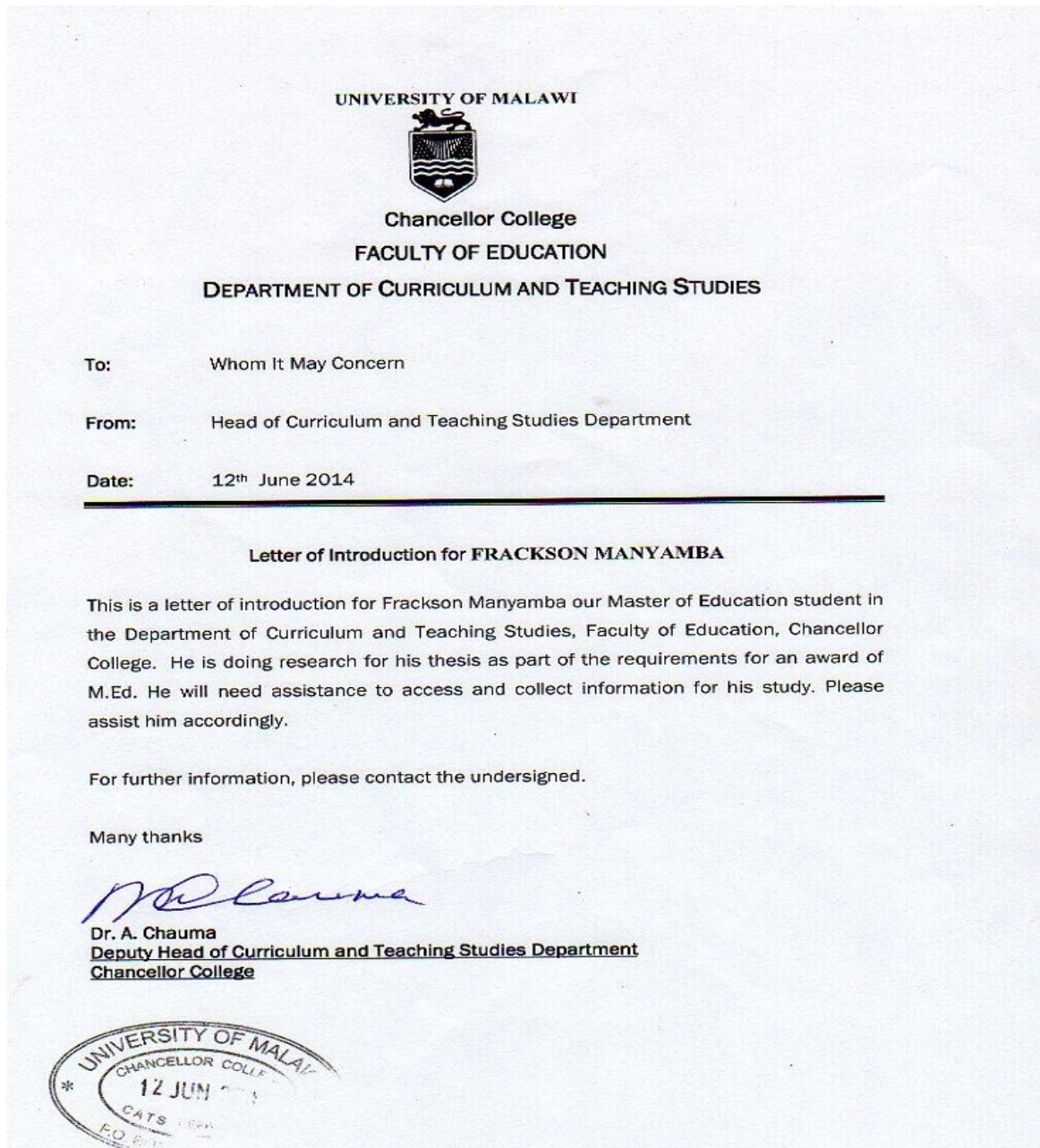
- Orodho, A.J., & Kombo, D.K. (2002). *Research methods*. Nairobi: Kenyatta University, Institute of Open Learning.
- Orr, G.J., & Scotton, C.M. (1980). *Learning Chichewa book 1: A piece corps language course* East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University.
- Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd ed.)*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Punch, K.F. (2009). *Introduction to research methods in education*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Rea, L.M., & Parker, R.A. (1997). *Survey research and survey research methods*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Richards, J.C., & Rodgers, T.S. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching: A description and analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J.C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, L. (2005). *Handling qualitative data*. London: Sage.
- Ringbom, H. (1987). *The role of the first language in foreign language learning*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Limited.
- Rossmann, G.B., & Rallis, S.F. (2003). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Sarantakos, S. (2005). *Social research (3rd ed.)*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Savignon, S.J. (2002). *Interpreting communicative language teaching: Contexts and concerns in teacher education*. London: Yale University Press.
- Sharwood-Smith, M. (1994). *Second language learning: Theoretical foundations*. London: Longman Publishers.
- Stake, R.E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sudman, S., & Bradburn, N. (1982). *Asking questions: A practical guide to questionnaire design*. San Francisco; Jossey-Bass.
- Tiffen, B. (1979). *A language in common*. London: Longman.
- Thornbury, S. (2006). *An A-Z of ELT: A dictionary of terms and concepts used in English language teaching*. Oxford: Macmillan Publishers Limited.
- Tom, M. (1998). *Oxford opinion to the English language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. (1962). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Trochim, W. M. K. (2006). *Ethics in research*. Retrieved 22 January, 2013, from: <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/ethics.php>.
- Wardhaugh, R. (1970). The contrastive analysis hypothesis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 4, 123-130.
- Wardhaugh, R. (1986). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

- Wallace, J.W. (1998). *Action research for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wassenaar, D.R. (2006). Ethical issues in social research. In M. Terre-Branche, K. Durrheim & D. Painter (Eds.). *Research in practice (2nd ed., pp 60-79)*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Zikmund, W.G. (2003). *Research design and methodology*. Ohio: Thomson.
- Zimba, J.M. (2010). Impact of Chichewa on English pronunciation: A study of English language learning in Government secondary schools in Kasungu district. Unpublished masters dissertation, University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter of introduction from Chancellor College



Appendix 2: Request letter for the study to the SEED Manager

Zomba Catholic Secondary School,
P.O Box 2,
Zomba.
16th June, 2014.

