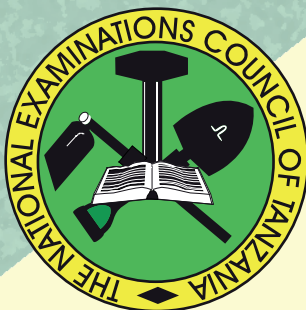**THE NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF TANZANIA**

PUPILS' ITEMS RESPONSE ANALYSIS REPORT FOR STANDARD FOUR NATIONAL ASSESSMENT (SFNA) 2018

02 ENGLISH LANGUAGE

THE NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF TANZANIA

PUPILS' ITEMS RESPONSE ANALYSIS

REPORT FOR STANDARD FOUR NATIONAL

ASSESSMENT (SFNA) - 2018

02 ENGLISH LANGUAGE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

This Pupils' Items Response Analysis report (PIRA) for Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA), 2018 for English Language subject has been written to provide feedback to pupils, teachers, parents, policy makers and all education stakeholders about the performance of the pupils who sat for the SFNA 2018. The Standard Four National Assessment evaluates the pupils' competences and mastery of English Language. It also examines the effectiveness of the English Language Syllabus that has been written in line with the Basic Education Curriculum of 2016. This syllabus introduces English Language subject in standard III. Therefore, pupils' responses to the 2018 standard four assessment questions indicate the extent to which the education system is successful in its mission towards offering better education to pupils, especially in making standards III and IV pupils competent in English Language.

This report aims at understanding the reasons that are likely to have caused good or weak performance of the pupils in English Language Assessment. The report, therefore, highlights the factors that contributed to pupils' performance in this assessment. Such factors included pupils' ability to understand the demands of the question, ability to follow instructions, and adequacy of knowledge and skills of the concepts related to the subject.

It is anticipated that through this report, different education stakeholders will know what they ought to do in order to make pupils at this level master English Language and use it in various situations. Hopefully, the education authorities at all levels and other actors will take appropriate measures pertaining to all the shortcomings

highlighted in this report so as to improve the teaching and learning in schools especially the teaching of English Language.

The National Examinations Council would like to thank the examiners and other stakeholders who took part in processing this analysis. Specifically thanks are due to those who collected data, those who analyzed it, edited the draft and finally those who printed the report.

Dkt. Charles E. Msonde
KATIBU MTENDAJI

Symbols, Abbreviations and Acronyms

SFNA   Standard Four National Assessments

PIRA   Pupils' Items Response Analysis

Qn   Question

( )   Optional element

%   Percentage

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents Pupils' Items Response Analysis of the standard IV pupils who sat for the SFNA in November 2018 in English Language. The information presented in this report is from what was discovered by examiners who marked the pupils' scripts. It is an evaluation of pupils' correct and wrong responses for the various items tested and the corresponding reasons for such responses.

The 2018 Standard Four National Assessment in the English Language Subject was done on 23rd November 2018. It was a one and a half hours assessment. It had a total of five sections; *Section A: Dictation*, *Section B: Vocabulary, Section C: Grammar, Section D: Composition and Section E: Comprehension*. Each section had five items; making a total of twenty five items which were to be attempted by each pupil who sat for this assessment. The assessment tested the pupils' competences in different areas such as listening, writing, comprehension, use of vocabulary in different contexts and constructing simple sentences.

Pupils who were registered for this assessment were 1,362,523 and those who sat for it were 1,301,625 which was equivalent to 95.53%. Those who passed with grades A-D were 1,142,528 which was equivalent 87.78% while 158,980 (12.22%) failed this assessment by getting grade E.

2.0   ANALYSIS OF PUPILS' ITEMS RESPONSES

The standard IV assessment 2018 analysis shows pupils' strengths and weaknesses in various areas. In this analysis, the pupils' performance has been classified according to the marks scored for each question. The scores for question number one were categorized as follows: scores from 0 to 2.5 marks were categorized as weak performance; those from 3 to 6 marks as average performance; those from 6.5 to 9.5 marks as good performance and those with 10 marks were classified as very good performance. In this question, each correctly spelt word was awarded half a mark (0.5). For questions numbers two, three, four and five, 0 to 2 marks were categorized as weak performance, 4 to 6 marks as average, 8 marks categorized as good and 10 marks as very good performance. Each question in this assessment carried a total of 10 marks. Detailed analysis of the pupils' performance in each question and item is provided in this report. Charts and graphs have been used to illustrate in detail the information presented. Colours in the graphs and charts represent the pupils' performance. Red represents weak/poor performance where as yellow stands for average performance, light green shows good performance and green represents very good performance.

2.1. Section A: Dictation

This question was on dictation with five sentences which were read aloud by the invigilator for pupils to write them down. Four sentences were in the statement form and one was in question form. The following are the five sentences for this question:

(i)   The baby is playing.

