

**RELEASE FORM**

**NAME OF STUDENT**    Khayelihle Bhebhe

**PROJECT TITLE**    English teachers' views about the communicative  
  
language approach. The case of Beitbridge urban  
  
schools.

**DEGREE TITLE**    Bachelor of Education in English

**YEAR GRANTED**    2016

Permission is hereby granted to the Midlands State University Library to produce single copies of this dissertation and to lend or sell copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only. The author does not reserve other publication rights of the dissertation nor any extension extracts from it be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission

**PERMANENT ADDRESS**    Lower Gwelo Mission, Gweru

**CONTACT NUMBERS**    0772346363

**SIGNED**.....    **DATE**.....

## APPROVAL FORM

### MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to Midlands State University a dissertation entitled: English teachers' views about the communicative language approach. The case of Beitbridge urban schools.

Supervisor: .....

Date: .....

Chairperson: .....

Date: .....

External: .....

Date: .....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study to my wife Charity Bhebhe and my three beautiful daughters: Cebolenkosi, Babazinkosi and Bikelinkosi who supported me even in trying times.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to acknowledge and express my appreciation of the following people for their invaluable contributions. First and foremost, I would like to thank the Almighty for the opportunity to do my studies at this institute.

I also owe my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Muzvidziwa who was always there for me in every step I took guiding and giving constructive criticism. I am particularly thankful to her for her time and expertise she offered freely, giving advice and support all the way throughout the journey.

I am also greatly indebted to my wife and children for being my source of strength and inspiration, their moral and financial support not forgetting their prayers. A special thank you to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Bhebhe and parents-in-law the late Mr. Dube and Mrs. Dube. My friends Vusumuzi (MaVu) Moyo, Tafadzwa (Taffie) Taremba and Veronica (Vee) Zvikwete I cannot thank you enough for your encouragement and support.

Lastly, a special thank you is reserved for my wife, had it not been of you I would not have done this study. Thank you for your love, support and for being a source of light, you kept me focused. You were always there for me with your unwavering support. Thank you so much. I love you.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study sought to find out the teachers' views about communicative language teaching within Beitbridge urban schools in Beitbridge District which is in Matabeleland South province. The researcher used the Qualitative research design. A sample of four schools was chosen using the purposive sampling method. Data in the field was collected using the in-depth interviews. Four teachers of English were interviewed using in-depth interviews. The collected data was analyzed both qualitatively and descriptively. The findings established that the Teachers of English language have negative views about communicative language teaching in some aspects but they generally view communicative language differently from the way the propounders of the approach did. The negative views have resulted in the teachers not fully implementing communicative language teaching approach in their lessons. The push to have a good pass rate has forced teachers to resort to the traditional ways like grammar-translation and natural way methods. Communicative language approach is viewed by the teachers as an approach that needs a lot of time to utilize hence it cannot be fully applied in the lessons. The researcher recommends that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should launch workshops and seminars. Teachers of English should be innovative. ZIMSEC should come up with a new way of assessing pupils.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

RELEASE FORM.....	i
APPROVAL FORM.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT .....	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of Study .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Research Questions.....	3
1.4. Rationale of the Study.....	4
1.5 Delimitation of the study .....	5
1.6 Limitations of the Study.....	5
1.7 Definition of Terms.....	5
1.8 Summary.....	6
CHAPTER TWO: THE REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	7
2.0 Introduction.....	7

2.1 English Language teaching methods. ....	7
2.2.0. A synopsis of traditional methods.....	9
2.2.1. Grammar translation method (GTM).....	9
2.2.2. Direct method.....	10
2.2.3. Audio-lingual method.....	11
2.3. The Communicative Approach.....	11
2.4. Pedagogical Implications and Challenges of Communicative Language Teaching to Teachers. ....	15
2.5. Solutions: Combining Theory and Application.....	16
2.7 Summary.....	21
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>22</b>
3.0 Introduction.....	22
3.1 Research Design.....	22
3.2. Research Methodology .....	23
3.3. Research Instruments.....	25
3.3.1 In-depth interviews .....	25
3.4. Population and Sample Size.....	27
3.5 Research Ethics.....	28
3.6. Data Presentation and Analysis Procedure .....	28
3.8 Summary.....	29

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSED .....	30
4.0 Introduction.....	30
4.1. Data Presentation .....	30
4.1.1. What is your understanding of communicative English language teaching? .....	30
4.1.2. What are the challenges faced in using communicative language teaching? .....	32
4.1.3. What are the solutions that can be used to close the gap between communicative language theory and practise in lessons?.....	37
4.1.4. Summary of the topics that emerged from the interviews .....	39
4.2. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION .....	40
4.2.1. Communicative Language Teaching and Learning .....	40
4.2.2. Challenges faced in Communicative Language Teaching Approach .....	40
4.2.3. Solutions to Improve Use of Communicative Language Teaching Approach .....	42
4.4. Summary .....	43
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	44
5.0 Introduction.....	44
5.2 Conclusions.....	46
5.2.1 Research Question 1: What in your Opinion is Communicative Language Teaching? .....	46
5.2.2 Research Question 2: What are the Pedagogical Implications and Challenges of Using Communicative Language Teaching?.....	47



5.2.3 Research Question 3: What are the Solutions to Close the Gap between Communicative Language theory and practise. ....	48
5.3 Recommendations.....	48
5.4 Suggestions for Further Study .....	49
REFERENCES .....	50



## **CHAPTER ONE: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to find out the views of the teachers towards the communicative language approach in teaching English as a second language and offer possible solutions. This chapter concentrates mainly on the background information, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, limitations, delimitations, and definition of terms used in the study.

### **1.1 Background of Study**

The importance of the English language in today's world cannot be underestimated. Paul (2007) proposed that English was one of the languages spoken in many countries. It was used in many areas such as in education, business and all other areas. It was also taught in many countries as a second language (ESL) or foreign language (EFL). However, teachers have different views on the effectiveness of the teaching and learning methods.

Mareva and Nyota (2012) in the research they carried out posit that first year students at universities failed to use language in situations such as greeting, criticizing, arguing and disagreeing on academic issues. Lucantoni (2002) called it language functions. In addition, the above mentioned found out that first year students failed to articulate their views properly. Paul and Cohen cited in Mann (2005) argued that one of the major determinants of students effectively acquiring English for communication in schools was the teachers' attitudes towards the communicative language approach.

English teachers use different types of teaching methods and approaches in order to teach English Language. There are several types of teaching methods such as Grammar Translation Method (GLT), Direct Method (DM), Audio Lingual Method (ALM), Situational Language Teaching (SLT), Eclectic Language Teaching method (ET) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Richards and Rodgers (2001) described the first three as traditional methods while the last three were called post-method approaches. Among these, Communicative Language Teaching was one of most effective methods in achieving communicative competence and may be one of the most popular and widely used methods in Zimbabwe.

To recompense for the limitations of the traditional language teaching methods, Communicative Language Teaching was introduced in English as a second Language (ESL) approach to improve students' abilities to use English in real contexts. Littlewood (2007) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) said Communicative Language Teaching promoted teaching practices that developed communicative abilities in real life contexts. English could be used orally and written both in formally and informally. Therefore, students were expected to be able to communicate effectively in any given situation.

However, Ellis (2006) said the principles and practices of Communicative Language Teaching have faced various challenges in ESL contexts. Thus, this research explores factors that promote or hinder teachers' implementation of Communicative Language Teaching and thereby motivate the teachers' views towards Communicative Language Teaching. Subsequently, the primary focus of Communicative Language Teaching was to facilitate learners in meaning-making. This

means that success of learning a foreign language depends on how good learners have developed their communicative competences and how much they were able to apply this knowledge of language in authentic situations.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Pupils pass the ‘O’ level English examinations but fail to communicate effectively and express themselves in English. Ngwaru (2013) noted that one of the major goals of teaching English was to make learners acquire high communicative language proficiency that enabled them to operate effectively in both academic and social situations. However, pupils have problems in spoken language scenarios. Mareva and Nyota (2012) asked why was it that pupils pass the ‘O’ level English examinations but could not communicate effectively in functional language scenarios. It was in that assertion that the researcher was incited to look into the views of the teachers towards the Communicative Language Teaching approach.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

- 1.) What are the English teachers’ views about the Communicative Language Teaching approach?
- 2.) What challenges do teachers face in using Communicative Language Teaching?
- 3.) What are the solutions to close the gap between Communicative Language Teaching theory and usage?

#### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study will help various stakeholders in the education system namely: Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council (ZIMSEC), textbook authors, education officers, teachers and the researcher.

(a) ZIMSEC

From the findings of the study ZIMSEC will identify ways of enhancing examinations the Communicative Language Teaching way so that theory and practice are combined.

(b) Textbook authors

These will revise the methodologies used in their textbooks and content so as to suit the Communicative Language Teaching approach.

(c) Teachers

Workshops will be done at a district or cluster level to encourage teachers to follow Communicative Language Teaching principles in their teaching of English Language. At school level teachers can staff-develop each other.

(d) Researcher

As a teacher of ESL, the study will help the researcher with the knowledge of how to overcome the challenges in teaching ESL and also improve teaching skills

### **1.5 Delimitation of the study**

The study focused on Beitbridge district urban schools and talked to participants from four secondary schools. The study focused on identifying the views of teachers towards using the Communicative Language Teaching approach in teaching English as a second language.

### **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

The researcher encountered financial and time constraints which inhibited the researcher from visiting the schools many times. The study was confined to four schools in Beitbridge district hence the findings cannot be generalized to the entire Zimbabwean situation but countrywide research could follow up on this small step.

### **1.7 Definition of Terms**

#### **(a) Communicative Language Teaching**

Richards and Rodgers (2001) suggested that communicative language teaching viewed language as a system for the expression of meaning where the main function of language was to permit interaction and communication.

#### **(b) English as a Second language (ESL)**

It is also known as the target language (L2). Richards (2006) said it was a language that was not native to a country but was widely used as a medium of communication in education and government with another or several other native languages.

### (c) Approach

Walia (2012) proffered that it was a language viewpoint that could be interpreted and applied in a variety of ways in the classroom.

## **1.8 Summary**

The chapter looked at the background to the study where the researcher laconically looked at the teaching methods and the salient principle of Communicative Language Teaching. The background of study, research questions and the significance of the study were outlined. It also covered the limitations, delimitations and definition of terms. The next chapter will delve into the literature review.



## **CHAPTER TWO: THE REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter looks at the literature review on communicative language teaching approach. The chapter begins by the discussing different teaching methods of English as a Second Language using traditional methods. The chapter also focuses on the pedagogical implications and challenges that teachers face in Communicative Language Teaching. The chapter ends by looking at the solutions to the challenges and especially on how to combine Communicative Language Teaching theory with practice.

### **2.1 English Language teaching methods.**

Diverse methods have been posited in the teaching of English as a second language. However, some of these methods were used a long time back and were no longer recommended for use in the classroom. The old methods were categorized as traditional methods. Damiani (2003) highlighted that as a teacher he liked to use the old teaching methods because they gave the feeling of teaching intelligent people who understood but was not sure whether they understood what he was teaching. He was the source of information for the class he was teaching. Chang (2011) noted that these traditional methods were structural and teacher-centred hence they did not promote the communicative competence and performance in the learners. The traditional methods were the Grammar Translation, Direct Method and the Audio-Lingual method.

The methods which are contemporarily are referred to as post methods. Kumaravadivelu (2006) posited that the post methods approaches were learner-centred thus they promote learner

autonomy. The study will look at one of these methods namely the Communicative Approach. Since the Communicative Approach was the one advocated for by the syllabus a detailed description of this approach was given and views of teachers were collected and analysed to find out if Communicative Language Teaching was being used in the classrooms.

The researcher discussed the concept of a method using the analysis made by Richards and Rodgers. Richards and Rodgers (2007) said that a method was made up of three stages namely Approach, Design and Procedure.

The Approach of a method looks at the tenets about the nature of language and language learning that served as a source of practices and principles in language teaching. Richards and Rodgers (2001) held that each method subscribed to a theory and determined the language view and methodologies to use in a classroom. It means that all the methods of teaching have theoretical underpinnings. The theory determines what was to be taught and how each topic had to be handled in the lesson delivery.

At the design level objectives, syllabus and content were determined. Richards (2006) suggested that the role of a teacher, role of a learner, role of student's L1 and role of instructional media were specified at design level. The level of procedure emphasised how the various tasks and activities were integrated into lessons and were used as the basis for teaching and learning.

These methods were divided into two critical categories which were structural approach and constructive approach. Richards and Rodgers (2001) suggested that structuralist methods were influenced by behaviorists like Bloomfield and Skinner. Kumaravadivelu (2006) also added that the tenets of the structural approach were, firstly, that language learning was a set of habit formation. The behaviorists believed that language learning was done through habits, for

example, the teacher's pronunciation should be in perfect English in order for the learners to copy the pronunciation of words properly. The second tenet was that language learning was direct in nature. This means that language learning was developmental, it follows set stages. For example, students have to start learning the phonemes- the smallest units of words, followed by the morphemes then syntax- sentence construction and lastly semantics- meaning making. The third principle of structural language teaching was that rules of a language were more important in the learning of a second language. Richards and Rodgers (2001) complemented by positing that structuralism focused on teaching knowledge of a language rather than 'doing', which implied that it did not teach learners how to use the language to communicate rather it gave students the rules of language. The methods that were used in structural approach were grammar translation method (GTM), natural method (NM) and audio lingual method (ALM).

## **2.2.0. A synopsis of traditional methods**

### **2.2.1. Grammar translation method (GTM)**

The grammar translation method was one of the oldest methods used in teaching second languages. Asi (2015) asserted that it was used to teach Greek and Latin. Richard and Rodgers (2007) affirmed that this method was still being used in some quarters presently. The method entails the learning of the grammar rules and presentation of vocabulary in the form of a bilingual list. That was to say vocabulary was taught through the translation way. Yule (2000) alluded to that the typical structural approach had long lists of grammar rules and vocabulary that had to be memorised. An illustration to this effect was when students were being taught sentences the teachers normally made the learners chant out aloud repetitively the sentences until the students had memorised the sentences given. The major learning activity was the translation

of L1 to L2 and vice versa too. The teacher was the only who knew the rules and students were receivers of the knowledge. The method had no room for student to student interaction. Tyler (2008) insisted that errors were not tolerated totally in this method thus students had to spend endless times cramming the rules and vocabulary so as to pass the examination. Richards (2006) further suggested that instructional media were the textbooks and board only and realia was not used. The only source of teaching material were the textbooks and nothing else. The lessons were conducted in L1 than in the target language. Mareva and Nyota (2012) summed up with that as with all structural approaches formal grammar contributed little to the successful use of the language. This curtailed the acquisition of the second language.

### **2.2.2. Direct method**

In the direct method, which was also known as natural method, the language used was the target language. In the case of Beitbridge urban schools the target language was English language. English language would be the only language used in the lessons. Mareva and Nyota (2012) indicated that rules of the target language were inculcated into the students, that was through using the language in spoken, reading and written way. Richards and Rodgers (2001) intimated that the natural method demanded a lot of activities for students to do, but the weakness with this method was its emphasis on accuracy and intolerance towards errors which made L2 learners frustrated. The frustration come in the sense that if they fail to grasp the grammar rules then they were labelled to have failed and could not continue to the next level. The intolerance of errors and insistence on correctly using grammar made the method structural and not conducive for students of English as a second language (ESL).

### **2.2.3. Audio-lingual method**

The audio-lingual method was a representative behaviorists informed method. The method in discussed was informed by a theory which sees language as a system of structures controlled by rules which were developmentally arranged. Mart (2013) enounced that language was habit forming process thus learners use memorisation, repetition of the structures in developmental way. This was used a lot in the early years of Zimbabwe's independence where there were radio lessons. In these lessons an L1 proficient speaker would give lessons over the radio and in the lesson there was a lot of copying where the speaker would say, "repeat after me ..." the students would repeat many times and memorisation was the objective of the lessons. There was no input by the learners except to follow what was taught. Richards (2006) concluded that as with all structuralist informed methods the teacher was the only one who had knowledge of the subject and children were tabula rasas. Teachers used a lot of drill method but at the end the learners would not easily use the language in real life situations. The method was teacher dominated.

### **2.3. The Communicative Language Approach**

It was imperative to delve in depth into what Communicative Language Teaching was so as to fully understand the approach. Fully understanding Communicative Language Teaching will enable the researcher compare the views of the teachers with Communicative Language Teaching.