The Education Division Manager,
Southern Eastern Education Division,
Private Bag 48,
Zomba.

Dear Sir,

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN ZOMBA COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

I am writing to ask for permission to conduct an academic research in the above mentioned schools in your division. The aim of the study is to investigate the errors that learners make in their written English. The study is part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education which I am studying for at Chancellor College. Attached is my letter of introduction from the college. I intend to carry out a pilot study as soon as permission is granted but the main study will be done next term. Should there be any need for clarification, please call me on 0881251433 or my main supervisor, Dr Amos Chauma, on 0888603574 or 0999776995.

I look forward to hearing from you, Sir.

Yours faithfully,



Frackson Manyamba.

Appendix 3: Permission letter from the SEED Manager

REF. NO. SEED/ADM/VOL. II/477

25th June, 2014.

FROM : THE EDUCATION DIVISION MANGER, SOUTH EAST EDUCATION DIVISION,
PRIVATE BAG 48, ZOMBA.

TO : THE HEADTEACHERS,

AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN ZOMBA COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

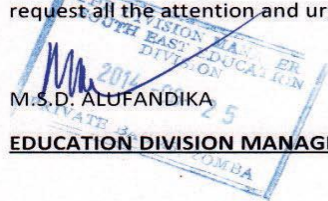
I write to kindly request your office to allow MR FRACKSON MANYAMBA, currently a post graduate student at Chancellor College at the University of Malawi – to carry out a research for his Master of Education Degree program with your Students and teachers at your institutions.

I will be most grateful if MR MANYAMBA is given all the necessary support and guidance so that his research is carried out successfully.

I look forward to your usual support and hoping at the same time that you will accord this request all the attention and urgency that it deserves.


M.S.D. ALUFANDIKA

EDUCATION DIVISION MANAGER



Appendix 4: A sample letter to head teachers

Zomba Catholic Secondary School

P.O Box 2

Zomba

22nd November, 2014

The Head teacher

_____ CDSS

Dear Sir

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research at your institution. I am a postgraduate student at Chancellor College studying for Master of Education Degree in Curriculum and Teaching Studies - Language Education.

I intend to visit your school on the following dates:

The participants will be teachers and learners of forms 2 and 4. Please be informed that I have already sought permission from the Education Division Manager (EDM) for the South East Education Division (SEED). Find attached a copy of the letter permitting me to proceed with the research.

Your cooperation in this research will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Frackson James Manyamba.

Appendix 5: Questionnaire for head teachers

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Instructions: This questionnaire is aimed at getting some important information about your school. Please answer all questions as honestly as possible. All the responses will be treated with a high level of confidentiality.

1. Name of the school _____
2. Year the school opened _____
3. Name of proprietor _____
4. School type: Community Day Secondary School
5. Number of teachers:

Male: _____

Female: _____

Total: _____

6. Number of teachers who were trained to teach at secondary school level (Thus, those with either Degree or Diploma in Education) _____
7. Background/ demographic information about teachers of English for Form 4

Name	Sex	Grade	Academic qualification	Teaching class and number of learners	Number of years he or she has been at this school

8. School capacity (Number of learners who have been enrolled at the school)

Boys: _____

Girls_____

Total_____

Thank you for taking your time filling in this questionnaire.

Appendix 6: A sample letter to teachers of English in Form 4

Zomba Catholic Secondary School
P.O Box 2
Zomba

_____CDSS

Dear Sir,

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

I am a postgraduate student at Chancellor College studying for Master of Education in Curriculum and Teaching Studies - Language Education. Currently, I am doing a research as part of the requirements of the programme.

By virtue of being a teacher of English in form 4 at this school, you have been selected to participate in this research. I intend to observe your English lessons and conduct interviews with you. I will also conduct focus group discussions with the learners. The information you will provide through your participation will contribute to the success of this study.

Please be assured that all the information you will supply will solely be used for the purposes of this study and not otherwise. In addition, the information will be treated with the highest degree of confidentiality. You reserve the right not to participate in this research if you so wish.

I will be very grateful if you accept to fully participate in this study.

Yours sincerely,

Frackson James Manyamba.

Appendix 7: Teacher consent form

I, _____, (please write your name in full) an English teacher at _____ CDSS, am aware of all the data collection processes in this study. I give consent to the following:

1. Being audio-taped during the English lesson
 - a. Yes b. No (Encircle the letter of your choice)
2. The possible future use of audio tape for conference purposes
 - a. Yes b. No (Encircle the letter of your choice)

Signed -----

Date: ----- January, 2015.

Appendix 8: A sample letter of commitment for research participants

_____ CDSS

Zomba

_____ 2015

Zomba Catholic Secondary School

P.O Box 2

Zomba

I, _____, acknowledge your invitation to participate in your research entitled “**Exploring Chichewa–influenced errors in learners written English.**”

I hereby freely accept to participate in the study. I promise that the information I provide will be true.