(ii) My father walks fast.

(iii) May I go out?

(iv) Asha did her homework.

(v) This is our house.

This question aimed to test pupils' ability to listen carefully and write the sentences read aloud by the invigilator. It, therefore, tested pupils' listening and writing skills. Each sentence had four words. The question was attempted by 1,301,622 pupils which was equivalent to 100%. In general, the performance in this question was average because 759,845 pupils (58.4%) who sat for this assessment got scores ranging from 3 and 10 marks. The remaining 541,777 pupils (41.6%) scored marks ranging from 0 to 2.5 marks out of 10 marks. Categorically, the performance in this question can be presented as follows: 541,777 pupils (41.6%) had scores ranging from 0 to 2.5 marks which indicates weak performance, 448,190 pupils (34.5%) got marks ranging from 3 to 6 which is categorized as average performance. 237,640 pupils (18.2%) got scores ranging from 6.5 to 9.5 marks and that was classified as good performance. Lastly, those who got 10 marks were 74,015 pupils (5.7%) which was a very good performance. Figure 1 serves as the summary of performance of pupils for this question.
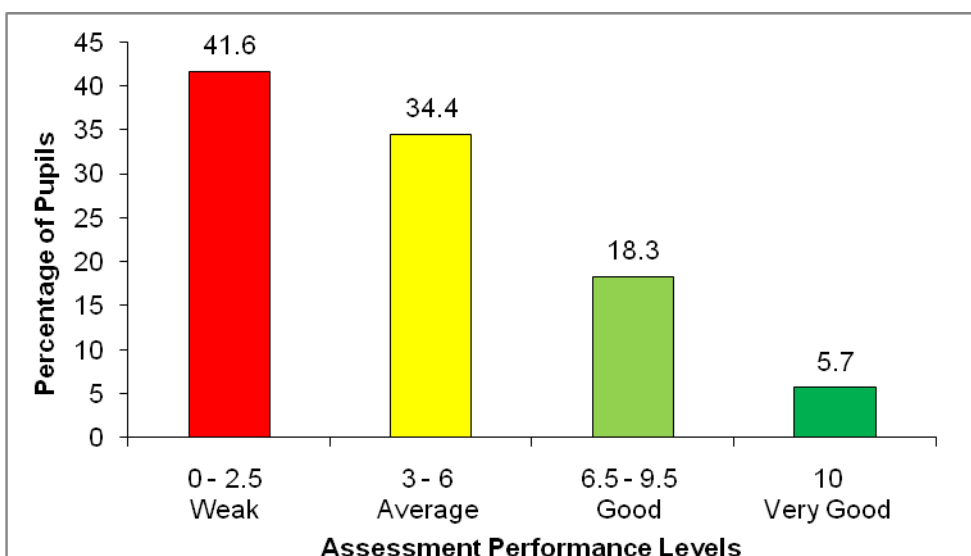
Figure 1: *Pupils' performance in question number 1*

The analysis shows that pupils who got all the 10 marks wrote all the five sentences correctly and put all the punctuation marks according to the nature of the sentences. Such pupils put capital letters at the beginning of each sentence, full stops at the end of each sentence which were in statement form and the question mark at the end of a question. Extract 1 below provides a sample of the best response for this question.

Extract: 1

Extract 1: A sample of the response for the pupil who wrote all the five sentences of the dictation correctly.

4

On the other hand, there were pupils who failed to write correctly the sentences which were read aloud by the invigilator. Some of them wrote words with incorrect spelling. This indicates that they failed to recall that in English Language most of the words are not spelt in the same way as they are pronounced. For example, one pupil wrote the word *baby* as *babi*, and my father as *mehi fathe.* This shows that this pupil lacked knowledge on writing skills especially on spelling. Extract 2 can be used to justify this argument.

Extract: 2

1. Listen carefully to the sentences read in (i) to (v) and then write them in the blanks provided.

(i) the babī hīthī Panī.

(ii) Mehī fathe husī.

(iii) Mīhe higo heutī.

(iv) ASha brdīhea Kwatī.

(v) thī hī Alwa hesī.

Extract 2: A sample of a script for the pupil who failed to spell and write the words correctly.

2.2. Section B: Vocabulary

This section had one question with five multiple choice items. Each item had four alternatives whereby one of them was a correct answer. The five items contained the vocabulary items used in various situations. The situations included telling time, using vocabulary in different situations like shopping and vocabulary on people's occupations.

In general, the performance of pupils in this question was good because 979,069 pupils (75.2%) who sat for this assessment scored marks ranging from 4 to 10. These pupils were able to select correct answers and write their letters in the boxes as instructed. Those pupils showed that they knew the meaning of different words used to refer to time, occupations and shopping as asked in the question.