#### Assumptions of the approach

The Communicative Approach was also known as the Communicative Language Teaching. This method originated in England in the 1960's. Mareva and Nyota (2012) said that the approach

was based on a theory of language as a system of statement of meaning, the main role of language being interaction and communication. Function replaced form, that was ability to communicate meaningfully was the focus rather than grammatical competence and linguistic capability. Wong (2010) said that Communicative language teaching was a term which referred to various approaches and methods for teaching L2 communicatively. Huszti (2013) postulates that emphasized individualized teaching, reality in language learning, a greater focus on the learner, and on the development of communicative. It emphasized that communicative competence was the desired result of language instruction. Al-Magid (2006) said that the objective of Communicative approach was to train learners to cope with the roles and situations they were likely to encounter upon leaving school hence the language taught was taken from real life situations. The Communicative approach aimed at directing learners to become independent.

### Goal.

According to Richards and Rogers (2007) the goal of the Communicative Approach was to develop the learners' communicative capability in the target language. This entails that learners should be able to use language appropriately in various situations. The rationale of the ZIMSEC English Language syllabus was to provide the Zimbabwean pupils with functional communication skills which they will need in their working situations. (emphasis provided).

### Syllabus

The syllabus was functional. Huszti (2013) suggested that a functional syllabus was distinguished by its focus on function as the organising element of English Language. The syllabus should focus on the practical purposes to which language was put. Richards (2006) said the syllabus was organized according to the functions the learner should be able to carry out in

English. For example, answering the telephone in a company or calling to inquire about a product from a particular organisation. Richards (2006) went on to say the syllabus for Communicative Language Teaching was skills based syllabus and functional. The ZIMSEC syllabus as highlighted before had the rationale of function of English language in real life situations. The syllabus therefore compels teachers to use the communicative approach when teaching in Zimbabwean schools. The ZIMSEC syllabus was not prescriptive in nature but it was descriptive that was to say, the topics to be taught were not designated by the syllabus designers but real life situations detect what to be taught. This, however, does not mean that the syllabus was an open cheque but the students should at the end of the course be able to communicate in any situation formal or informal.

#### Role of the teacher

Richards (2006) suggested that the role of the teacher in the Communicative Language Teaching approach was to be a facilitator, guide, participant, resource organiser, resource him/herself, learner, needs analyst, and counsellor. The teacher was not the only fountain of knowledge in the class but he/she at times learns from the students too. The teacher was compelled by the approach to always analyse the needs of the students. Brumfit cited in Mareva and Nyota (2012) advocated for teachers whose intervention was not visibly detected by the students but was implied. The teacher should at times disappear from intervening as students conversed amongst themselves.

#### Role of the learners

The method was learner-centred; therefore, the teacher was seen as the enabler of the learning process. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) saw students as communicators. The students

were engaged in negotiating meaning actively through student-to- student interaction. This was supported by Hu (2002) who said that students' roles became those of exchanging meaning, speakers, originators and contributors of knowledge and information. Students were responsible for their own learning. Therefore, the teacher ceases to be the only citadel of knowledge.

### Instructional media

According to Richards (2006) The Communicative Approach emphasized the use of real sources which were termed as realia. For example, articles from magazines, newspapers, songs, adverts and short stories. The teacher made use of communicative activities, pictures, visuals and task based activities. The teacher should give students opportunities to express ideas and opinions on a regular basis so that the students integrate the target language with their own lives so that they gain confidence and feel more secure in using the language. Richards and Rogers (2001) said that the learning activities were nominated according to how well they involved the learner in meaningful and authentic language use. Richards (2006) also stated that the pupils should be engaged in activities and tasks where they interact and cooperate with each other to accomplish communicative goals. The instructional media in communicative language approach was based on reality.

### Role of Mother Tongue (L1).

Communicative Language Teaching approach advocates for tolerance of the L1 in the lessons. As all of the students were learning English as a Second Language the teachers should allow them to use L1 mingled with the target language. Frith cited in Ahmad (2013) argued that as learners learnt the second language they grasped certain aspects of the target language based on their L1. This shows that these students were in the process of learning. For example, a student



may say “I cutted the grass yesterday” after a lesson on simple past tense. The student who used the aforementioned example would have grasped the concept of past tenses but would not as yet understood it fully. The process was called interlanguage continuum because it constantly changes as they acquire more of the target language.

### Error correction

In the Communicative Approach, the learners’ errors could be tolerated, as long as they were not deliberately done, since they were a natural outcome of the development of communication skills. Richards (2006) said that teachers should be tolerant of the learner’s errors as they indicate that the learners were building up their communicative competence.

## **2.4. Pedagogical Implications and Challenges of Communicative Language Teaching to Teachers.**

Mvududu and Thiel-Burges (2012) suggest that teaching could not be viewed as the transmission of information from the educated to the uneducated. Pupil-to-pupil activities that boost interaction between the pupils should be encouraged. If learning was based on prior knowledge, then teachers must make use of scaffolding techniques and zone of proximal development (ZPD) in their lessons and provide learning environments that cater for all abilities of the learners. If students must use their present understandings in new situations in order to build new knowledge, then teachers must scaffold students in learning by bringing the students’ current understandings to the forefront.

Rao (2013) articulated that English teachers in China had switched from using the traditional methods to implementing a variety of modern English language teaching methods from the West.

Of all these methods Communicative Language Teaching was the most popular and in widespread use in Chinese schools.

Schweisfurth cited in Wamalwa and Wamalwa (2014) observed that teachers in developing countries were rarely taught about learner-centred approaches and the teacher education did not offer suitable models which teacher trainees could copy from for their practice and was sometimes theoretical with little practical application of theory. This lack of Communicative Language Teaching practice resulted in teachers resorting to using traditional methods when they were in the classroom.

The Zimbabwe School Examination Council (ZIMSEC) O' Level English Language syllabus (1122) recommended an approach which was intended to provide students with functional communication skills which they would apply in their working situations after school. Notwithstanding the demand for the use of the Communicative Approach, Mareva and Nyota (2012) observed that a majority of teachers were still using the traditional methods. There was substantial dependence on the text, that is textbooks and past examination papers.

## **2.5. Solutions: Combining Theory and Application**

Richards (2006) said, the ever increasing need for good communication skills in English had created a huge demand for English teaching around the world. The worldwide demand for English had created a vast demand for quality language teaching and learning materials and resources, which had led to more researches being done in the field of second language teaching. Therefore, teachers of English in Beitbridge urban should be kept abreast of these changes so that they execute their duties effectively. Professional aggrandisement amongst the teachers was needed which would in turn improve their classroom practice and make students' learning better.

Ansarey (2012) postulated that the changing language teaching environment required that teachers adapt to the new methods and techniques quickly. In modern times a teacher was no longer a teacher but his/her roles keep on changing from facilitator, monitor, resource, resource organiser, and researcher (Richards and Rodgers 2001, Krashen cited in Mareva and Nyota 2012) said that effective language teachers were the ones who developed their students' self-confidence and esteem, decreased their anxiety, promoted enthusiasm and encouraged students to set attainable goals. The eventual goal was that students had to be able to communicate fluently in every context with other people both in formal and informal settings. This could only be achieved if the teachers of the target language had all the prerequisite skills for effective teaching of the language.

Richards and Farrel (2005) said professional development involved teachers' knowledge of themselves and of the teaching situations, understanding of how students learnt language and an analysis of teachers' philosophies for language teaching. Knapp (2003) pointed out that professional development was a critical link to improved teaching. Brown (2001) said that professional development referred to a range of means, experiences and activities geared to helping practicing teachers to develop their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to educate their learners effectively.

Mann (2005) proposed some professional developmental needs for classroom practitioners when he said that English teachers need to take cognisance of the teaching methods and techniques needed for successful teaching such as presentation techniques, different types of practice and how to evaluate student learning. English as a second language teachers also need to be armed with knowledge on the theories of second language acquisition since these theories explain how second language was acquired. The ESL theories help the teachers in coming up with the best

methods to employ for learning to take place, for example, things like scaffolding and zone of proximal development (ZPD). Meyer (2000) also said that teachers could use the strategies based on the interactionist and constructivist theories to create classrooms that foster learning by modelling, scaffolding, co-operative learning, content-based instruction, task based learning and student-centred knowledge generation which Celce-Meacia (2005) said took into consideration cognitive, affective and linguistic principles.

Richards and Farrell (2005) emphasized the culture of reflective and collaborative professional development activities. Al-Issa (2002) said that reflection permitted teachers to detect and appreciate their classroom context and students' learning better, make their students' learning be the centre of the teaching process, and take knowledgeable actions and make thorough conclusions.