NAME: _____ SIGNATURE _____

DATE: _____

**Appendix 9: Questionnaire for background information about teachers of English
for Form 4**

The aim of this questionnaire is to get some vital background information about you. Please feel free to give your responses. I assure you that the information you provide will be used solely for the purposes of this study and will be treated with a high level of confidentiality. I wish to thank you in advance for taking time from your busy schedule to respond to the questions.

Instruction: Please encircle the letter of your choice(s) or fill in the required information.

1. Your full name is: _____
2. Your sex is: A. Male B. Female
3. Your age is: _____
4. Your school is: A. B. C. D.
5. Your length of service: _____ (Write the number of years you have been teaching at secondary school level).
6. For how long have you been at this school? _____
7. Educational qualification (Encircle all that are applicable to you).

A. T2/ MSCE B. Diploma in Education C. Bachelor of Education D. Master's Degree
E. Any other (Specify) _____
8. Your major teaching subject is: _____

9. Your minor teaching subject is: _____

10. Class(es) currently teaching: A. Form 1 B. Form 2 C. Form 3 D. Form 4 (Encircle all that are applicable to you).

11. Your teaching load (total number of periods per week) is: _____

12. Which is your mother tongue? (Thus, the language you acquired at home).

A. Chichewa B. Chiyao C. Chitumbuka D. Any other (Please specify)

13. Apart from English, which other language(s) do you hear and understand?

14. What is your home district? _____

Thank you very much for filling in this questionnaire.

Appendix 10: Questionnaire for background information about learners in Form 4

Hello, I am Frackson James Manyamba, a Master of Education student at Chancellor College, University of Malawi. Currently, I am doing a research that is interested in finding out the effect that the native language (Chichewa) has on the teaching and learning of English in Malawian secondary schools. In this questionnaire I would like to get some relevant background information about you.

Please feel free to give your responses. I assure you that the information you provide will be used solely for the purposes of this study and will be treated with a high level of confidentiality. I wish to thank you in advance for taking time from your busy schedule to respond to the questions.

Instruction: Please encircle the letter of your choice(s) or fill in the required information.

1. Your name is: _____

2. Your sex is: A. Male B. Female

3. Your age is: A. 11-13 B. 14 - 16 C. 17 - 19 D. 20 - above

4. Your school is: A. B. C. D.

5. Which is your mother tongue? (Thus, the language you acquired at home).

A. Chichewa B. Chiyao C. Chitumbuka D. Any other (Please specify)

6. Apart from English, which other language(s) do you hear and understand?

7. What is your home district? _____

Thank you very much for filling in this questionnaire.

Appendix 11: Lesson observation schedule

1. Date _____ Name of the school _____

2. Time of the observation: Start: _____ End: _____

3. Class: _____ Name of teacher: _____

4. Gender: _____

5. Lesson Topic: _____

6. Number of learners: _____ Boys: _____ Girls _____

7. Does the teacher use Chichewa in the lesson? _____

8. If yes, in what activities?

a. Explaining abstract vocabulary _____

b. Explaining grammatical rules _____

c. Paraphrasing an important point _____

d. Reading comprehension _____

e. Giving instructions _____

f. Others (Specify) _____

9. Do the learners use Chichewa in the classroom? _____

10. If yes, in which activities?

a. Answering questions _____

b. Asking questions _____

- c. Pair work or group activities _____
- d. Mere talking to fellow learners _____
- e. Other (Specify) _____

11. Are learners actively involved in the lesson? _____

12. If so, how?

13. If the learners share learning materials, how many learners share one copy?

Appendix 12: An interview schedule for teachers

Use of Chichewa in the English classroom

- Why do you use Chichewa in your English class?

Probe: How often do you use Chichewa in your class?

- In your opinion, why do the learners use Chichewa in your English lessons?
- Do you allow them to use Chichewa in the classroom?

Probe: Why?

- When teaching other subjects apart from English, Chichewa and French, which language(s) do you and other teachers use as medium of instruction at this school?
- In your opinion, what effects, if any, does the use of Chichewa in the English classroom have on the teaching and learning of English?
- Do you notice features of Chichewa in learners' written English?

Probe: What do you think are the factors that influence the learners to make such mother-tongue related errors in their written English?

Probe: How do you deal with the factors to help the learners overcome the errors?

Practices of English Teaching and Learning

- How do your learners participate in your English class?

Probe: Why?

- Which aspect(s) of English do you most frequently teach?

- Do you create real-life activities in your English lessons?

Probe: In what ways and why?

- On average, how many learners share one text book in your English class?

Probe: Why?

- How often do you use supplementary reading materials when teaching English?
- How keen are your learners at reading supplementary reading materials like newspapers, magazines and novels in addition to their prescribed textbooks?
- How do you make your learners practise the writing of English essays?

Probe: How often do you do that and why?

- What activities do you use to help the learners develop English vocabulary and proficiency?

Appendix 13: A guide for focus group discussion with learners

Use of Chichewa in the English classroom

- I saw that you use Chichewa in your English lessons, why do you do that?

Probe: How often do you use Chichewa in your English class and in what activities?

- Does your teacher allow you to use Chichewa in his English class?
- Why does your English teacher use Chichewa in your English lessons?

Probe: In what activities does he or she use Chichewa in the classroom?