This performance has been analyzed at four levels. Those whose scores ranged from 0 to 2 marks were 322,721 pupils (24.8%). These had poor performance. Moreover pupils who got scores ranging from 4 to 6 marks were 642,572 (49.4%) which was indicative of average performance. On the other hand, 200,947 pupils (15.4%) who scored 8 marks had good performance. Those who got 10 marks were 135,550 pupils (10.4%) which indicated very good performance. Figure 2 presents the summary of this analysis.
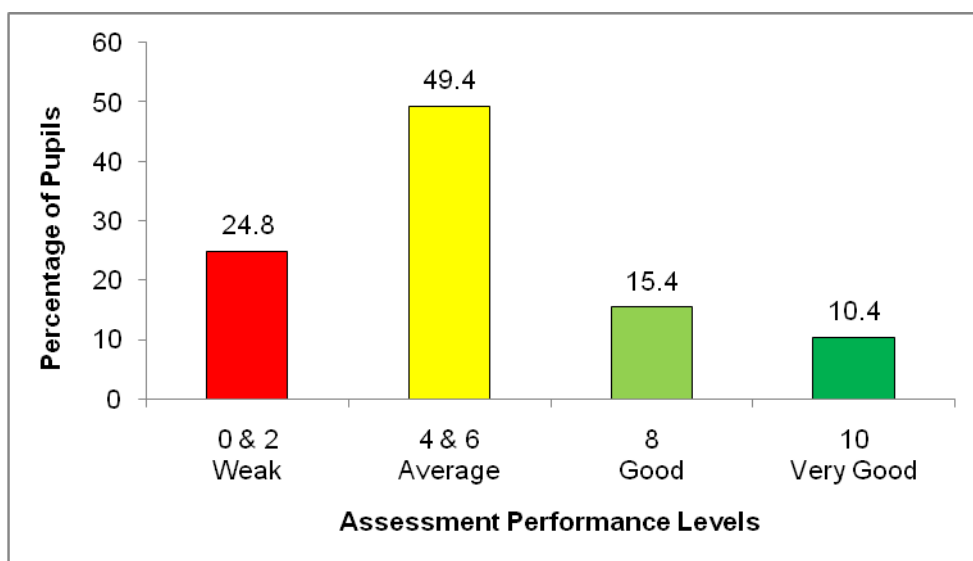

Figure 2: *Pupils' performance in question number 2*

(i) If a watch reads 2:00, therefore it is
    A. two o'clock
    B. eight o'clock
    C. half past two
    D. half past eight

This item tested pupils' ability to tell time in words when given in numbers. Pupils were supposed to choose the correct answer from the four given alternatives which refer to the time mentioned in the stem. The correct answer was A *two o'clock*. Pupils who selected this correct answer had knowledge on how to tell time in words. Those who selected B *eight o'clock,* C *half past two* and D *half past eight* lacked competence on time telling in English.

(ii) I want to buy a pair of shoes, but I don't know its
    A. sell
    B. money
    C. price
    D. shillings

In this item, pupils were required to identify the word which best completes the statement about selling and buying things. The correct answer in this item was C *price*. Pupils who selected A *sell* lacked knowledge on the possessive pronoun *its*. They failed to link the possessive pronoun *its* with the words given. Those who selected B *money* and D *shillings* linked the word *buy* with *money* and *shillings* respectively. So, they failed to identify the appropriate vocabulary item.

7

(iii) Musa repairs and makes cars, so he is

    A. a manager

    B. a mechanic

    C. a technician

    D. an engineer

This item tested the pupils' ability to talk about people's occupations. Pupils had to show their knowledge of naming various occupations. The correct alternative in this item was B *a mechanic.* Pupils who selected this answer knew the meaning of the word *mechanic* and the way it is related to the other words like *repair* and *cars* which are used in the stem of the item. Those who selected A *a manager* wrongly linked the meaning of the word *manager* with words like *cars* and *repair*. On the other hand, those who chose C *a technician* and D *an engineer* lacked knowledge on occupation for a person who repairs and makes cars because an engineer designs machines, engines and other types of equipment. A technician, on the other hand, is someone who has special skills in doing something. A technician, therefore, neither repairs nor designs machines.

(iv) She grows maize, beans, cassava and coconut in her farm. She is a

    A. potter

    B. worker

    C. gardener

    D. Farmer

This item tested the pupils' ability to identify occupation related vocabulary. The stem of this item describes what is done by someone and therefore pupils were asked to identify the word used to name such a person and the correct answer was D *farmer*. The stem of the item has the word *farm* which is likely to have helped those pupils who got the correct answer to associate it with the correct answer *farmer* unlike the other alternatives *potter*, *worker* and *gardener*. Pupils who wrote wrong answers failed to identify the correct occupation from the alternatives given. They failed to recognize that a potter moulds pots while a worker is someone who works in a particular job. On the other hand, a gardener is someone who takes care of a garden. Pupils who selected A, B, and C lacked knowledge on the meaning of these words.

