MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED EDUCATION

TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCES IN THE TEACHING OF ORAL COMMUNICATION AT ORDINARY LEVEL WITH REFERENCE TO SADZA CLUSTER IN CHIKOMBA DISTRICT

MUTARA CHARITY

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DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR UNDERGRADUATE BACHELOR OF EDUCATION DEGREE IN ENGLISH

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GWERU, ZIMBABWE

APPROVAL FORM

THE UNDERSIGNED CERTIFY THAT THEY HAVE SUPERVISED ANDDRECOMMENDED FOR THE ACCEPTSNCE, A RESEARCH PROJECT ENTILTLED TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCES IN THE TEACHING OF ORAL COMMUNICATION AT ORDINARY LEVEL WITH REFERENCE TO SADZA CLUSTER IN CHIKOMBA DISTRICT. THIS WAS SUBMITTED BY MUTARA CHARITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BACHELOR OF EDUCATION DEGREE IN ENGLISH (MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY).

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(Signature of supervisor) Date

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(Signature of Co-ordinator) Date

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(Signature of Chairperson) Date

DEDICATION

To my only child Kimberly.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the teachers' understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication in English at O' Level in Sadza Cluster in Chikomba District. The study was necessitated by the need to know the teachers' understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication in English. A qualitative research design premised on phenomenology was used for it enabled the researcher to get current and on the ground information of teachers' understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication at O' Level. The population comprised of all English teacher from each of the 7 schools in Sadza Cluster. Purposive sampling was used to select English teachers who were interviewed. All the seven teachers participated in this study by answering interview question. The researcher used interview guides and biographical data to collect data from the teachers. The study revealed that pupils need to be exposed to resource materials and engaged in interactive activities to enhance their oral proficiency.

The teachers acknowledged that they rarely concentrated on the teaching of oral communication as it was no tested or examined at O' Level. Teachers were using structural teaching methods as they wanted to enhance pupils' writing skills in preparation for the final written examination, thereby ignoring oral skills. The researcher thus recommended that the curriculum should include oral tests at O' Level and that teachers should be eclectic in their selection of teaching method in order to produce students who have both oral and written English proficiency. The researcher also recommended that pupils should be taught oral communication starting at lower levels.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CLT – Communicative Language Teaching

DM – Direct Method

ALM – Audio- Lingual Method

GTM – Grammar Translation Method

ZIMSEC – Zimbabwe School Examination Council

SLA – Second Language Acquisition

ESL – English as a Second Language

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CHAPTER 1:

1.1 Introduction

Teaching approaches are essential components of teaching and learning process in English language. The teaching approach or method adopted by the teacher has an effective impact on pupils' performance in English Language. Azam (2005) reports that a number of researches have been carried out in the use of Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, Audio-lingual and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and how effective these methods are to the teaching of oral communication and development of pupils' communicative competence. This study looked at the teachers' understanding and experiences of the teaching of oral communication in English Language. The study identified pupils' challenges in oral communication in other words lack of communicative competence in secondary schools in Sadza Cluster in Chikomba District.

1.2 Background of the study

According to Nunan (2000) teaching methods are fundamental aspects to the teaching and learning of language. Brown (2000) asserts that a teaching method imply the way a learning experience is conducted, this is built from the behaviour of the teacher and strategy chosen to ensure that planned learning outcomes are achieved. The methods commonly used are Grammar Translation method (GTM), Direct Method (DM), Audio- Lingual method (ALM) and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Mukwa and Too (2002) asserts that an effective teacher is one who uses a variety of approaches in order to meet the needs of students. Always using a particular approach poses danger to the learning outcomes of your pupils, for they tend to be restricted to a narrow band. Pupils may become high achievers in one aspect of the language for example written language(linguistic competence) whilst lacking what Waddowsonin Fotos (2001)refer to as language use, that is an understanding of

which sentences, parts of sentences or utterances are appropriate to use in a particular context. Azam (2005) reported that some learners can communicate well in written language but prove to be incompetent when it comes to oral and social situation. There is need therefore for the English Language teachers to wisely choose teaching methods that will enhance pupils' ability to express themselves both orally and in writing.