- Do you practise an “English only rule” inside the classroom?
- Apart from class periods, do you speak with your teachers in English only?
- When teaching other subjects apart from English, Chichewa and French, which language(s) do the teachers use as medium of instruction at this school?
- In your opinion, what effects, if any, does the use of Chichewa in English classrooms have on the teaching and learning of English?

Practices of Teaching and Learning English

- When learning English, does the teacher give you chance to take part in the lesson?

Probe: Explain how.

- Which aspect(s) of English do you most frequently learn in your class?
- On average, how many learners share one English text book per group?

- How often do you read on your own materials such as newspapers, magazines and novels?

Probe: Why?

- How often does the teacher teach you the writing of English essays and give you exercises on the same?
- How often do you practise the writing of English essays on your own?
- At this school, what activities are conducted that provide you with an opportunity to speak or write English?

Appendix 14: Sample lesson observation transcript

TRANSCRIPT OF AN OBSERVED LESSON IN FORM 4 AT SCHOOL B FROM 10: 00 – 10:40 AM – 2ND FEBRUARY, 2015.

LESSON 3: WRITING BETTER SENTENCES

(Res = Researcher; Tr = Teacher; L = Leaner; Ls = Learners)

Tr: You are welcome, Sir.

Res: Thank you.

Tr: Good morning class.

Ls: Good morning, Sir.

Tr: Today, we are having a topic which is writing better sentence (pauses) Writing better?

Ls: Sentences (as a chorus)

Tr: It's a problem to most of you, you need to improve on this. We are going to use adjectives; we are going to use what?

Ls: Adjectives

Tr: Open on page 174.

L: *Peji chani?* (Which page?)

Tr: 174, Ok we are going to use adjectival clauses, adjectival what?

Ls: Clauses (as a chorus)

Tr: Most of us do put the adjectival clauses wrongly. So we have sentences which have adjectival clauses in wrong positions and we are going to put them in correct positions; that means, writing better sentences. We are going to do number 1 for example, that's what we're going to do, ok?

Ls: Yes!

Tr: Who can read the first sentence? *Kodi enanu mukutani, mungocheza eti? Mukutani kodi?* (What are some of you doing? Are you just chatting? What are you doing?) Who can read sentence number 1 for us?

(Learners raise their hands and the teacher nominates)

Tr: Yes, Rose.

L: I took ..(pauses)

Tr: *Ehe, pang'onopan'ono, ungofulumira nanga ndizilemba bwanji? Uzinena zoti ndizitha kulemba? Tapitiriza.* (Slow down, you are too fast. How will I write on the chalkboard? You need to read at a suitable pace for me to be able to write on the board. You can continue).

L: books with me

Tr: *Ok ndilembe kaye* (Let me write first) you will continue later on. Yes, continue now.

L: to bed which

Tr: to bed which...Yes continue

L: I borrowed from the library.

Tr: Ok. You see now class? This sentence is wrong. You see it reads: I took books with me to bed which I borrowed from the library. What is the adjectival clause in this sentence? Can you identify the adjectival clause in this sentence? (pauses)

L: The adjectival clause is which I borrowed.

Tr: Thank you for trying, now who can finish the clause, it is not complete.

L: from the library.

Tr: Yes. This clause is at the wrong position that's why the sentence is grammatically wrong. Now, who can put it at the right position for the sentence to be grammatical?

(There is silence in the classroom for about a minute)

Tr: Angella, Angella, correct the sentence. I will start for you, I took books ...

L: which I borrowed from the library

Tr: Yes, with me to the library. Now the sentence is correct. It reads: I took books which I borrowed from the library with me to bed. It is grammatical because the adjectival clause is now in the right position.

Tr: The second sentence now, who can read it? Yes, here in the front.

L: He entered the correct marks on the

Tr: *Nawenso ukufulumiza, uziyankhula pang'onopang'ono kuti ndizilemba* (You are also speaking too fast, slow down so that it will be easy for me to write on the board).

L: Ok Sir *ndiziyankhula pang'onopang'ono* (I will slow down).

Tr: **Yes, continue.**

L: on the

Tr: **on the**

L: report form

Tr: **Yes, continue please**

L: which had been

Tr: **Yes, which had been, Ya.. go ahead**

L: wrongly calculated.

Tr: **Ya, wrongly calculated. You see now, the sentence is: He entered the correct marks on the report form which had been wrongly calculated. This sentence is also not grammatically correct because the adjectival clause is in the wrong position.**

L: *Koma sir, simukufotokoza bwinobwino kuti tizimvetsa, mungonena kuti wrong position koma ifeyo wrong positionyo simukutiuza komanso mungonena kuti right position osatiuza kuti right positionyo ndi iti ndipo n'chifukwa chiyani ili right, mukuganiza kuti pamenepo mukuphunzitsa bwinobwino kuti ife tidziwe?* (Sir, you are not explaining clearly for us to understand, you are just saying wrong position without telling us which position is wrong and why; you are just saying right position but you are not explaining which is the right position and why. Do you think in this way you are effectively teaching for us to understand?

Tr: **Iwe, zachamba ndimadana nazo, wamva? Pamene ndimafotokoza unali kuti?**

Mayesa umacheza ndi mnzakoyo pamenepo, ndiye ukufuna ndibwereze zomwezi? Ndikubana m'kalasi mwanga usadzalowensotu. (I don't want nonsense in this class, where were you when I was explaining this? I saw you chatting with your friend and you want me to repeat? I can bar you from attending my classes if you continue misbehaving.)

Tr: Ok, there again the adjectival clause is not at the right position no, it is wrongly placed.

(The teacher reads the sentence three times and says: "Writing better sentences")

Tr: Who can correct the sentence? Yes Mary.