(v) A list of food in a hotel is called a
   A.   diary
   B.   menu
   C.   timetable
   D.   register

Pupils were required to show their skills in using different words used in hotel setting. The correct answer was B *menu*. Pupils who answered it correctly knew the relationship in meaning between *hotel* and *menu*. The remaining three options are not related to the word *hotel*. *Diary*, which is alternative A, refers to a book used by people to keep records of various events. Option C *timetable* is the plan of how events have to take place in relation to the time given and *register*, which is option D, refers to either the action of recording something or the style of dealing with a

certain topic or subject. All these alternatives are not related to the meaning of the word *hotel*. Pupils who answered this item wrongly failed to relate the word *hotel* with *menu*.

2.3. Section C : Grammar

This section comprised question number three with five items; (i) to (v). Pupils were given incomplete sentences and they were supposed to fill in the blanks with the correct words provided in the box. This question tested pupils' ability to use appropriate vocabulary/verbs in various situations. Specifically, it tested pupils' ability to use quantifiers and correct forms of verbs according to situations.

The words which were supposed to be used to fill in the blanks are given in the following box:

a few, cooked, is, much, cook, was, many, some

(i) He ate too _____ meat last night.
This item tested pupils' ability to use the right quantifiers according to the context. The word which had to be used by pupils to fill in the blank in this sentence was *much*. The presence of the expression *too* before the blank shows that the word which comes after must be an adjective. The uncountable noun *meat* which comes after the blank also served as a clue to the kind of the quantifier to be used.

The analysis of the pupils' responses shows that those who wrote wrong answers lacked knowledge on the use of quantifiers. Pupils who wrote the right response in this item

had knowledge on the uses of quantifiers. Extract 3 is a sample of a good response to this question.

Extract 3

3. Fill in the blanks in (i) to (v) with correct words provided in the box to make the sentences meaningful.

a few, cooked, is, much, cook, was, many, some

(i) He ate too ___Much___ meat last night.

(ii) Juma invited ___Many___ friends for lunch.

(iii) My mother put ___Some___ milk in the glass.

(iv) Our teacher ___Was___ here two hours ago.

(v) Mrs Tamaambele ___Cooked___ a lot of food yesterday.

Extract 3: A sample of a response of the pupil who answered all the five items correctly

(ii) Juma invited _____ friends for lunch.

This sentence was to be completed by using a quantifier which is used with countable nouns. The blank which had to be filled in comes before the countable noun *friends*. The word which can best be used to fill in this blank is *many*.

Pupils who wrote correct answers knew the type of quantifiers which precede countable nouns. They also discovered that the countable noun *friends* is in plural form. Pupils who failed to recognize the way quantifiers are used with nouns wrote wrong answers. Some pupils filled in with incorrect words such as *cook* instead of the quantifier *many*.

(iii) My mother put _____ milk in the glass.

In this item pupils were required to identify the quantifier which is supposed to be used with uncountable nouns. The right quantifier, according to the context in this sentence, is *some*. The way the noun *milk* is used makes the quantifier *some* to be the suitable alternative in this sentence. The context implies that milk is in a glass and from the list given, the word *some* best fills the blank to make the sentence meaningful. Pupils who got it right had knowledge on uncountable nouns. The quantifier *some* is used with uncountable nouns.

Pupils who wrote other words to fill in the blank in this sentence show that they lacked knowledge on the use of quantifiers.

(iv)   Our teacher _____ here two hours ago.

This item tested pupils' ability to use *be* verbs in their past form. The presence of the expression *two hours ago* indicates that the verb has to be in past tense. Pupils, therefore, had to discover that the given item lacked the verb to make it a sentence. Pupils who succeeded to write the correct answer discovered that the sentence was missing the verb and it had to be in the past tense.

(v)   Mrs Tamaambele _____ a lot of food yesterday.

In this part, pupils were tested on their ability to use the past tense form of verbs to talk about past events. The use of the word *yesterday* in this item shows that this sentence refers to past events. In the given list, the words *cooked* and *was* are in past tense forms and the one which best fits in this item is *cooked.*

Pupils who wrote the correct answer had knowledge on the use of simple past tense *cooked*. Failure to interpret the meaning of the given item made other pupils write incorrect answers. Those who did not get the item correctly lacked knowledge on the use of simple past tense *cooked* in relation to the sentence given. Some of them filled in with the incorrect answers like

Mrs Tamaambele much a lot of food yesterday

Extract 4 is a sample of wrong response to this question.

Extract 4

3. Fill in the blanks in (i) to (v) with correct words provided in the box to make the sentences meaningful.

a few, cooked, is, much, cook, was, many, some

(i) He ate too _____ *COOK* _____ meat last night.

(ii) Juma invited _____ *some* _____ friends for lunch.