Teachers need to understand the students' interlanguage continuum. Gonzalez (2002) noted the importance of teachers' knowledge of their students when he said that teachers should try to know their students and understand that the students come from rich L1 and socio-economic diverse backgrounds. This was an important first step in creating a bridge between Communicative Language Teaching theory and practice. Niemi (2008) further suggested that the teachers needed the best available academic knowledge in order to accomplish their purpose to society. This means that teachers should be thoroughly knowledgeable about Communicative Language Teaching and how to apply the approach in the classroom. According to Kumaravadivelu (2006) an L2 teacher needs to be well versed in ESL theories, understand that learners have fully formed personalities and minds when they start learning L2 and these have great effects on how the students learn English, therefore the teacher should practically

understand how teaching methods and techniques work, the goals of language teaching and the nature of the children.

Odden et al cited in Herzallah (2011) said that effective professional development made changes to the teachers' practices that subsequently led to improvements in students' achievement. It helped teachers to be more competent, have practical solutions for daily classroom problems. Herzallah (2011) further suggested that problem-solving, monitoring, micro-teaching and demonstrative lessons should be utilised to train teachers in Communicative Language Teaching use in the classroom.

Ellis (1994) examined the suitability of the communicative approach in the Vietnamese context. He found that one of the main problems in using a communicative approach in Vietnam was that teachers were dependent on the inherent traditional teaching practices. In a similar study, Karavas-Doukas (1996) investigated teachers' attitudes toward the use of communicative approach in Greece. It was reported that although the English curriculum in Greece was based on the premises of communicative language teaching, teachers showed a tendency to carry on the traditional teacher-oriented instruction style. The findings of this study suggested that teachers either did not understand or were unable to see the practical implications of the Communicative Language Teaching principles. In another significant study, Li (1998) looked into Korean teachers' perceptions of the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching. The results of Li's (1998) study confirmed that the teachers encountered difficulties in using Communicative Language Teaching practices in their classes.

The some of the difficulties reported by the Korean teachers were:

- Inabilities to speak English,

- Insufficient training in Communicative Language Teaching,
- Few opportunities for in-service training in Communicative Language Teaching,
- Misunderstandings of what Communicative Language Teaching was,
- Grammar-based examinations,
- Lack of support,
- Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments.

According to Li (1998), teachers were not keen to implement Communicative Language Teaching in their language classrooms due to these problems listed above. He claimed that in order for teachers to be willing to make use of Communicative Language Teaching in ESL contexts, many alterations have to be made.

In Zimbabwe in-service training provides lectures and seminars on ESL teaching methods and L2 Learning theory but there is little or no practice of Communicative Language Teaching. Al-Magid (2006) said the assumption was that the English teachers' exposure to these approaches, methods and techniques of ESL teaching will equip them with sufficient competence to teach their classes effectively. Schools, cluster of schools and districts were also encouraged to staff development English teachers in Communicative Language Teaching.

Aggarwal cited in Hornberger and Vaish (2009) suggested that teachers should be innovative enough and venture out to experiment so as to improve and enhance learning. Zainuddin et al (2011) also added that when teachers were well-versed with Communicative Language Teaching they could be creative and resourceful. Innovation, creativity and resourcefulness of the teachers, therefore, hinged on the professional development of the same teachers. The government should improve school resources (Education Act 1987). The administrators must allow teachers to

analyse recent research on language acquisition so that the teachers were kept abreast of the developments through subject panels at the district level. Ignacio and Martinez (2011) proposed that all schools should be provided with language resource centres and other learning facilities for teachers and pupils to have ample practice.

## **2.7 Summary**

The chapter looked at English as a Second Language teaching methods by looking at the synopses of the traditional methods which were commonly used by teachers and then Communicative Language Teaching in depth. The chapter then looked at the pedagogical implications of Communicative Language Teaching to the teacher and lastly how Communicative Language Teaching theory could be combined with practice through teacher professional development program and resource provision as solutions to the problems of using Communicative Language Teaching. The following chapter will dwell more on research methodology.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the English teachers' views about Communicative Language Teaching in Beitbridge urban secondary schools. The chapter looks at the research design and methodology adopted, sample used, research instruments used, data collection procedures and data analysis. The chapter closes with a summary.

### **3.1 Research Design**

In this study the researcher used the qualitative design. However, Cohen and Manion (2001) held that research design was a plan that outlines how, when and what data should be collected. Walliman (2006) defines a research design as parameter which provides plan for the gathering and analysis of data ultimately demonstrating which methods were appropriate. According to Johnson and Onwaegbuzie (2004) a research design empowers the researcher to take a heterogeneous approach to method selection and offers the best opportunity to obtain full answers to the research questions.

The qualitative design was selected because the research was endeavouring to capture the views of teachers of English Language. The researcher wanted to understand the experiences of the teachers. These experiences led to the views that the researcher wanted to find out. The qualitative design was the best design used because the researcher wanted to find out what the teachers did and felt about the communicative language teaching approach. The researcher wanted to capture also the reasons why the teachers used or did not use the communicative teaching approach. The qualitative research design was appropriate for the research in that the



design gave the researcher room to probe more information than simply getting the yes/no answers. The presentation of qualitative design also highlights the pathos and emotions of individual participants in the research. The researcher began the research with no hypotheses to test but tried to find out all about what the teachers view as beneficial or challenging when using the communicative language approach. The essence of the research being carried out was to understand the views of teachers and not direct the teacher to the researchers' views. The qualitative design provided the researcher with ability to select the appropriate method.

### **3.2. Research Methodology**

The researcher used in-depth interviews to generate data. The method was descriptive in nature. The researcher used the descriptive method to present and analyse the data. Chiromo (2009) said the descriptive method describes what is seen. Qualitative research using in-depth interviews is about finding out not what people think about a phenomenon but why they feel it. It is about making people dialog about their feelings and their opinions through face-to-face interviews. Levine (2008) referred to qualitative methodology as a way of conducting and regarding of research where the researcher physically goes to the interviewees and collected data and analysed the data. It is an exploratory research method.

The in-depth interviews that the researcher did found out how the participants viewed communicative language teaching. The spoken words were captured on paper as the interviews were taking place. The participants were all informed that their views will be recorded on paper thus they should not have felt offended when they saw the researcher write down notes. The time of interview was recorded too but the place was not. This was done to keep the participants' identity confidential.

The places where the interviews were conducted were different, the researcher travelled to the participants' place of work and did the interviews there. Patton and Cochran (2002) posited that the setting could have an impact on the answers given. The interviews were, thus, done either in the open or in the staff offices depending on availability of space. Disturbances were minimised too through the use of open spaces away from the constant greetings of other teachers. In other schools the head gave us their offices to use.

The sitting position were such that the researcher could see all the facial expressions of the participants. Patton and Cochran (2002) also gave guidelines by way of questions on sitting position since people come from different cultures. This meant that the researcher had to sit at a distance that did not intimidate and make the participants uncomfortable especially with the ladies. However, the researcher had to create that formal and friendly atmosphere needed to maintain a good interview.

The presentation of data of a descriptive method is by narrating what took place in the interview. Brewer (2001) said that the researcher should include direct quotes in the description of the interviews. The research should also highlight the gestures and mannerisms of the interviewees. From the interview the researcher can interpret data to come up with topics of discussion.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2010) added that organising data analysis using research questions preserved the coherence of the data and returned the reader to the gist of the research. The just mentioned meant that the researcher and the reader would constantly be reminded of the reasons of the research being undertaken.

The researcher visited the Provincial offices of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Matabeleland South with an introductory letter from Midlands State University seeking permission to collect data from schools. From there the researcher visited the district offices and proceeded to the schools to collect data. The in-depth interviews were conducted. It took the researcher five days to complete the process of data collection.

### **3.3. Research Instruments**

The researcher used in-depth interviews as the instrument for collecting data to establish the views of teachers in teaching English using the Communicative Language Teaching approach in Beitbridge Urban schools. Neumen (2000) defines research instruments as tools that were used to collect data. They were also used to find solutions to the problem under investigation. The advantages and disadvantages of using in-depth interviews were discussed below.

#### **3.3.1 In-depth interviews**

Leedy (2001) argued that interviews were a two-way dialogue initiated by the interviewer to acquire information from the participants. Boyce and Neale (2006) defined in-depth interviewing as a qualitative research technique that involved conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of participants to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation. The interviews were used to solicit the full response of the participants through talking, feelings, mannerisms and gestures. Marsiglio (2008) said the in-depth interview should be conducted like a conversation where the interviewee was encouraged to tell the interviewer stories about the issues of interest to the interviewer. Marsiglio (2008) goes on to say the interviewer should be very vigilant and understand the emotional reactions of the interviewees to events. The researcher used face to face interviews.