L: He entered the correct marks which had been

Tr; Yes, yes which had been?

L: wrongly calculated

Tr: Yes, which had been wrongly calculated on the?

L: on the report form.

Tr: Yes good. The sentence is now correct. He entered the correct marks which had been wrongly calculated on the report form. The adjectival clause is now at the right place. The first sentence was: I took books with me to bed which I borrowed from the library. The sentence was wrong because the adjectival clause was not at the right place. We have corrected it and now it reads: I took books which I had borrowed from the library with me to bed. It is correct as the adjectival clause is at the correct position. The second sentence was: He entered the marks on the report form which had been wrongly calculated. Again this sentence was wrong because of the same reason as in the first sentence. We have corrected it placing the adjectival clause at the

right position and now it reads: He entered the marks which had been wrongly calculated on the report form. We have done number 1 and 2 and now I want you to be in your groups and discuss number 3 to 7. All those sentences are wrong because the adjectival clauses are at the wrong positions. Correct them. I will give you 10 minutes to discuss. One should be the secretary.

(Learners form groups of more than ten members per group and discuss. However, the language used is Chichewa in almost all the groups)

L: *Kodi sir mwati tikambirane nambala chani ndi chani?* (Sir, which numbers should we discuss?)

Tr: **I said numbers 3 to 7. *Muzimvetsera mwatcheru, mwamva?*** (Listen attentively, ok?).

(The teacher goes round and marks the work in the groups. He hears the learners discussing in Chichewa but he does not say anything to encourage them to speak English).

Tr: **Now, we want to make corrections. Which group has done number 1 correctly?**

(Learners raise hands)

Tr: **Ok, you tell us...**

(*Bell rings*)

Tr: **Ok, it is time so we will make the corrections tomorrow. *Aliyense akafufuze yankho lolondola*** (Each one of you should find out the correct answers). Thank you very much. *Tionana mawa* (See you tomorrow).

Ls: Thank you, Sir.

(Factors contributing to Chichewa-based errors in written English: Use of Chichewa in the classroom, inadequate teaching and learning materials i.e. textbooks)

Appendix 15: Sample in-depth interview transcript

TRANSCRIPT OF AN IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH THE TEACHER ON 20TH FEBRUARY, 2015 FROM 2: 50 -3: 20 PM AT SCHOOL C

Res = Researcher; Tr = Teacher

Res: The purpose of this interview is just to share with me your experiences and attitudes in relation to your job as a teacher of English. Please, feel free. As I said earlier, the information you provide will be used for the purposes of the study only and will be treated with confidentiality.

Tr: Thank you, Sir.

Res: In your English class, why do you use Chichewa?

Tr: We sometimes use it if the students are failing to understand the words and they themselves do ask me to explain in Chichewa, that's why I explain to them in Chichewa but that happens only sometimes not always.

Res: When you see that your learners are speaking Chichewa in your English classroom, how do you react?

Tr: When I see that it is becoming a tendency for the students to be using Chichewa anyhow, I do direct them to speak English for them to get used to English.

Res: What are the effects of using Chichewa in an English classroom, in your opinion?

Tr: It partly facilitates the teaching and learning process because the kind of learners that we have nowadays in CDSSs most of them do not understand English. If you stick to using English only, they tell you at the end of the lesson that they have

not understood anything. You ask them questions no one will respond, so I take Chichewa as a teaching and learning resource because of the nature of the learners that I have. If you put them in groups to discuss, they do so in Chichewa and if you try to tell them not to speak Chichewa, then no one will participate and there is total silence in the classroom. So I succumb to using Chichewa because of the nature of the students that we have nowadays.

Res: Any negative effects?

Tr: Yes. I see that much as the use of Chichewa helps learners to grasp something from the lessons, the learners are not helped much. They are not able to speak good English but also when they write in English, the quality of English they write is undermined by Chichewa interference. In compositions, for example, they write Chichewa spellings. They fail to write compositions, letters and other long pieces of writing because they are used to speaking Chichewa. So the use of Chichewa just helps us teachers when teaching but it is detrimental on the part of the learners especially when it comes to examinations because they are marked wrong when they write something that has features of the mother tongue.

Res: What do you do when you notice Chichewa interference in the learners' written work?

Tr: I call the learner and tell him or her how to correct the construction. I tell them that what they wrote is mother tongue and they lose marks.

Res: Why don't you teach them as a class the areas which you see that features of the mother tongue are common?

Tr: I think I will start doing so from now; you have enlightened me on that one.

Res: When you see that the learners do not understand and they ask you in Chichewa, don't you think there are some other means of assisting them to

understand apart from the use of the mother tongue?

Tr: Yes, I think there are some. But mostly what I do is to correct them and tell them how to say the same question in English.

Res: Why are the learners not good at English?

Tr: There are a number of problems that contribute to the poor quality of their English and this problem is common among students in the CDSSs. First, I think this problem comes right from the primary schools where they were. I think the teachers there were not encouraging them to speak and write good English. So, when they come here it is the same system.

Res: In your opinion, how can this problem be solved?

Tr: To me, it is very difficult because it is like a chain from the primary schools and the type of the students that we receive here are generally of poor quality, they passed MANEB examinations of course but those of good quality go to national secondary schools and boarding secondary schools while the residues are the ones who come here. So, we will definitely have problems. Imagine, I have been trying to conduct debates here with the learners but most of them run away; only two or three students out of fifty something are willing to participate. So, what can we do? Tie them, no. I just leave them; they do not like school here. Even the school itself is not supportive enough. For example, I have been reporting to the headmaster the issue of lack of English books but for 3 years now no single book has been bought to improve the situation. So who am I to keep on pushing things? I just leave the issue.