1.3 Statement of the problem.

Most O' Level students express linguistic (written) competence but struggle to express themselves orally (interaction). Some students who are doing well in written language for example compositions, spellings and summary writing are struggling to communicate orally. Most pupils have challenges in communicating with their peers, teachers in fluent English and also their pathetic performances in Debate competitions and other speaking contests. These pupils lack what Hymes (1972) refers to as communicative competence. This was seen as being effected as a result of the teaching and learning methods they have been exposed to as well as affective factors. Mukwa and Too (2002) purport that a teaching approach or strategy imply the way a learning experience is conductedand has impact on students'perfomance in the subject matter.

1.4 Rationale

Being a secondary school teacher in Chikomba district and also being the teacher in- charge of public speaking at the school where I teach, I have observed that struggle to express themselves orally. When adjudicating public speaking competitions I had a chance to notice pupils' different levels of proficiency. Most pupils lacked the ability to participate in Language related functions for example debate, drama and quiz competitions because they lacked what Luccantoni (2000) referred to as the ability to use English effectively for purposes of practical communication. This phenomenon gave fertile ground for the researcher

to try and find out how oral communication in English is being taught at O' Level in Zimbabwe using Sadza Cluster in Chikomba District.

1.5 Significance of study

This study will inform teachers and government policy markers on the need to integrate various teaching methods in the teaching of English Language towards enhancing both linguistic and communicative competences in O' Level. The researcher's passion is to inform teachers of English Language on aspects related to teaching and learning of English as a second Language (ESL) with particular attention to oral communication. The researcher also aims at enlightening teachers on the advantages and disadvantages of some teaching methods to oral communicative competence.

1.6 Research objectives

This research seeks to:

- Find out teachers' experience and understanding of the teaching of oral communication in English Language at O' Level.
- Establish factors affecting students' communicative competence.
- Find out the strategies of improving pupils' proficiency in English Language.

1.7 Research questions

i. What methods and strategies are mostly used by teachers in the teaching of oral communication in O' Level English Language?

ii. What affects pupils' English communicative competence (proficiency)?

iii. What do the teachers' of English Language think can be done to improve pupils' communicative competence?

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Approach

According to Brown (2000) an approach refers to a theoretically well-informed positions and beliefs about the nature of language learning and the applicability of both to pedagogical settings. It defines assumptions, beliefs and theories about the nature of language and language learning.

Method

Richard and Rodgers (2000) assert that a method refers to a generalized set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistic objectives. It is concerned primarily with teacher and student roles and behaviours and secondarily with such features as linguistic and subject matter objectives, sequencing and materials to meet the needs of a designated group of learners in a defined context. It includes approach, design and procedures.

Technique

According to Brown (2000) a technique is a variety of wide variety of exercises, activities or tasks in language classroom for realizing lesson objectives. It can be defined as a plan of action intended to accomplish lesson or learning outcomes.

Linguistic competence

Nunan (2000) contends that linguistic competence is the knowledge about rules and principals that govern the structure of a language.

Communicative competence

According to Brown (2000) communicative competence was introduced by Dell Hymes in the 1970s. He argued that besides having grammatical knowledge about a language a social

and functional aspect of language are equally important. Communicative competence enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific context. This enables us to express opinions, argue, complain, debate and apologize among other functions.

Oral communication

Jay (2015) contends that oral communication is the process of verbally communicating information and ideas from one individual or group to another. This can be formal or informal for example face- to- face conversation, telephone conversation, presentations, classroom discussions and public speaking among other conversations.

1.9 DELIMITATIONS

The study was confined to secondary schools in Sadza Cluster in Chikomba District. Its attention was on O' Level English Language teaching approaches. The research sought to utilize responses from teachers only and not pupils as well since pupils are part of the problem experienced.

1.10 LIMITATIONS.

The study was restricted to only seven schools in Sadza Cluster in Chikomba East District; therefore the findings could not be generalized to the entire country. The study was also specific to this social context while pupils in Chikomba District had communication challenges others elsewhere did quite well in both oral and written English.