(iii) My mother put _____ *cooked* _____ milk in the glass.

(iv) Our teacher _____ *A fue* _____ here two hours ago.

(v) Mrs Tamaambele _____ *much* _____ a lot of food yesterday

Extract 4: A sample of wrong responses to all the five items of this question

The general performance for this question was poor/weak. This is evidenced by the fact that 829,010 pupils (63.7%) got scores ranging from 0 to 2 marks out of 10 marks. Only 472,737 pupils (36.3%) passed by getting scores ranging from 4 to 10 marks.

Pupils who got marks ranging from 0 to 2 are categorized as having weak/poor performance and in this question there were 829,010 pupils (63.7%) who got such marks. The other group is that of pupils who got scores ranging from 4 to 6. This performance is categorized as average. There were 295,475 pupils (22.7%) in this category. 96,652 pupils (7.4%) had good performance for they scored 8 marks. Only 80,610 pupils (6.2%) scored 10 marks and this is categorized as very good performance. The performance of pupils for this question is summarized in Figure 3
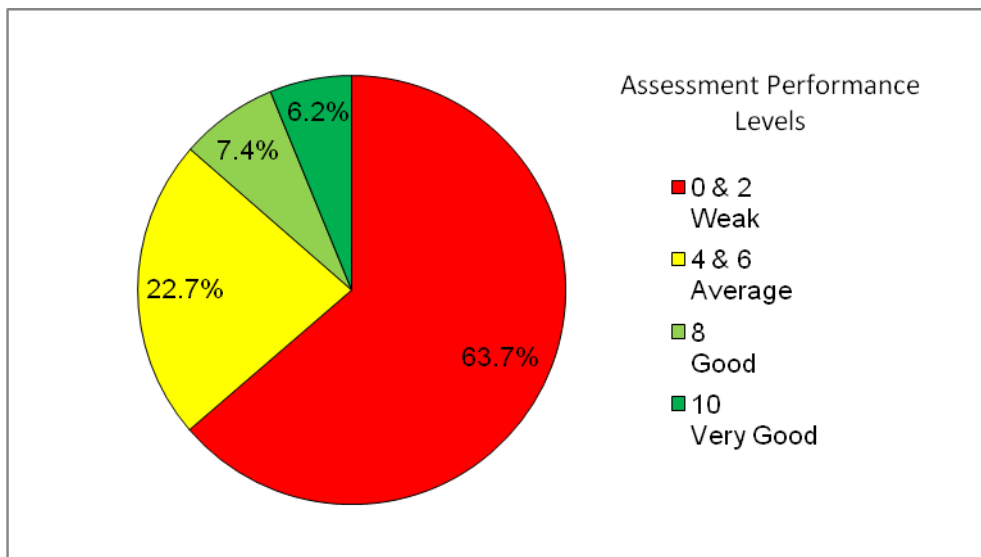

Figure 3: *The performance of pupils in question 3*

2.4. Section D: Composition

This section comprised question number four. Pupils were given a short passage with blanks to be filled in by pupils. Pupils had to use the words provided in the box to fill in the blanks of the given passage to make it complete and meaningful.

The following are the words in the box and the passage.

> *attract, anopheles, eat, diseases, evenings, mosquito, drinks*

> *Malaria is one of the dangerous _____ in Africa. It can cause death. It is transmitted by a female mosquito called _____. This mosquito bites at night. The signs of malaria include fever and chills. In order to prevent malaria, we have to wear long sleeved shirts and light coloured clothes in the _____. This is because black colours _____ mosquitoes. Therefore, white coloured clothes are better than black coloured ones. We also have to sleep under _____ nets.*

This question tested pupils' ability to use appropriate vocabulary items when writing. The pupils were required to demonstrate their ability to use English vocabulary items correctly as part of writing skills (composition). Specifically, pupils were supposed to select appropriate words from those provided in the box and use them in the context of the passage.

Analysis of pupils' responses shows that pupils with high scores managed to answer this question. This indicates that they had not only sufficient knowledge on composition but also they were rich in terms of vocabulary about malaria. Thus, these pupils selected suitable words and made the paragraph meaningful. Extract 5 is a sample of a good pupil's response to this question.

Extract 5

> 4. Complete the following passage by filling in the blanks with correct words provided in the box.
>
> | attract, anopheles, eat, diseases, evenings, mosquito, drinks |
>
> Malaria is one of the dangerous ___diseases___ in Africa. It can cause death. It is transmitted by a female mosquito called ___anopheles___. This mosquito bites at night. The signs of malaria include fever and chills. In order to prevent malaria, we have to wear long sleeved shirts and light coloured clothes in the ___evenings___. This is because black colours ___attract___ mosquitoes. Therefore, white coloured clothes are better than black coloured ones. We also have to sleep under ___mosquito___ nets.