Res: Aren't there other books apart from those of English which you can use to teach English?

Tr: Sir, that requires creativity on the teacher's part. Now with the lack of motivation

in terms of good salaries I don't think I can take that courage to improvise. The learners are not willing to learn, you organise activities to improve their language, they run away, even poem recitation, they tell you they cannot, you report to the head, nothing is done. So the whole system is not supportive. That's the problem we are having here. For literature books we have only one copy for each book for the teacher only. The students do not have access to even a single copy of literature book which is not good for learners to develop proficiency in English.

Res: How often do you teach the learners how to write a good essay in English?

Tr: I do teach them maybe three times a term and they write.

Res: Do you mark and give them feedback?

Tr: Yes, I do mark their work and make corrections.

Res: Thank you very much for accepting to participate in this study.

Tr: Thank you.

Appendix 16: Sample focus group discussion transcript with learners

TRANSCRIPT OF A FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH FORM 4 LEARNERS ON 26th FEBRUARY, 2015 FROM 2:00 – 2:40 PM AT SCHOOL D

(Res = Researcher; L1 = Learner 1; L2 = Learner 2; L3 = Learner 3; L4 = Learner 4; L5 = Learner 5; L6 = Learner 6; L7 = Learner 7; L8 = Learner 8; L9 = Learner 9; L10 = Learner 10)

Res: The purpose of this meeting is to discuss some aspects related to your experiences at this school especially with regard to the teaching and learning of English. Please feel free to share with us your ideas, attitudes, experiences and anything related to our topics. Anything you say here will not be used for any other purposes apart from the research and will be treated with a high level of confidentiality.

L6: *Koma sir bwanji tizikambirana m'Chichewa chifukwa enafe chizungucho ndiye sitiyanikhulapo kalikonse koma Chichewa ndiye tikambirana bwinobwino popanda vuto lililonse.* (Sir, can't we conduct the meeting in Chichewa because some of us will not be able to participate in English but with Chichewa, everything will be okay.)

Res: How do the others feel? (The rest of the learners opt for Chichewa)

Res: Ok, we will discuss in Chichewa.

Res: *Funso loyamba: Ndinaona m'kalasi muja kuti mumayankhula kwambiri Chichewa, kodi n'chifukwa chiyani?* (First question: I saw that in the classroom you were mostly using Chichewa, why was that the case?)

L2: *Ngati ana asukulu timatha kugwiritsa ntchito Chichewa chifukwa choti malinga ndi funso mmene labwerera kumakhala kuti sitinamvetsetse bwinobwino ndiye*

timafunsa m'Chichewa kuti aphunzitsiwonso atifotokozere m'Chichewa n'cholinga choti timvetse bwinobwino chifukwa chizungu ndi chovuta. (As learners we use Chichewa because sometimes we do not understand a question asked by the teacher so we ask him in Chichewa so that he should also explain in Chichewa in order for us to understand since English is difficult).

L3: *Komanso kuti aphunzitsi aziphunzitsa m'chizungu mokha ndiye sizingatheke chifukwa iwonso nthawi zina amatimasulira m'Chichewa kuti tizimvetsa bwino.* (In addition, it is not possible for the teacher to teach us in English only because he also sometimes translates into Chichewa for us to understand what he is teaching).

L1: *Ndipo kale pasukulu pano panali lamulo loti tiziyankhula chingerezi chokha koma sizinatheke ndipo lamulolo linangofa lokha; ife ndi amalawi basi sitingakhale ngati azungu ndipo Chichewa ndi chikhalidwe chathu tinachizolowera basi.* (In the past there was a rule at this school saying that we should be speaking English only. However, it died naturally for we are Malawians and we cannot behave like Americans, speaking English only; Chichewa is part of our culture and we are used to it).

Res: *Kodi aphunzitsi anu a Chingerezi nthawi zina amaphunzitsa m'Chichewa chifukwa chiyani?* (Why does your teacher of English sometimes teach you in Chichewa?)

L4: *Tikawafunsa kuti atifotokozere m'Chichewa koma ngati tisawafunse amangophunzitsa m'Chizungu.* (If we ask him to explain to us in Chichewa, that's when he usually teaches us in Chichewa).

L6: *Aphunzitsiwo amayankhulanso Chichewa akakhala kuti akuthirira ndemanga inayake pa phunzirolo mwina wina akuchita zosayenera amamukalipira m'Chichewa.* (The teacher also speaks Chichewa when making other

comments, for example, when reprimanding a misbehaving learner).

L5: *Ndi zoona kuti nthawi zambiri aphunzitsi amatiphunzitsa m'Chizungu koma ifeyo ndi omwe timawauza kuti azitimasulira m'Chichewa kuti tizimvetsa bwino.* (The teacher indeed teaches in English but it is us who ask him to explain in Chichewa for easy understanding of the issues at hand).

Res: *Inuyo mukuona kuti kugwiritsa ntchito Chichewa pophunzira Chingerezi kuli ndi ubwino kapena kuipa kotani?* (In your opinion, what are the advantages or disadvantages of using Chichewa in an English classroom?)

L7: *Ine ndikuona kuti Chichewa chimatithandiza kuti tizimvetsa bwino chifukwa chizungu chokha ndiye tisanamizane pano ambirife sitimamva mokwanira.* (In my opinion, Chichewa helps us understand because honestly speaking, most of us do not fully understand English).