1.11 Organisation of the study

The study was organised into 5 chapters. Each chapter provides a specific aspect of the study. The content of each chapter is briefly explained below.

Chapter 1

This chapter is the orientation chapter it gives the reader an introduction of what to expect in the research report. This chapter covers; background of the study, statement of the problem, rationale of the study, significance of the study, research objectives and research questions. It also covers delimitations of the study, limitations of the study and definition of terms.

Chapter 2

This chapter consists of a review of related literature.

Chapter 3

This chapter deals with research methodology, design, instruments, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection procedures, data analysis, ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

Chapter 4

This chapter presents data, analyses and discusses data collected in order to find answers to the research questions.

Chapter 5

This chapter is the final chapter of the study which gives the summary of the study, draws conclusion based on the research findings and makes recommendations for further research.

1.11 Summary

This chapter has introduced the topic, the statement of the problem, given the background to the study, significance of study and indicated the research questions and objectives.It also gave an organisation of the study. Review of literature related to this study will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2:

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the exposition and discussion of the issues by authors and researchers pertaining to what they found out in the teaching of oral communication in English Language. Literature on teaching methods like the Grammar-Translation method, Direct method, Audio-Lingual and the Communicative Language Teaching will be explored. This section will also discuss the implications of each of these approaches to the teaching and learning of English as a second language (ESL). The chapter will outline the implications of each of the teaching method to communicative competence or oral communication. The issues will be discussed under the following subheadings; Importance of oral communicative competence, Factors that affect oral communicative competence and Methods of teaching oral communication.

2.2 Importance of oral communicative competence

Yao (2011) opines that the teaching of communication is important as it prepares students to better communicate and enter into a dialogue with peers and for further learning. He also argues that it prepares students for various professional environments and develops communication skills that are important for use after school. Brown (2001) is of the same opinion with Yao, he argues that oral communication takes form of speech either formal or informal and it helps people to improve their own academic performance, increase employment opportunities and professional success.

In addition to this Purwita (2002) argues that oral communication is important throughout one's lifetime. It is so vital because in school learners are expected to give well argued and

presented oral answers when attempting to answer teacher's questions as part of the teaching-learning process and also to participate in group discussions. M'mbore (2015) researched on interactive methods in developing oral communicative competence in learners of English and concluded that oral communication is important in and out of school and it is the teacher's duty to ensure learner's oral proficiency.

2.3 FACTORS THAT AFFECT ORAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

2.3.1 Teaching methods

A research by Purwita(2002) revealed that teaching methods are crucial in the development of oral communication skills in learners especially in second language. Research revealed that for oral communicative skills to be instilled in learners teaching methods should fulfil certain functions like providing opportunities for learners to be practical in language use encourage accuracy and development of proficiency. In agreement with Purwita, Inbaraj (2002) argues that in order to enhance students' oral communication skills, teachers should use methods that provide opportunities for students to practice this skill during class. Students may engage in activities that pose real life use of language thereby developing communicative competence. Yao (2011) suggests that discussion based pedagogy is an available and valuable method that can improve students communication skills during the course.

In line with the above is Wilder in Cohen (2000) who argued that teaching methods for teaching oral communication should provide resources and opportunities for students to practice oral communication outside of the classroom.

2.3.2 Motivation

Stephen Krashen (1982) has developed *The Affective Filter Hypothesis* to account for the effects of affective variables on second language acquisition. He argues that affective variables can act as a mental block, also termed affective filter and prevent comprehensible input to be absorbed. When the learner is unmotivated and lacks confidence the affective filter goes up.Krashen also argues that when the filters are down for example when the learner is motivated learning takes place.

According to Morreale (2007) the desire to speak is influenced by both apprehension and willingness to initiate a communication. These variables may vary with the type of communication involved; some people may be strained to engage in public speaking whereas they feel very comfortable in small group interaction.