Extract 5 : A sample of a response for the pupil who filled in the blanks of the passage with correct words

On the other hand, pupils with low scores failed to answer the question correctly because they lacked knowledge of vocabulary items especially those about malaria. Lack of knowledge of vocabulary items made one of the pupils write:

Malaria is one of the dangerous <u>attract</u> in Africa.

Pupils who wrote wrong answers made the passage lose meaning. Extract 6 is a sample of pupils' responses for those who got only one correct answer for this question.

Extract 6

4. Complete the following passage by filling in the blanks with correct words provided in the box.

attract, anopheles, eat, diseases, evenings, mosquito, drinks

Malaria is one of the dangerous _Attact_ in Africa. It can cause death. It is transmitted by a female mosquito called _diseases v_. This mosquito bites at night. The signs of malaria include fever and chills. In order to prevent malaria, we have to wear long sleeved shirts and light coloured clothes in the _evenings_. This is because black colours _mosquito_ mosquitoes. Therefore, white coloured clothes are better than black coloured ones. We also have to sleep under _drinks_ nets.

Extract 6: A sample of a response for a pupil who got only one correct answer in question 4.

Generally, the performance for this question was weak because 877,376 pupils (67.4%) got marks ranging from 0 to 2 while only 424,438 pupils (32.6%) passed by getting scores ranging from 4 to 10 marks.

Detailed presentation of pupils' performance for this question is that 877,376 pupils (67.4%) performed poorly. 246,946 (19%) pupils had an average performance after getting scores ranging from 4 to 6 marks. Moreover, 53,160 pupils (4.1%) scored 8 marks which was good performance. Those who scored 10 marks were 124,332 (9.6%), which was very good performance. Figure 5 provides the summary of pupils' performance for this question.
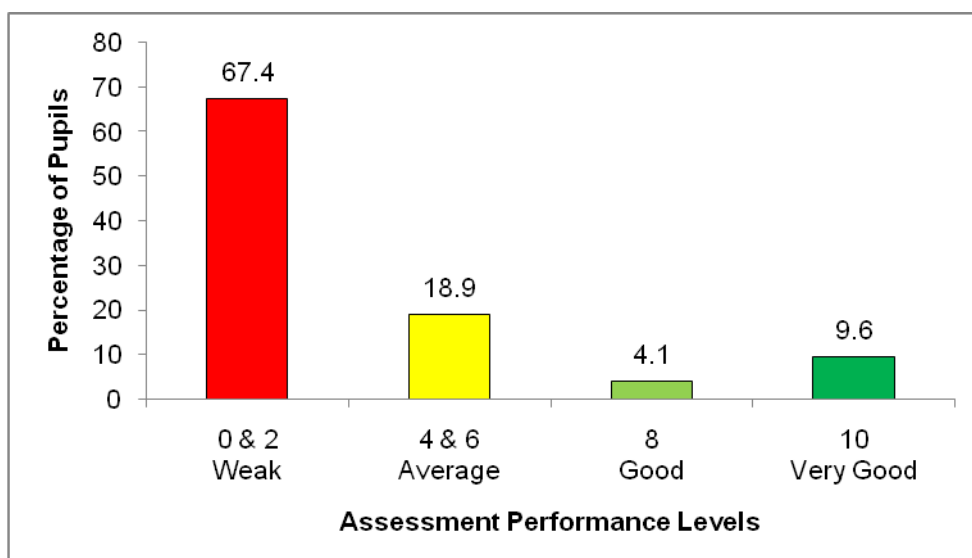
Figure 5: *Pupils' performance in question 4*

2.5. Section E: Comprehension

This section consisted of question number five with five short answer items. For this question, pupils were provided with a passage to read carefully and to answer the questions given after it. The question was meant to test pupils' ability to read and understand and to answer the questions pertaining to the passage.

The following is the passage which was given.

> *My name is Ally. I am ten years old. I am in Standard Four. My bothers are Juma and Abdallah. They teach at Mwongozo Secondary School. My sisters are Aisha and Amina. Aisha is eleven years old. She is in Standard Seven. We study together at Mbuyuni Primary School. Amina is nine years older than Aisha. She has a shop. She sells rice, sugar, maize flour, beans and bread. She is very hard working. Many people like to buy things from her shop because she uses polite language. We all live in Babati Town.*

18

Questions:

(i) How many children are there in Ally's family?

This item demanded pupils to tell the number of children in Ally's family based on the passage. This implies that pupils had to count those children without excluding Ally. They could note that Ally has two brothers and two sisters. This means there are five children in Ally's family.

Pupils who provided the correct response to this item understood that in Ally's family, there is Ally and his four siblings. This information is provided in the passage. Pupils had to put together the information provided from the beginning to the end of the passage. Pupils who gave wrong responses to this item did not understand that they were supposed to count the children in Ally's family. One pupil wrote the names of the children instead of telling the number.