L1: *Ndi zoona ndithu kuti Chichewa chimatithandiza kumvetsa.* (It is true that the use of Chichewa facilitates our understanding when learning).

L8: *Komabe ngakhale kuti Chichewa chimatithandiza kumvetsa, ine ndikuona ngati penapake si bwino kumachiyankhula kwambiri chifukwa zikhoza kupangitsa kuti chizungucho tisadzachidziwe bwino. Koma tiziyesetsabe Chizungu chomwecho zikhoza kutithandiza, ndikuona choncho.* (Although the use of Chichewa facilitates our understanding, I feel that it is not good to make it our habit because it can also prevent us from using English effectively. We should keep on trying to learn English using English only; I think that can help us in the long run).

Res: *N'chifukwa chiyani ukuona kuti Chichewa chikhoza kuchititsa kuti musamadziwe bwino Chingerezi?* (Why do you feel that the use of Chichewa can prevent you from developing proficiency in English?)

L8: *Chimene chimachitika Sir, n'choti tikazolowera kwambiri kumangoyankhula Chichewa mapeto ake tikhoza kulembanso mwina m'chimangirizo mawu a Chichewa ndiye si bwino choncho.* (Sir, what happens is that if speaking Chichewa in the English classroom becomes our habit, then our written English may also be full of Chichewa features and that is not good for us).

Res: *Kodi mumalodwa kulemba mawu a m'Chichewa polemba Chingerezi? (Are you allowed to use Chichewa words in your written English?*

L1: *Ayi, ndipo ukalemba mawu a Chichewa amakuthetha and umaluza malikisi.* (Not at all, and if you do, you are marked wrong and you lose marks).

L4: *Ndipo mnyamata winawake analemba chimangirizo cha English chonse anachilemba m'Chichewa pamayeso.* (And in an English examination, one boy wrote a whole composition in Chichewa).

L3: *Ndipo anadya zero.* (And he got a zero).

L8: *N'chifukwa chake ine ndikuona kuti ndi bwino kumaphunzira m'Chingerezi basi osati kumaphatikiza ndi Chichewa, Chichewa ndi Chichewa ndipo Chizungu ndi Chizungu basi* (That's why I am of the view that English should be taught directly without the use of the native language; Chichewa is Chichewa, English is English).

Res: *Ena mukunena kuti simumva chizungu, kodi mukuganiza kuti n'chifukwa chiyani zili choncho pamene muli kusekondale? (Some of you are saying that you do not understand English. In your view, why is it the case yet you are in secondary school?)*

L6: *Vutoli lachokera patali. Mwachitsanzo, ku primary aphunzitsi athu amakonda kutiphunzitsa m'Chichewa masabujekiti pafupifupi onse ndiye ifenso timangoyankhula Chichewa chomwecho basi moti pamene anatiuza kuno kuti*

tiziyankhula chizungu chokha ambirife tinamva kupweteka kwambiri (The problem originates from afar. For instance, at primary school our teacher used to teach us almost all subjects in Chichewa. So, we were used to it and when we were told here to speak English only, we were not comfortable at all).

L5: *Komanso anthufe mabuku a English sitimawapeza n'kumawerenga chifukwa tikanati tiziwapeza ndi kumawawerenga pafupipafupi, bwenzi tikumadziwa mawu ambiri achizungu zomwe zikanatithandizira kuti tizitha kuyankhula ndi kulemba Chizungu chakupsa* (Furthermore, we do not have access to English books; if we could access them we could read them on our own and that would expose us to various words which, in turn, would help us to speak and write good English).

L6: *Pa nkhani yamabukuyo mwinanso inuyo mwadzionera nokha m'kalasi muja. Pagulu limodzi pamakhala anthu 9 kapena 10 ndipo ambiri sitimaonapo wina akamawerenga ndiye ma spelling ambiri sitimawadziwa mapeto ake timangowalemba ngati a Chichewa, nanga tipanga bwanji?* (On the issue of textbooks, I think you saw the problem for yourself as you were observing the lessons. At each group, there are 9 or 10 members and most of us do not see on the book when one is reading. As a result, we do not know the spelling of words. Consequently, we write them as if they are Chichewa words).

Res: *Kupatula mabuku a Chingerezi, ndi zinthu zina ziti zomwe mumagwirits ntchito pophunzira Chingerezi?* (Apart from English textbooks, what other materials do you use for learning English?

L1: *Mwina mupereke chitsanzo.* (May you give an example).

Res: *Zinthu monga nyuzipepala kapena mabuku ena omwe ali m'Chingerezi koma sanalembedwe n'cholinga chophunzitsira kapena kuphunzirira Chingerezi.* (I'm referring to materials like newspapers and other books written in

English but not meant for the teaching and learning of English).

L2: *Zinthu ngati zimenezo kuno ndi zosowa, nthawi zina zimapezeka koma si kawirikawiri.* (Those materials are scarce here).

L3: *Ndipo mwachidule tinganene kuti sizimapezeka kuno.* (And in short we can say they are not accessible here).

L5: *Tikati tawerenga chizungu timangodalira timabuku tathu tochepa tomweto basi.* (For us to read in English, we solely rely on our inadequate English textbooks).

Res: *Nanga bwanji zinthu ngati mtsutso (debate) komanso njira zina zothandizira kuti muziyesa kuyankhula Chingerezi, kodi zimenezi zimachitika pasukulu pano?*

(How often do you conduct debates and other activities that encourage you to speak English?)

L4: *Pasukulu pano zimenezo sizimachitika* (Such activities are not conducted at this school).