Wang and Duo (2013) researched on affective factors in oral English teaching and learning and reported that motivation is probably important for successful language learning. Teachers teaching effectiveness can be exhibited by their skills in motivating learners. They go on to assert that proper motivation will draw learners attention and arouse their interests to learn, thus they are more likely to succeed in language learning .Wang and Duo also comment that high motivation and positive attitude might encourage learners to participate more in class activities and oral practices which in turn results in greater success in their language proficiency and competence in language learning speaking skill.

- **Implications to teachers**

Robin et al in Wang (2005) purports that motivation is so important in language learning and teachers should pay more attention to make activities and materials, exciting, stimulating and interesting to learners to enhance their motivation. In addition, the teacher have to be very

concerned about the attitude students bring to language learning, assisting in reversing any negative attitudes and inculcate positive attitude toward the target language, target culture and the language learning process.

According to Brown (2000) language should be acquired in a meaningful way. Yao (2011) agrees with Brown and mentions the importance of using exercises in the foreign language classroom that are useful to the pupils outside school. Yao points out the advantage of letting the pupils practise oral communication through role plays saying that this goes a long way in motivating pupils in speaking using the target language.

2.3.3 Self confidence

Hyde in Brown (2000) professes that self confidence involves judgements and evaluations about one's value and worth. If a learner thinks negatively about himself or herself the his or her self-confidence becomes negatively influenced. On the other hand, high self confidence can be positively correlated with oral performance.

According to Baker and Westrup (2003) every human being has some extent of self confidence, self esteem and belief in one's own abilities in carrying on one's own task, this, however may vary from person to person. Man has a concept of self from experiences with themselves and others and the external environment that surrounds them. This implies that a sense of self esteem may be derived from comparing and matching the self in relation with the others and the external world. Brown (2000) argues that self confidence is influences to students' willingness to communicate in English. Park and Lee (2005) also examined the relationship between second language learners' anxiety, self confidence and oral performance and reported that self confidence affected significantly on second language learners oral performance. They stated that if the learners were confident, they would have better oral performance.

❖ **Implications to teachers**

Xiang (2003) is of the view that it is essential that language teachers use teaching methods and techniques that enhance learners' self worth and value. He further advices that teachers should make students aware that making mistakes shows evidence of learning that is taking place. Errors should also be allowed in the whole process of learning oral English to help students elevate their self confidence. Xiang also argues that correcting pupils' mistakes immediately and directly often makes students feel; embarrassed or lose face in front of the whole class will do harm to their self confidence. On the other hand encouraging comments can help students achieve a sense of fulfilment and improvement and to learn from their own errors.

2.3.4 Self- esteem

Brown (2000) asserts that there is a relationship between self esteem and learners' willingness to communicate in the target language. A high willingness corresponds with a high level of communicative ability. Brown argues that self esteem is stimulated by a classroom climate where pupils accept each other. According to Stephen Krashen's*Affective Filter Hypothesis* language acquisition will happen in an environment where anxiety is low.

Brown (2002) claims that no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degrees of self- esteem, self confidence, knowledge of yourself and belief in your own capabilities for the activity. Learners with high self esteem are more confident give more positive evaluations on themselves which will promote their language learning. Some students fail in oral English language learning or feel less willing and confident to speak in class because they have low self esteem. Some pupils feel frustrated unwanted and confused because they lack self confidence. Such students in most cases give negative statements about themselves which will in turn bring about negative effects on their oral English learning.

❖ **Implications to teachers**

Hao and Hao (2001) suggest that teachers should put effort to enhance students' self esteem in oral English practice. Teachers are encouraged to consider that every learner needs to be respected, valued and appreciated. Teachers ought to ensure that pupils have high self esteem by convincing them that they are capable, significant and worthy. Teachers are also encouraged to try and build a relaxing learning environment to lower the learners' anxiety. Teachers ought to treat students equally in order to enhance their self esteem. They also have to be tolerant of pupils' errors. Xiang (2005) agrees with Hao and Hao that high self- esteem corresponds with high oral communication competence and argues that inspiring words and comments go a long way in overcoming students' low self esteem and negative anxiety.

2.4 METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS TO ORAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE.