This pupil wrote:

Ally, Juma, Abdallah, Aisha, Amina

(ii) Who is the youngest in Ally's family?

The passage does not directly mention anyone in Ally's family to be the youngest but pupils had to interpret it considering the age of each member of the family and compare it with that of others. It could be noted that the youngest person in Ally's family is Ally. This was derived after comparing Ally's age with that of the rest of the members of his family.

(iii)   How old is Amina?

This item tested the pupils' ability to link the information and do simple Mathematical additions. In the passage, the author presents directly Ally's and Aisha's age but Amina's age is presented in an indirect way. It is presented by using the comparative form in the statement.

Amina is nine years older than Aisha.

This means that pupils had to go back and find Aisha's age which is eleven years. Eleven was then added with nine to get Amina's age. Pupils who scored two marks in this item wrote twenty years which is derived by taking eleven years which is Aisha's age plus nine years. On the other hand, pupils who got zero for this item failed to know that they were supposed to do this addition. Extract 7 is a sample of pupils' good response to this question.

Extract 7

Questions:

(i)   How many children are there in Ally's family?
my name is Ally

(ii)   Who is the youngest in Ally's family?
we study together at mbunyium primary school

(iii)   How old is Amina?
amina is nne years older than aishu

(iv)   Why do many people like to buy things at Amina's shop?
Aishu is elivin years old she is

(v)   Where does Juma live?
may brothers er Juma and Abdulrin

Extract 7: A sample of a response for a pupil who wrote wrong answers to all items of question 5

(iv)   Why do many people like to buy things at Amina's shop?

This item aimed to make pupils locate specific information in the passage. The answer to this item is found in the last line of the passage. The answer to this item was *because she uses polite language*. Some of the pupils who provided wrong responses failed to know that the interrogative *why* is different from *what*. This made them give answers as if they responded to the question *what,* hence, they mentioned the commodities which are sold at Amina's shop. One of them wrote:

rice, sugar, maize flour, beans and bread

(v)   Where does Juma live?
Here, pupils were required to identify the name of the place where Juma who is one of the members of Ally's family lives. The answer to this item is found in the last sentence of the passage. Pupils had to interpret the statement:

We all live in Babati Town

In this statement, the use of the pronoun *we* implies that Juma is included as he is one of the members of Ally's family. Pupils who answered it correctly identified this place after knowing that Juma and Ally are brothers. Extract 8 is a sample of the pupils' best response for this question

Extract 8

Questions:

(i)   How many children are there in Ally's family?

      five children

(ii) Who is the youngest in Ally's family?

      ALLy

(iii) How old is Amina?

      twenty years

(iv) Why do many people like to buy things at Amina's shop?

      because she uses Polite language

(v)   Where does Juma live?

      Babati town

Extract 8: Sample of a response of a pupil who wrote correct answers to all items of question 5

In general, the performance in this question was poor. This is justified by the fact that 1,056,636 pupils (81.2%) who sat for this assessment got between 0 and 2 marks out of 10. Only 11,975 pupils (0.9%) scored 10 marks. Categorically, this performance can be classified in the levels as follows; 1,056,636 pupils (81.2%) got scores ranging from 0 to 2 marks and this was weak performance. Figure 5 provides the summary of the performance of pupils for this question. 210,598 pupils (16.2%) got scores ranging from 4 to 6 marks which was indicative of average performance. Those who scored 8 marks were 22,469 (1.7%) and their performance was

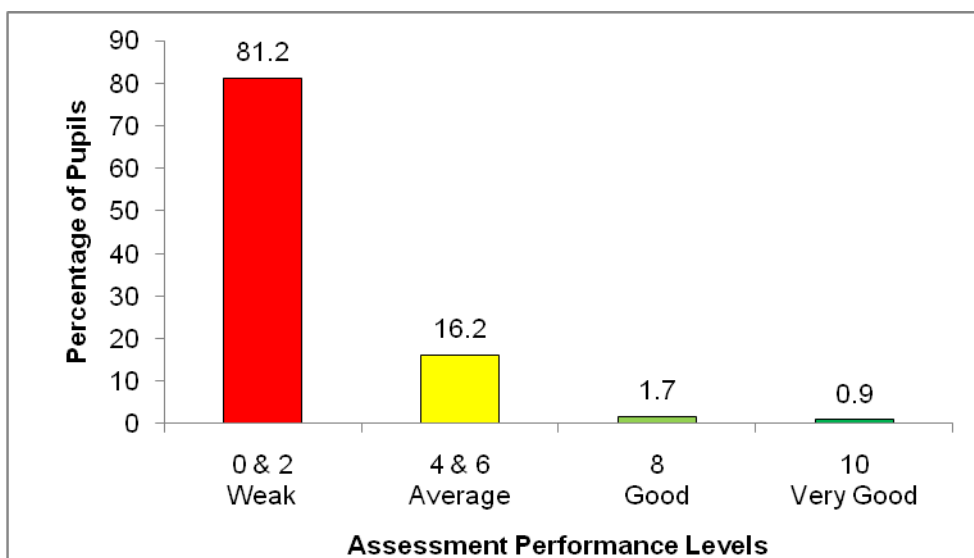good. Lastly, those who scored 10 marks were only 11,975 pupils (0.9%) which was very good performance.