### Advantages of in-depth interviews

According to Boyce and Neale (2006) in-depth interviews provided much more details than through other research instruments. There was room for further explanation since questions could be repeated or their meanings explained. Leedy (2001) adds that the interviewer could also probe for relevant additional information when a response seems incomplete or not relevant. Interviews provide great volumes of detailed data in a short period. Interviews provide first-hand information and perceptions of the participants. In-depth interviews also supply extra information through gestures, mannerisms and tone of voice. In-depth interviews give a one to one interaction which made the interviewee feel free and calm if there was a relationship that was there between the interviewer and the interviewee. For the researcher the participants were well known since the four participants were colleagues within the district.

Adler and Adler in Baker and Edwards (2014) added that the relationship often established between the researcher and participant could often make up for lack of varieties of people. The relationship between the researcher and the participants helped the researcher to easily notice the underlying feelings and meanings participants flashed as he interviews progressed. The researcher only did in-depth interviews to the four participants because of aspect of diminishing returns and due to the setting of urban area of Beitbridge.

### Disadvantages of Interviews

According to Annum (2014) interviews were prone to socially desirability bias in which participants wanted to please the interviewer by giving socially acceptable responses that they would not give in an anonymous questionnaire. The participants may say what they think the interviewer wants to hear. However, the interviewer controlled this bias by constantly telling the

participants that the answers were for academic purposes thus there was need for truthfulness and frankness. The researcher also clarified that the interview was formal not casual.

### **3.4. Population and Sample Size**

The targeted population was three schools in Beitbridge District in Beitbridge urban which was in Matabeleland South Province. Walliman (2006) defines population as the overall number of persons who fit the standards the researcher had put out for research participants. Beitbridge urban had four secondary schools but the researcher interviewed three Heads of English Departments and one teacher. The four schools have a staff compliment of nine English teachers altogether.

The four participants were enough for the research because their views represented the views of the other teachers within Beitbridge urban. Mason (2010) argued that there was a point where the diminishing returns aspect comes in. By diminishing returns Mason (2010) means as the research was going on more data did not result in new information but that the same information would be repeated over and over. Mason goes on to say that qualitative research was more concerned with meaning and not making generalised hypothesis statements. The diminishing returns aspect resulted in the researcher using the few participants.

Baker and Edwards (2014) suggested that qualitative researchers generally study fewer people but delve more deeply into individuals, settings, and scenes, hoping to generate a subjective view of people about a phenomenon. This subjective view by the participants was what the researcher was find out. Views which were not influenced by renowned authors and writers. The views came from the participants themselves uncensored.

### **3.5 Research Ethics and Data Collection Procedure**

Lewis (2014) defined confidentiality as decision in keeping information secret, that was not disclosing the identity of the participants. The researcher upheld individual's rights to confidentiality and privacy by ensuring participants that information gathered from them will be used for academic use only and names of the participants and names of schools they worked at were not going to be used.

Chiromo (2009) defined informed consent as informing the subjects about the research before they decided to participate in. The researcher made sure that the participants were informed that their participation was voluntary. They could withdraw at any time during the research process, or choose not to answer certain questions and that their withdrawal carried no penalties.

### **3.6. Data Presentation and Analysis Procedure**

Data presentation involves the presentation of research findings on various instruments used. The data presentation according to Chiromo (2009) should not compromise the richness of the data. The researcher will narrate what the participants said. The direct quotations of some of the participants' responses would be used too.

Ary et. al. (2010) defines data analysis as a process whereby researchers methodically search and arrange their data in order to increase their understanding of the total data and to enable them to present what they learned to others. The analysis of the data followed the research questions that are a guide to the researcher. Each theme was explained and conclusions proffered.

On reliability the researcher took proper research steps and took cognisance of the ethics. Postlethwaite (2005) referred to reliability as the extent to which a measuring instrument gave unswerving results. Data was collected from teachers of English as a second language at the

schools to prevent participant errors. As for validity the researcher made sure that the method used solicited full information on the views of the teachers. Postlethwaite (2005) said validity entailed the extent to which data collection methods truthfully measure what they intend to measure.

The researcher used the Descriptive method in analysing data on the English teachers' views about Communicative Language Teaching in Beitbridge urban schools. Postlethwaite (2005) stated that descriptive data delivers information about conditions, situations, and events that occur in the present. According to Leedy (2001) a descriptive data analysis was intended to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally happened. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) say descriptive data obtained from in-depth interviews sets out to describe and interpret what was. The descriptive data analysis was selected since the aim of the study was on identifying, describing and analysing the views of teachers in teaching English as second language using Communicative Language Teaching.

### **3.7 Summary**

The chapter delineated the research design and methodology which the researcher utilised. The researcher espoused the qualitative research design where in-depth interviews was used to gather data. The population were the Beitbridge Urban Secondary Schools. The research ethics, data collection procedure and data presentation and analysis procedures were also discussed. The next chapter will be about data analysis.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSED**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the data and analyses it. Data discussion is done in the same chapter. The researcher collected data through in-depth interviews from four teachers. Three of the participants were heads of the English department. From the analysis of the data the following themes emerged: (1) Communicative Language Teaching as oral and written. (2) challenges of using Communicative Language Teaching. (3) solutions to improve teachers' use of Communicative Language Teaching.

### **4.1. Data Presentation**

The researcher introduced the interview conversation by asking the following question

#### **4.1.1. What is your understanding of communicative English language teaching?**

##### First participant (P1)

To start the conversation, the researcher asked what the participant thought was communicative language teaching approach. Her response was

*I don't remember what it was but I learnt about it at university, but it has to do with teaching pupils how to communicate both orally and written.*

She went on to say she saw the oral aspect was difficult to teach because of the examinations.

*I have to make sure my students pass the examination."*



She then said she emphasised on written communication because it was the one that was examined by ZIMSEC.

### Second participant (P2)

The second participant answering the same question said,

*It is an approach that is modern. It demands that communication be taught to students in a relaxed way, just like my current Form Four students who can communicate well verbally and written.*

She said her students were generally from economically well-to-do families. They speak English even at home. They did their primary school at a private school in Beitbridge where English speaking was compulsory, so she had very little problems. She quickly said the problem she had was with donor sponsored students.

*“their background was the problem, they use English only when at school and thus they make it difficult for me to always use the communicative approach.*

She showed that she was angry and unaccommodating to these non-English speaking students.

### Third participant (P3)

The participant showed that he was not happy about the approach. He thought,

*This thing of yours will make pupils fail examinations and nothing else. My teachers taught me English the best way, that was why I became a teacher of English. The new methods you bring when you come from university will not make pupils pass their exams.*

I insisted on the question that was when he then said he did not know what communicative language teaching approach was but thought it meant teaching pupils how to communicate.

And communication involves use of spoken and written words

#### Fourth participant (P4)

To start the conversation, I asked what communicative language teaching was all about. She said it was all about communication as long as she, teacher, understood what the pupils were saying then the students have communicated.

#### Key issue that emerged from question one

- Communication language teaching approach is all about verbal and written communication.
- Meaning making and comprehension of the interaction is important.

#### **4.1.2. What are the challenges faced in using communicative language teaching?**

The researcher went on further to ask the second question and each of the participants responded to the question starting with

#### First participant (P1)

P1 said the first challenge was

*The oral part of communication was not examined and so I do not concentrate on it. That part is for home. I teach in order for the students to pass their English.*

She therefore, concentrated on examinable concepts. She further said, she believed that textbooks were written in conjunction with the syllabus and the grammar aspect was very important so that pupils write correct sentences. I asked her if she used communicative approach. She laughed and answered,

*Aah! that will, be too much for me to do.*

She explained that lessons were only thirty-five minutes long and she had a lot of work to do. She could not do that in her lessons because it meant she had to do a lot of lesson preparation when the textbook provided the exercises.

The other challenge that she faced was she had little knowledge about the communicative approach since teachers all over do not use the approach as it is supposed to be. She even asked me if I used the approach before I came to university. To which I replied I did not. She then said

*You see. We don't know what it wants us to do as teachers.*

I asked her what her views were about the use of mother tongue in the lessons. She quickly said she to used English language only because

*English is taught in English and nothing else. How can another language be used to teach another language? I don't want my students to use their L1. You hear people talk of decolonising the mind, that is for politicians not students. English is an international language that Chinese are teaching their children too. What will Venda, Ndebele and Shona do for the children in this modern world.*

She however, said the challenge she faced was it forced her to be the only one who spoke in the lessons. Pupils just kept quiet because they were not comfortable to use English. She thought probably they were afraid she would reprimand them. She also thought the background of the children played a major role because the children never use English at home except when Watching the television.