2.4.1 The Grammar Translation Approach

i. Background

According to Larsen- Freeman, (2000) this is the most traditional approach. This method is mostly concerned with knowing the language. Rules pertaining to the target language are explicitly taught. Richards and Rodgers (2002) comment that rules are applied together with translation to and from mother tongue and the target language. Research by Mareva and Nyota (2012) has evidence that teachers using this approach will be concerned much with making learners write correct grammar, error free essays, correct spellings among other rules.

ii. Principles of Grammar Translation method

Saraswathi (2004) posits that the Grammar- Translation method focuses greatly on accuracy and is intolerant towards errors hence they focus entirely on form than meaning. In this approach vocabulary and grammar are controlled. Accuracy in pronunciation and grammar are considered vital. Larsen-Freeman (2000) purports that the approach aims at fostering linguistic competence. Under the Grammar translation approach, more emphasis is placed on written language with little attention paid to speech. Teachers using this approach hence put main focus to reading and writing skills at the expense of speech and listening skills. Perfection in grammar is fostered through repetition, memorization, and drill practise. A research by Mareva and Nyota (2012) discovered that in the classroom where this approach is used, set of grammatical rules have to be memorized.

iii. Implications to oral communication

According to Harman (2010) the Grammar Translation approach however tend to impact negatively on learners communicative competence since linguistic knowledge (knowledge of the spellings and construction of sentences) seem not to contribute much to the use of language in context. Harman also argues that this approach hence develops learners' linguistics competence (writing and reading skills) at the expense of the use of language in real situations (context) like debates, apologies, greeting among other functions. When the teacher employs the Grammar-translation approach there will be limited interaction among learners. Yasin (2012) opines that lack of interaction means that the learner has little confidence in language use and it takes away constructive nature that is provided by the process of negotiation of meaning. A research by Mareva and Nyota (2012) revealed that the explicit grammar teaching affects pupil's proficiency for they will end up knowing about the

language, writing correct spellings and grammatically correct sentences but lacking the ability to use English language proficiently.

Liu (2007) argues that regardless of the severe attacks levelled against the Grammar-Translation approach is still widely practised. A research by Sultana (2004) revealed that due to long experience in former Grammar Translation method, teachers feel comfortable to teach in that method. Khader (2013) researched on the implementation of the communicative language teaching (CLT) and discovered that it was done so by fits and starts since most teachers felt constrained by the system under which they operated. Teachers acknowledged that they teach in settings which are particularly exam focused where the best method to teach ESL is the Structural approach and its related methods. Collins (1999) in Warwick (2001) contends that because of the continuing emphasis in preparation for examination, conversation classes tend to be perceived as being of less value to the students. This approach prepares pupils for the written tests and examinations. Warwick (2001) reports that the Grammar Translation method seems to be continuing in use especially where the examination is based on grammar and written language. Grammar translation approach creates pupils interested to gain credits rather than to learn the language.

A research by Khader (2013) reveals that most teachers teach to the examination where the curriculum is examination oriented. This hampers the creation of an English speaking environment, for pupils rarely use English outside the classroom or even during the lessons. Khader (2013) claims that students end up knowing the lexical items and linguistic rules as a means of passing an examination. Students hence struggle to acquire linguistic competence in writing, spelling, punctuation and construction in order to pass examinations. Pupils tend to know about the rules of grammar at the expense of being able to use the language in real communicative events. Khader also asserts that Students' worry becomes passing the test or examination. Recommendations should be made to put in place a system which integrates

both linguistic and communicative competences. ZIMSEC (2013) stipulates that the English Language examination are aptitude tests which are comprehensive written tests consisting of grammatical items, reading comprehension, writing essays, letter and paragraphs . There is no room for examining speaking and listening (Akter, 2003). Written tests neglect the necessity of testing ones' pronunciation, listening ability and communicative competence.