Figure 5: *Pupils' performance in question number 5*

3.0 ANALYSIS OF PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN EACH TOPIC

The general performance of pupils in the 2018 Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) in English Language in different topics was average by 44.26% of pass. Dictation which was question number one had an average performance as 759,845 pupils (58.4%) passed it. Those who passed scored marks ranging from 3 to 10. Question number two which was on vocabulary demonstrated good performance as 979,069 pupils (75.2%) passed after getting scores ranging from 4 to 10 marks. The performance was moderate or average in grammar as 472,737 pupils (36.3%) scored marks ranging from 4 to 10. Performance in Composition was weak as 424,438 pupils (32.6%) had scores ranging from 4 to 10 marks. The last topic for this assessment was comprehension in which pupils had weak performance with only 11,975 pupils (18.8%) who got scores ranging from 4 to 10 marks. Pupils' performance across topics is summarized in figure 6.
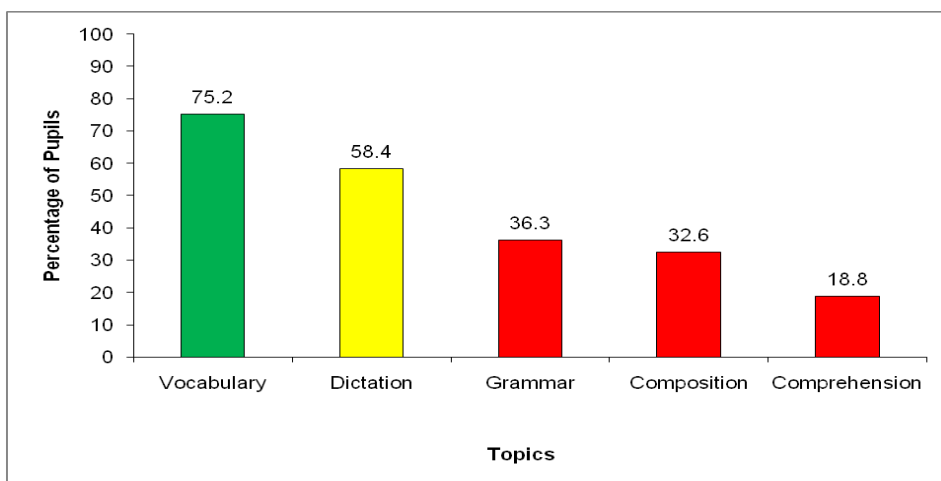
Figure 6: *The percentage of the pupils' performance in each topic*

4.0   CONCLUSION

Generally, the Pupils' Items Responses Analysis indicates that the performance of pupils in English Language assessment was good because 1,142,528 pupils (87.78%) passed by getting A-D grades. Some pupils demonstrated great skills when answering questions according to the instructions given. They had adequate knowledge and skills in English Language which enabled them to understand the demands of the questions and responded correctly.

However, many   pupils failed to answer well the assessment questions because they had serious problems of understanding and using English Language in different situations. They failed to communicate simple ideas in the written form when asked to do so. Serious problems were seen in comprehending oral and written information as evidenced by the weak performance of pupils in question number five where they were supposed to read the passage given and answer the questions by extracting correct information from the passage. This appears to have been a big challenge to all English Language teachers and other stakeholders at this level of education.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the moderate performance observed in the 2018 SFNA in English Language, there is a need to take some measures in order to improve that performance. The following things are recommended.

(a) Emphasis should be put on the teaching of dictation to standard III and IV pupils so as to enable them to have Listening, Writing and Reading Skills. This follows from poor performance observed in the question on dictation.

(b) In order to acquire more vocabulary, pupils should be given enough time to practice using English Language in various contexts. It will also improve other skills like speaking and writing. Ultimately, the performance in vocabulary-related questions will improve.

(c) More emphasis should be put on Grammar, Composition and Comprehension. These areas need more attention because they show higher rates of failure in the assessment.

THE PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN SFNA 2018 ON EACH COMPETENCE

SN	General competence	SFNA 2018			
		Performance on each competence			Remarks
		Qn number		% Performance per competence	
1	Comprehend oral and written information	1		58.4	Average
2	Use vocabulary/verbs through the four language skills	2	75.2	48.03	Average
		3	36.3		
		4	32.6		
3	Communicate orally and through writing	5		18.8	Weak
% Average Performance				41.74	Average