She continued to highlight that the examination was in English not vernacular. These African languages were the problem in the teaching of English.

*For example, we say in Venda 'Riddo nnamela golowi yavhoMuleya.' Children then write 'we will climb Mr Muleya's car' instead of board the car. You see it interferes with my teaching. Students come to school to learn and in order to learn they have to avoid errors too. I know you talk of different Englishes but these Englishes I see in computers are not right. There should be one English and English teachers should be serious about the subject.*

### Second participant (P2)

Participant 2 said the challenge she had was applying the approach in her lessons.

*I know that the teacher is a facilitator in the lessons not the only one with the knowledge. I know that students can be facilitators too in the lessons. I know that I have to tolerate students' errors and allow them to use their L1 in the communication but if I do that my head will say I don't teach well. The examination will not examine what my students were taught that is why I leave the spoken aspect to the parents and I concentrate on the written.*

She then gave an example when she invited a white lady who came to talk about her life in Zimbabwe. She said the students from the affluent background were the ones that were actively interacting with the lady while those sponsored by the NGOs were silent.

She also said

*My classes don't sit in rows like you do with your classes. With me my classes sit in a circle and fortunately the classes are manageable too, this makes the lesson have a relaxed atmosphere and friendly interaction. Teachers who come after my lessons always complain but I tell them that is what I want. In such a circle a child can be corrected his/her errors and still feel relaxed.*

P2 showed a lot of pomp in her interview and had the theoretical knowledge of the communicative language approach.

### Third participant (P3)

Participant 3 said the only challenge was that he did not know what communicative language approach was. With this I had to ask a lot of questions to try find out if he used the communicative approach by any chance. I asked him if he had the syllabus. He said

*It is with the HOD. I use the examination papers to teach my pupils. If pupils fail their examinations, you are labelled a failure as a teacher. Even you, before you went to university you taught for the examinations and now you come with your communicative language approach. The people in the offices don't look at whether your students can communicate but they look at the results.*

I asked him how he views use of vernacular. To this he said he did not tolerate any of his pupils using their L1. Pupils' use of English all times made them gain more vocabulary. Then he said:

*If I see that the pupils haven't understood I speak in Shona. Who doesn't understand Shona. South Africans at the border there understand Shona what more pupils who stay at Dulivhadzimu.*

#### Fourth participant (P4)

On the same question P4 said the major challenge she faced was her children were not confident to use English language to communicate. She said she had tried to make the pupils less afraid to speak but their background was curtailing her efforts.

*Every time I give them work to do in groups they speak in their Venda. I now accept that but after group work I insist they use English then they become silent. I know that L1 is the foundation for me to build upon. I know that I use my L1 to think with, so do my pupils, so when I see that they don't understand I explain in Ndebele and Venda.*

She further said the other challenge was the time she took to prepare for the lessons was exerting a lot of pressure on her.

*I was taught about the approach and right now I am trying it out in grammar lessons. These lessons will make my pupils' written work be error free or have less errors. But I take a lot of time looking for a passage that has concepts I want to teach and at times I fail to find the passages then I resort to the textbooks.*

#### Issues that emerged from question two

- Examinations do not promote communicative language teaching fully.
- The communicative language approach demands a lot of preparation time
- Teachers know very little about the communicative language approach
- Background of students does not make use of communicative language teaching practical
- L1 interferes in lessons.

#### **4.1.3. What are the solutions that can be used to close the gap between communicative language theory and practice in lessons?**

Third question was asked to the participants and their responses were

##### First participant (P1)

Participant 1 emphasized that workshops were the only option available to train teachers to use the communicative language approach.

*The Government has banned full time in-servicing of teachers and I see no other way except to hold regular workshops. I can facilitate if called upon to do so. You see when you come back let us organize one for a start.*

Participant 1 also added that subject panels needed to begin so that

*Teachers can share information to improve the district pass rate through subject panels.*

The third point P1 highlighted was the issue of thorough inspection. She said

*The syllabus demands a communicative approach but inspectors come to check books instead of checking on whether teachers are following the syllabus. I wonder if the inspectors know the current trends in language teaching. I look forward to the day when the results will not be the only measure of success for both the teacher and students.*

##### Second participant (P2)

Participant 2 also raised the issue of holding workshops regularly. She said,

*We need workshops so that as teachers of English we interact and share notes on what needed to be done to improve the situation. Workshop facilitators can be invited from university lecturers and local markers like the Head of Nuli High. What is the function of*

*BSPZ in this district? It should work towards betterment of the district results. The other thing is the ZIMSEC should include an oral examination for English like they do with the French language. Instead of pronunciation the exam should seek to assess a student's abilities to communicate in different scenarios. For example, in the exam the students can be asked to dramatize meeting the President.*

### Third participant (P3)

Participant 3 had from the onset said he did not know what communicative language teaching was, so I asked him what could be done to help him use the approach too. He said,

*I don't want to be viewed as a rebel but these new methods you are bringing will not make the pupils pass the examination. But, I think workshops can be utilised to train old teachers like me who are about to retire.*

He then asked me why I was doing the research on the communicative language teaching approach. I told him I read the syllabus and wanted to see how teachers viewed the approach. He wished me well.

### Fourth participant (P4)

Participant 4 was in a hurry, for she had an appointment at 1300hrs in town. I asked what could be done to remedy the situation since she did not use communicative language approach regularly as required by the syllabus. She said,

*English teachers need to co-operate in the district. This system of one school teacher on their own is not good. We also need to teach in good schools too. For example, you have schools which have students who use English even at home having high passes while our*



*'location' students fail. We need co-operative teaching and learning. Teachers should team teach in the district so that learners can improve. Also, we should be allowed as the English department to go for field trips where the students will spend a day in different situations where English is used constantly like at the border where foreign visitors come through. If my students can interact with those tourists I know they will have learnt something not these ZIMSEC examinations.*

Issues that emerged from question three:

- Workshops to train teachers
- Inclusion of oral examination at 'O' level,
- Thorough inspection on syllabus coverage,
- Co-operative and team teaching
- Field trips for English.

**4.1.4. Summary of the topics that emerged from the interviews**

From the interviews the researcher got the following topics which emerged: communicative language teaching approach is both oral and written. Question two issues that emerged were oral communication not examined, students' L1 interference and students' background impeding on English language learning and the time of lessons was short. The issues that emerged from question three were workshop the teachers, thorough inspection to be done looking at syllabus coverage, co-operative teaching at district level and field trips for students to practice their oral skills.

## **4.2. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.2.1. Communicative Language Teaching and Learning**

In this study the researcher wanted to establish if the teachers knew what Communicative Language Teaching approach was. Three of the participants had an idea but they were not so sure if the ideas were the correct description of Communicative Language Teaching. Participant three blatantly said

*I don't know because I was trained a long time ago before this communicative Language teaching 'thing' came to be.*

The other three said they thought it had to do with communication both orally and written. Dornyei (2013) and Kumaravadevelu (2013) said Communicative Language Teaching was all about the functionality of English language outside the classroom walls. The researcher found out that teachers generally knew what communicative Language Teaching was. However, upon further probing the teachers conceded that they teach students to communicate effectively in the written form of communication so that they pass examinations. Mareva and Nyota (2012) also found that teachers teach for the examination only.

### **4.2.2. Challenges faced in Communicative Language Teaching Approach**

Focused on examinable concepts.

All the teachers focused on examinable concepts. They all agreed that the current examination system did not permit the teaching of oral communication in the lessons. Three of the teachers said that they at times used communicative language teaching in their lessons. P3 used the traditional methods which were teacher-centred and gave less time for students to communicate

orally and instead gave more time to written exercises. P4 said she used the Communicative Language Teaching when she was being supervised by the Education Inspector from district offices or provincial offices. Richards and Rogers (2007) said that the goal of communicative language teaching was to develop all the communication skills that students would need beyond the classroom walls. This entails teaching learners both oral and written communication skills. The teachers' views were that at the moment communicative language teaching could not be used.