A research carried out by Mareva et al (2012) on the use of the Structural or the Communicative approaches revealed that although the ZIMSEC O'Level English Language syllabus advocates the communicative approach to the teaching of English Language in Zimbabwe teachers preferred the use of the structural approach related methods and focus was on grammatical structures, memorization and there was no tolerance for errors. The teachers acknowledged that their preoccupation was to ensure pupils' accuracy and that the teacher should dominate the learning process. Mareva et al (2012) went on to discover that approaches like the grammar- translation led to the development of pupils' linguistic competence. Learners can end up writing correct spellings, construct grammatical sentences but struggle to use the language in context. Such learners lack what Chomsky (1972) in Naughton (2004) referred to as "communicative competence"

Lui (2007) found out that in spite of the flaws levelled against the Grammar –Translation approach, however it helps raise the learners' conscious awareness of the form and structure of the target language, making use of the First language as a reference system. Thinking about the formal features of the Second Language and translation as a practice puts the learner into an active problem solving situation. Regardless of its shortcomings; hence, the Grammar-Translation approach prepares the learner for actual language use. Hedge (2000) has the same opinion with Lui that the learner needs basic knowledge of the language system (grammar and vocabulary) which should then provide the essential basis for communicative behaviour when the learner finds himself or herself in a situation which requires him to use

the language communicatively. Ishraq (2012) carried an experimental research on the effect of using Grammar Translation on acquiring English as a foreign language and reported that there is a positive effect of using GTM.

iv. Common techniques

Larsen- Freeman (2000) purports that common techniques closely linked to the GTM are:

1. Translation of literary passage
2. Reading comprehension questions that is reading information in a passage, making inference and relating to personal experiences
3. Finding antonyms and synonyms for words or set of words.
4. Learning spelling or sound patterns that correspond between L1 and the target language.
5. Fill in the blanks in sentences with new items of a particular grammar type.
6. Memorization of vocabulary, grammatical rules and paradigms.
7. Use of words in sentences by creating own sentences.
8. Composition writing using the target language.
9. Dictation
10. Imitations.

2.4.2 DIRECT METHOD

i. Background

According to Richards and Rodgers (2007) there was desperate need to develop oral proficiency in foreign languages. Pandergast and Sauveur proposed natural method to serve purposes of trade, commerce, business and travel between the different European countries

and this was later developed into the Direct Method. Rao et al (2010) assert that this method was developed to address some of the shortcomings of the Grammar- translation method.

ii. Principles of the Direct Method

Larsen- Freeman (2000) argues that language is primarily speech and classroom instruction and activities are carried out in the target language. Students are therefore actively involved in using English Language. Conversational activities are essential in the direct Method. Through using language in real contexts, learners get a chance of thinking and speaking in English. This is in tandem with Brown (2008) who asserts that it represents the collection of teaching methods whish use the target language (English) as a medium of instruction. Students learn better by listening to a great deal of the target language (English) and they learn speaking by associating speech with appropriate action. Learners are not explicitly taught rules of grammar but they rather induce the rules of their language from using it in actual communicative situations. There is no need for translation from mother tongue to English language. Lessons are strictly carried .out in English.

Fotos (2001) argues that in Direct Method teacher does not explicitly explain the rules of grammar to the pupils, nor attempt to correct any errors that the learners might make during the process. The learners have to induce the grammar of the language themselves. This approach hence enhances creativity and rules of grammar are learnt in a natural way.

Bhatia and Bhatia in Willis and Willis (2001) opine that the Direct Method emphasizes thinking in English and discourages practise of inwardly thinking in vernacular and then translating the thought into English language. Pupils should rather be able to understand what they hear or reads in English and should be able to express their thought and wishes directly

and proficiently so that in due course of time they acquire a real command over the language. The more they use the language in communication the more they become proficient.

A research by Gazu (2006) presented that the use of the Direct method implies that learners will learn English words, phrases for objects and actions in classroom. When these could be used readily and appropriately learning moved to the common situations and settings of everyday life miming, visuals and explanations in English language. This approach implies that teachers have to make use of visuals like charts or pictures to enhance learners' understanding of English Language.

Rao, Kanta and Kanthi (2010) contend that in this approach grammar is taught implicitly. Pupils are exposed to lots and lots of English language samples and it is believed that the learners will eventually understand the rules inductively. This method encourages the situational use of English and considers meaningful sentences at the core.

iii. Implications to oral communication.