L6: *Nthawi inayake tinachitapo kamodzi koma m'malo momatsutsana m'Chizungu timapanga m'Chichewa koma debate ya English* (We did it once but instead of conducting the debate in English, we were just using Chichewa, yet the debate was supposed to be held in English).

L7: *Ndiye basi aphunzitsi anangonena kuti sitimapanganso chifukwa sizitithandiza kudziwa Chizungu* (So our teacher told us that we would never conduct a debate because it would not help us develop English proficiency since we used Chichewa).

Res: *Kodi mumaphunzira ndi kulemba chimangirizo kapena kalata kawirikawiri motani?* (How often do you learn and write English composition or letter?

L2: *Chibwerere kuno sitinaphunzirepo chimangirizo kapena kalata* (We have never learnt the writing of a letter or composition since we came here).

L1: *Amangotipatsa pamayeso kuti tilembe ndiye timangolembe mmene timalemba ku primary basi* (The teacher only gives us topics to write on during examinations, so we just use our knowledge from primary school).

Res: *Inuyo simumwapempha kuti akuphunzitseni?* (Don't you request him to teach you?)

L4: *Timawafunsa koma amangonena kuti adzatiphunzitsabe tikadzayandikira mayeso a JC.* (We do ask him but he tells us that he will teach us when we are about to sit for national examinations).

Res: *Zikomo kwambiri chifukwa munavomera kuti tikambirane zimenezi.* (Thank you very much for accepting to discuss these issues with me).

Ls: *Zikomo* (Thank you).

Appendix 17: Sample essays written by Form Four learners

English composition NO 0004
EFFECTS OF POPULATION GROWTH

Population ^{OM} is number of people in given ^{OM} area. Population growth is increasing up of people in given area. In this composition I am going to explain more about effects of population growth.

The causes of population growth ^{SVA} is early marriage and sex preference. When childrens are married when they are young these young parents are likely to keep on bearing children for along period of time resulting into ^{OM} big family.

Sex preference also another cause of population growth. when families keep on having children because they want a certain number of boys and girls for example if one of parents wants boy and child born is girl the family is likely to want another child which leads to big family.

population growth is dangerous to country because it lead in deforestation.

When people cut off trees in forest in order to have land for cultivating. This practice ^{SVA} lead in soil erosion because land is left bare. Those resulting in poor growth or crops land as result cause famine.

Population growth can be controlled by education when childrens stay in schools they delay their marriage. ^{om} As result they end up by having small family. And also Family Planning can reduce. Population growth by having sex without giving each other ^{Lit transl.} pregnancy. This is what I wanted to explain about effects of population growth as seen let us control population growth as soon as possible since sleep in the middle is to be first. Lit. transl.

WO = word order
Lit. transl = Literal translation
om = omission
sp = spelling
SVA = Subject Verb Agreement
CC = Clichés

ENGLISH

NO. A015

SHORT STORY

EFFECTS OF DRUG ABUSE

Once upon a time there was a man in our village. This man he was abusing alcohol and drug. ^{om} Was also drinking a lot of Kachasu beer.

One day when he was coming from drinking he met some people with ^{om} gun, knives and zinkwaffe. Thugs commanded him to stop. So the head of the drunkard stopped due to afraid. Lit.

Because he had drunk beer and ^{cc word} wasn't strong he could not run away quickly. So the men of thieves caught him and took away his remaining money in the pocket. When thieves left him he just thought that when sun shines warm yourself, so he ran away very fast. Lit. transl.

Another day ^{om} same man also went to drink beer. When coming he found a girl who was a son killer. So he decided to sleep with her since she was very beautiful. ^{om} Girl rejected sex. So man raped her and ^{lit transl} gave her pregnancy. However girl gave him STI. It was Chizonono. So the man started suffering ^{om} Chizonono. He had sores itching in the face (private parts). Lit. transl.

He was also arrested because of rape. He sentenced to 10 years with hard labour.

All problems came due to effects of drug and alcohol abuse. So alcohol and drug is not good. People need to work in their fields and

businesses not indulge themselves into drug and alcohol abuse.

However, the girl he raped although she was beautiful^{but} she was as black as burned wood. But because of drug and alcohol he raped her. So when we are with problems we should just insure not using drugs to forget problem. We will suffer consequences Sp.

In conclusion that is all I wanted to write about effects of drug abuse such as raping girl, arrested by police and failure to run away when you meet with gangs

B005

P/O Box 453

ZOMBA

24/09/14

KALHULU LEA SCHOOL

P/O Box 453

ZOMBA

JAMES HAD BEEN SUSPEND FROM SCHOOL DUE TO DRUG
ALCOHOL ABUSE

Dear uncle, I would like to inform you that James
has been suspended from school due to drug and
alcohol abuse.

What happened was that on Tuesday on 20 August
this year James stole somebody's CC word tula in our class.

Then he also raped a girl in form one and gave her
lit. transl. pregnancy. After that he was found that he was abuse
alcohol and drug especially CC word chambei. lit. transl.

O.M. Situation was not good and the police lit. tied him especially
because of raping girl in form one.

So, uncle you can go and see him he is at zomba
Prison and he is suffering many diseases. O.M.

He has, dropped school and his future is not good. So please
uncle assist him don't forget that relationship is bone it does
not rot-so help him he is your nephew. lit. transl.

Lastly give my greeting to your wife and all those who
know me. CC word

Yours faithfully

SP = Spelling
OM = Omission
CC = Chichewa

lit. transl. = literal translation
WO = word order

SVA = Subject-Verb
Agreement