#### Students' Background and L1 interference

Students' Background and L1 interference were also the challenges that teachers face. Most of the participants said students could not communicate in English because the student's background was not so rich in monetary terms and thus most of them used L1 in all situations outside the school set-up. P2 showed through her tone that she had a negative view towards students from poor backgrounds. She, thus, used traditional methods to remediate these students. However, there were some students who were from affluent family backgrounds who communicated well in English. Frith (2012) posited that learners acquired the L2 based on their L1 which teachers fail to understand and tolerate. L1 interference should be accepted by teachers as building blocks to learning English. In addition, Ellis (2006) accentuated the significance of the local needs and the conditions of the particular students' background and contexts that teachers need to take cognisance of. Teachers viewed communicative language teaching approach as too tolerant of students' errors and use of L1 and thus, could not be fully implemented in lessons.

### **4.2.3. Solutions to Improve Use of Communicative Language Teaching Approach**

The last topic that emerged from the interviews was on possible solutions to improve communicative language approach use in lessons. The P3 said he will prefer that workshops be organised to train teachers about the new trends in second language teaching. These workshops should be conducted at school level and district level too. One lady interviewee said subject panels should be created so that English teachers meet to discuss about the challenges they meet and brain storm on solutions too, at least once a term. Three of interviewees said teachers should change attitudes towards new approaches like the Communicative Language teaching approach. She added that the English department of each school should organise field trips where the students could meet real people who work in offices who use English for business communication. These field trips would give students real practice in real situations. The interviewees proposed that co-operative teaching be implemented within the district so that teachers could team teach. On the aspect of assessment two interviewees said if ZIMSEC could introduce oral examinations as it was done with other foreign language learning, for example, French.

The research proved that teachers do not fully use the Communicative Language Teaching approach because of their views. Teachers, therefore, tend to use traditional methods instead. Teacher in-service programmes and workshops should be established which will be more practical in nature than theory. As was purported by Awobuluyi (2012) that teachers need to be empowered to ensure that the ways in which they support learning through their teaching were of consistently high quality and continually improving.

### **4.3. Summary**

The chapter presented, analysed and discussed the data which was collected from the four secondary schools in Beitbridge urban in an effort to establish the views of English teachers about the Communicative Language Teaching approach. The study established that the teachers have views that were different from that propounded by Communicative Language Teaching and this had led to teachers not using the approach fully. Some of these views were communicative language teaching if followed will make pupils fail examinations, L1 should not be tolerated in English lessons and errors should be corrected instantly lest the errors manifest in examinations and the examinations test written work so oral communication was for outside use. The chapter also looked at what could be done to fully implement Communicative Language teaching and interviewees proffered in-service training, use of English subject panels, staff development programmes and use of field trips. The next chapter summarises the findings and proffers recommendations.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter summarises the research findings and draws up conclusions and recommendations on the study. Recommendations were largely drawn from the research findings and were aimed at demystifying the tenets of communicative language teaching so that the negative views of Communicative Language Teaching will not recur. This was believed to achieve effective use of communicative language teaching approach in schools.

### **5.1. Summary of the Study**

The study sought to find out the views of English teachers' views about the communicative language teaching approach. The study targeted Beitbridge urban schools which are in Beitbridge district in Matabeleland South province. A sample of four teachers of English was selected. The study was largely prompted by the failure of the pupils in communicating functionally in real situations. The study found out that the teachers of English as a second language have varying views about the communicative language approach.

In chapter one the study looked at the background of study, the purpose of the study, the limitations and delimitations, the significance of the study to various groups of people and organizations. Chapter one also came up with the main research questions and the sub research questions. In the background of the study the researcher looked at the traditional teaching methods and the importance of communicative language approach.

Chapter two reviewed the literature of the study. The researcher examined the traditional teaching methods in summary and then detailed the principles of communicative language

teaching approach. The chapter also looked at the pedagogical implications and challenges of using communicative language approach, identified the views of other teachers from other countries and the challenges teachers face in implementing communicative language teaching approach. The chapter went on to look at the professional developmental needs of English as a Second Language teachers and the solutions to the challenges which cause the negative views of the teachers of English.

The research design and methodology were discussed in chapter three. The researcher adopted the qualitative research design and the population was the four secondary schools in Beitbridge urban. Purposive sampling was used to choose the participants to be interviewed through the in-depth interview research instrument.

In chapter four, the researcher analysed the data which was collected from the field and presented it using descriptive method. Conclusions were drawn from these findings. The findings suggested that teachers have negative views in some principles of communicative language approach. Some of these views were the communicative language will not make pupils pass their 'O' level ZIMSEC examinations, the limited time allocated to the subject to fully implement communicative approach procedures like role-play, debates, simulations considering that it was a second language to both the teacher and the pupil. In addition, the study found that teachers viewed students' background as a contributory factor in their failure to use communicative language teaching approach. The research also found that teachers viewed L1 as the another factor that made them not use communicative language teaching approach. The chapter also sought to find teachers' solutions to the negative views they had in order to fully implement communicative language approach. The solutions were that teachers need to be workshopped in

order for them to know communicative language approach. Subject panels need to be introduced to give teacher a platform to help each other.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

Teachers of English language have negative views about communicative language teaching in some aspects but they generally view communicative language differently from the way the propounders of the approach did. The negative views have resulted in the teachers not fully implementing communicative language teaching approach in their lessons. The push to have a good pass rate has forced teachers to resort to the traditional ways like grammar-translation and natural way methods. Communicative language approach was viewed by the teachers as an approach that needs a lot of time to utilise hence it cannot be fully applied in the lessons.

### **5.2.1 Research Question 1: What in your Opinion is Communicative Language Teaching?**

The results obtained from the study show that teachers have an idea of what communicative language teaching approach was. The teachers said it was all about communication both orally and written in other words, the authors suggest, language-learning activities in a communicative language teaching class involve real communication, and allowed the learners to apply language that was meaningful to them. However, Mareva and Nyota (2012) concluded their research proffering that teachers prefer to use the traditional methods like grammar-translation because they were conservative. Thus, it could be concluded that teachers need refresher workshops and undertake refresher courses to be able to follow the syllabus and the current trends in second language teaching and learning field.



### **5.2.2 Research Question 2: What are the Pedagogical Implications and Challenges of Using Communicative Language Teaching?**

The issue of teaching methods was very crucial. The researcher noticed that one of the teachers had no idea of these contemporary methods. Most of the teachers agreed that the Communicative Approach was not very applicable in their lessons since the demands of high pass rates in ZIMSEC examinations was what was needed by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. This forces them to teach for the examinations and not to teach to improve English functional proficiency of the students. In a study that addressed the issues of Communicative Language Teaching approach use in Taiwan, Liu (2005) found out that despite the popularity of communicative language teaching in Taiwan, it was very difficult to apply communicative language teaching into the actual language classroom. Since the education system was mainly exam-oriented in Taiwan, teachers put a heavy emphasis on preparing their students for the National College Entrance Examination in Taiwan. They essentially teach grammatical structures of English because the examinations largely consist of questions that assess the structural forms of the language. Just like in Zimbabwe where the first paper of the examinations looks at accuracy above meaning making. The second paper had advice that wrong grammar and wrong spellings may be penalized. The implied view was that the examinations do not promote the use of communicative language teaching approach. The end does not justify the means in this case. Therefore, ZIMSEC has to come up with a new way of assessing students at the end of their four-year course at secondary school so that the syllabus and the examination were synchronized. If this happens then probably teachers will use communicative language in their lessons.

### **5.2.3 Research Question 3: What are the Solutions to Close the Gap between Communicative Language theory and practice.**

The need for workshops, seminars and use of resource persons at school, district and provincial level as well as team teaching in the schools and district; and staff development were the most effective measures taken to develop the teachers. This all culminates to in-service training at school, cluster, district, provincial and national level. Owing to the changes that were always taking place there was need for the teachers to be innovative and for the Ministry to be abreast with new trends such that workshops could be done where teachers were kept abreast with the latest ideas. Mareva and Nyota (2012) concur that through regional education offices, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should, do thorough monitoring, ensure that teachers implement Communicative Language Teaching as stipulated in the syllabus. The Ministry could also mount workshops for teachers of English, where teachers could be sensitized or re-sensitized to the concept of Communicative Language Teaching. This could result in a standard shift from traditional methods to Communicative Language Teaching, which focuses on language in real-life situations, places emphases on meaning, discourages teacher-dominance and encourages use of learning aids from the real world, among other advantages.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

In the light of the above conclusions it was recommended that:

- The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should launch workshops and seminars for teachers of English as a second language with a focus on Communicative Language Teaching approach.
- Teachers of English should be innovative by also organising field trips for students. In these field trips students will have opportunities of interacting with real life situations so

that their functional language proficiency was improved. Such innovation will integrate school learning with reality learning. This was called eclectic teaching.