Cagri (2013) researched on benefits of using the Direct Method to teach communication in the target language and reported that the use of communication strategies highly contributes to oral proficiency in target language. The Direct Method in the teaching of English Language enhances communicative competence. The ultimate goal of this approach is to develop learners' ability to think in English whether conversing, reading or writing.

According to Rao (2004) when the Direct Method is used there is marked increase in teacher-pupil interaction. The teacher does not dominate the classroom activities during the lesson. The Direct approach focuses on speaking, and listening skills which are of practical use to the learner in real communication situation thereby enhancing learners' communicative competence. Sakui (2005) agrees with Rao and attests that using the Direct Method enhances

learners' communicative ability of interpretation, expression and negotiation. The Direct method develops real command of English language and facilitates the understanding of English established by a direct association between words and their meanings. It enhances fluency of speech and efficiency in writing. It represents a radical shift from literary language to the day to day spoken language as the object of language teaching and learning.

A research by Inbaraj (2008) revealed that the Direct approach requires the use of media. This research also revealed that although the Direct method improves communicative competence it has strained implementation. Some teachers were said to have felt restrained in the application of the approach due to limited resources. There is need for adequate resources like audio-visual aids; pictures, overhead transparencies, audio tapes, videos, computers and these should be fully utilized. The other restrain was that of bigger class sizes. Bigger classes are challenges to teacher – pupil interaction and therefore hamper the effectiveness of the Direct method. The teacher using this approach assumes the role of a facilitator who guides pupils' development of effective learning habits. The class therefore ought to be of a reasonable size for effective interaction and effective monitoring of pupils activities.

According to Larsen-Freeman (2000) the disadvantages of the Direct Method are that it does not consider all aspects of language teaching that is it emphasizes speech and ignores reading, writing and listening. The main drawback of the Direct method is that it requires much of the teacher's proficiency.

iv. Common techniques of the Direct Method

Larsen – Freeman (2000) argues that techniques common in the Direct approach include reading aloud, question and answer, self correction, conversation practise, fill in the blank exercises, dictation and paragraph writing.

2.4.3 THE AUDIO- LINGUAL APPROACH

i. Background

According to Brown (2000) the Audio- Lingual method was developed in the USA during the World War II when the Americans realised the necessity of teaching languages to their army in order to have communication with their allies or with their enemies. This method was the Army method and it was later developed to the Audio- Lingual method. This entailed that language was to be learnt in its spoken form first, even before the graphic form was introduced. The method put accent on the acquisition of oral language skills through oral practice based on repetition and analogy.

ii. Principles of the Audio- Lingual Method

Nunan (2003) asserts that the Audio- Lingual method is strongly influenced by the belief that the fluent use of a language is essentially a set of habits which could be developed with a lot of practice. Language is presented in spoken form before the written form. The techniques of the direct approach include dialogue, repetition and memorization.

Bygate (2000) contends that the Audio-Lingual method is based on the principle that that in relation to the four skills speaking, listening, writing and reading, one has to first listen, speak, read and finally write. This approach enhances the integration of the four skills of speaking, writing, reading and listening; hence producing a round language learner. This approach if carefully employed can produce pupils with both linguistic and communicative competence.

A research by Gazu (2006) revealed that the Audio-lingual approach put the practical emphasis on “oral” practice of English language. The real goal when using this approach is to enhance learners’ ability to speak the language and not only know about it. The Audio-

lingual Method is when learners spend prolonged periods in a language laboratory repeating oral drills. It can be achieved if students may have access to technologies like audio- visual devices, listening laboratories, computer assisted language devices, CD and DVD systems. The method depends much the use of machines and machines are unnatural and cannot replace teachers. Machines make language learning a controlled and artificial process.

Larsen- Freeman (2002) comments that Audio-Lingual learning places emphasis on teaching of linguistic structure through dialogues and drills. The approach can be effective means when teaching communication and register by using dialogues and role plays. A typical lesson in Audio-Lingual methods usually commences with a dialogue based on a particular communicative event or speech act. The whole class is the given an order to repeat the lines of the dialogue for several times.

iii. Implications to oral communication

A research by Bygate (2000) revealed that teaching English speaking using Audio-Lingual method as an alternative method of teaching process is a good way to be applied in the junior high school to improve their ability in speaking.