- Teachers should also create or resuscitate subject panels where the teachers could discuss challenges and solutions to make their teaching motivating and keep abreast with new trends.
- The supervisory structure of the Ministry should supervise the teaching methods being employed by the teachers to make sure they were using the recommended methods.
- ZIMSEC should come up with a new way of assessing pupils. For example, use of oral examinations as they do in French examination but the examination should not focus on pronunciation instead on how students will communicate in a given simulation of real life.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Study**

The research was carried out as a case of Beitbridge urban schools, since the problem of English competence and proficiency was of national interest, there was need for further research on the topic with a representative sample so that the results could be comprehensive.

## REFERENCES

Hornberger, N and Vaish, V. (2009). Multilingual language policy and school-linguistic practice: Globalization and English Language Teaching in India, Singapore and South Africa. *A journal of Comparative and International education* Vol 39 (3), Doi.org/ 10.1080/03057920802469663.

Ahmad (2013), *Applying Communicative Approach in Teaching English as a Foreign Language: a case Study of Pakistan*. *Porta Linguarum* 20, junio2013. Issn: 1697-7467.

Al-Magid, M.A. (2006). *The Effect of Teachers' Attitudes on Communicative Approach in ESL Classrooms*

Anseray, D. (2012). *Communicative Language Teaching in EFL Contexts: Teachers Attitudes and Perceptions in Bangladesh*. *Asa University Review* Vol 6, No. 1, Jan-June2012 pg. 61-78

Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C. And Sorenson, C. (2010). *Introduction to Research in Education*. (8th Ed) Wadsworth. Cengage Learning.

Asi, E.H. (2015). *Comparative Study of Grammar Translation (GTM) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Language Teaching Methodology*. *IJRSM. Human*. 2015; Vol1(3); 16-25.

Asif, M. (2013) *Using Literature to Address a Problem/ Issue in Writing*. *International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection*; Volume 1 (2) July 2013

Brown, H. D. (2000) *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. (4th Ed). Eaglewood Cliffs NJ; Prentice Hall.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2005). *Grammar Pedagogy in Second Foreign Language Teaching*. Vol25, No. 3, pg. 459-480. Doi: 10.2307/3586980. ([www.jstor.Org/Stable/3585980](http://www.jstor.Org/Stable/3585980))

Chang, M. (2011). EFL Teachers' attitudes towards Communicative Language Teaching in Taiwanese College. *Asian EFL journal Professional Teaching Articles* vol 53 July 2011.

Cohen, L., Manion, L, And Morrison K. (2007) *Research Methods in Education*. Routledge: New York.

Damiani, A.J. (2003). *The Grammar Translation Method of Language Teaching*. London: Longman.

Ellis, R. (2008). *Principles of Instructed Second Language Acquisitio*. CAL Digest.

Gonzalez, A. (2002). *Language Planning and Intellectualization*. *Current issues in Language Planning*. Vol.3, No. 1.

Government of Zimbabwe (1987) *Zimbabwe Education Act*, Harare. Government Printers.

Herzallah, A.A. (2011). *Professional Development Obstacles Facing Primary School Teachers in Northern Gaza*. Unpublished MA thesis. The Islamic University of Gaza.

Hu, G. (2002). *Potential Cultural Resistance to Pedagogical Imports. The Case of Communicative Language Teaching in China*. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*. Volume 15(2) 93-105.

Hushti, I. (2013). *Glossary of Language Teaching and Learning*. Beregszasz: Finland.

Ignacio and Martinez (2011)

Brown, J.D. (2003). *Promoting fluency in EFL classrooms*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual JALT Pan-Sig Conference: Kyoto.

Johnson, B. R. And Onwuegbuzie, J. A. (2004) Mixed Methods Researcher, Educational Researcher. Volume 33, (7) P 14-26

Karavas-Doukas, E. (1996). Using attitude scales to investigate teachers' attitudes to the Communicative approach. *ELT journal*, 50(3), 187-198.

Knapp, M. (2003). Professional Development as A Policy Pathway. *Review of Research in Education*. Volume 27 P 109-157

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding Language Teaching. From Method to Post Method*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers: London.

Larsen-Freeman, D and Anderson (2011). *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Li, D. (1998). It's more difficult than you plan and imagine: Teachers' perceived difficulties in introducing the communicative approach in South Korea. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(4), 677-703.

Littlewood, W. T. (1981). *Common Language Teaching. An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lucantoni, P. (2002) *Teaching and Assessing Skills in ESL*. Cambridge Cup.

Majid-Al-Humaidi, M. (2007) *Communicative Language Teaching*. King Saud University. (Retrieved from: [Hhttp:// Faculty.Ksu. Edu.Sa/Alhumaidi/Publications/ Pdf](http://Faculty.Ksu.Edu.Sa/Alhumaidi/Publications/Pdf))

Mann, S. (2005) *The Language Teacher's Development*. *Language Teaching*, Volume 28 (3), Pp 104-111.

Mareva, R. And Nyota, S. (2012) Structural or Communicative Approach; A Case Study of English as A Second Language in Masvingo Urban and Peri-Urban Secondary Schools; International Journal of English and Literature, Volume 3 (5) Pp 103-111, May 2013

Mart, C.T. (2013). The Grammar-Translation Method and The Use of Translation to Facilitate Learning in ESL Classes. Journal of Advances in English Language Teaching, Vol 1. No 4, pg. 103-105. Issn 1805-8957.

Mason, M. (2010). Sample Size and Saturation in PhD Studies Using Qualitative Interviews [63 Paragraphs]. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 11(3), Art. 8, [Http://Nbn-Resolving.De/Urn:Nbn:De:0114-Fqs100387](http://Nbn-Resolving.De/Urn:Nbn:De:0114-Fqs100387).

Meyer, J. (2000). Using Qualitative Methods in Health Related Action Research. BMJ 2000:320:178.

Mvududu, N and Thiel- Burges, J. (2012). Constructivism in Practice: The Case for English Language Learners. International Journal of Education, 4 (3), 108-118.DOI: 10.5296/ije.v4i3.2223.

Ngwaru, C. (2012) Pre-Service Student Teacher Practices in The Teaching of English as A Second Language; Experiences, Challenges. Greener Journals of Education Research. Volume 3 (7) Pp 310-317 September 2013

Paul, Z. (2007). English Language Imperialism: Points of View. Journal of English as an International Language. April 2007, Vol 1, pg. 103-123.

Postlewaite, T.N. (2005) Educational Research: Some Basic Concepts and Terminology. (<http://www.Unseco.Org/Iiep>)

Rao, K.V. (2004). *Methods of Teaching English*. Neelkamal Publication: Hyderabad.

Rao, Z. (2013). *Teaching English as A Foreign Language in China. Looking Back and Forward. Reconciling Modern Methodologies with Traditional Ways of Language Teaching*. *English Today*. Volume 29(3) 34-39 September 2013.

Richards J.C. (2006) *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. Cambridge University Press: New York.

Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. And Farrell, T. S. (2005). *Professional Development for Language Teachers*. New York: Cambridge University Press

Richards, J. C. And Rogers, T. (2007). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*: Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J.C. And Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching (2nd Ed)* Cambridge University Press: New York.

Tyler, W. (2008). *Nature of Learning Activities*. *Review of Educational Research*, Vol1, No. 1, pg. 22-29

Walia, D.N. (2012). *Traditional Teaching Methods Vs CLT: A Study*. *Frontiers of Language and Teaching*, Vol 3.

Walliman, N. (2006) *Social Research Methods*. London, Sage



Wamalwa, E. J. and Wamalwa, E.W. (2014) Towards The Utilization of Institutional Media for Effective Teaching and Learning of English in Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*. Volume 5 (31) 2014

Wong, X. (2010) Reflection On the Notion of Culture Teaching. USA, China, *Foreign Language* Volume 6 (1) 49-53.

Yule, G. (2000). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Zainuddin, (2011). *Fundamentals of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages in K-12 Mainstream Classrooms* (3rd ed). New York: Kendall Hunt Publishers.

ZIMSEC (2013-2017) *English Language Syllabus* (1122). Government Printers: Harare.

## **APPENDIX**

### **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. What is your understanding of communicative English language teaching?
2. What are the challenges faced in using communicative language teaching?
3. What are the solutions that can be used to close the gap between communicative language theory and practice in lessons?