A research by Purwita (2007) on the use of Audio-Lingual teaching as an alternative teaching method using an action research revealed that this approach is the effective method because it increases students' enthusiasm in learning English. It is an approach squarely at communicative competence. Bushra (2001) commends the Audio- Lingual Method as a fairly effective language teaching method because learners get to practise language associated with real life communicative situations for example complaining, debating, arguing, interrogating, apologising among other functions.

According to Haycroft (2002) using the Audio-Lingual approach makes students become confident and motivates them to learn the language because of the teaching aids and materials used in the classroom along with the provision of the teacher's reinforce.

Ninik (2012) carried out a survey on the implementation of the Audio-Lingual approach in teaching English and found out that the approach was appropriate to learners because it made students easier to memorizing words and teachers faced challenges like limited time, motivation of the students and difficult capabilities of students was another drawback to the implementation of the Audio- Lingual approach.

2.4.4. COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

i. **Background**

According to Brown(2000) the communicative approach came to existence in the late 1970s and early 1980s and the late 1980s and 1990s saw the development of approaches that highlighted the fundamentally communicative properties of language and classrooms were increasingly characterised by authenticity, real- world simulation and meaningful tasks. The communicative language teaching is a fairly recent teaching approach.

ii. Principles of the Communicative Language Teaching.

According to Brown (2000) Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is based on the view that the function of language should be the major concern than its form (correct grammatical or phonological structure). It is focused at fostering communicative competence, as compared to linguistic and grammatical competence. Sakui (2003) researched on the perceptions of

teachers about the communicative approach and revealed that many teachers suggested that the basic goal of Communicative language teaching is to be able to exchange message in English without paying too much attention to the details or linguistic forms. Similar to Sakui is a research by Jelena (2011) showed that many teachers suggested that the basic goal of communicative teaching is to be able to exchange message in English without paying too much attention to details or linguistic forms.

Hiep (2005) argues that the Communicative approach is not worried about errors. Errors are tolerated as being useful to both the teacher and the learners. Errors are useful to the teacher because they help him or her to access the extent to which learners have learnt the language. Errors are also important to the pupils because they evaluate their own levels of competence and help them to keep on practising until they master the language.

Mareva and Nyota (2012) reported that the Zimbabwe Examination Council (ZIMSEC) advocates for an approach which is intended to provide pupils with the communication skills necessary for the different roles and situations which they are likely to find themselves after leaving school. ZIMSEC English language syllabus aims at making the learning of English language more functional and purposeful. In other words there is encouragement for the use of the communication approach in English Language classrooms. Teachers have to be experienced and innovate enough so as to motivate students through communicative activities such as group work, discuss debates and appreciate oral performance with the motive to build an English-speaking environment both in the classroom and outside the classroom.

iii. **Implications to oral communication.**

A research by Mareva and Nyota (2012) revealed that the Communicative approach is effective in enhancing students' competence in language functions such as greeting, criticising, arguing, inviting and disagreeing. The approach allows opportunities in the classroom in the classroom for students to engage in real-life communication in English. Richards and Rodgers (2001) attest that in communicative learning language is viewed as a communicative tool. It encourages outside world to be brought into the classroom so that the learners would acquire the language naturally, that is communicating to get things done or the message across. Luccantoni (2002) asserts that Communicative learning is learner-centred because the learner finds himself or herself in a situation where he or she has to communicate meaning. The approach is effective in developing students' proficiency in English language.

According to Nunan (2008) learners are expected not so much to produce correct sentences or to be accurate as with grammar translation approach. Learners are expected to be capable of communicating and being fluent. Classroom language learning is thus integrated to real life communication outside its bounds. If teachers use this approach they foster students' ability to produce spontaneous language outside the immediate classroom.

Saraswathi (2005) recommended educators to use the communicative approach after, finding out that teachers felt that students were not learning enough realistic and whole language. The learners did not know how to communicate, using appropriate social language, gestures and expressions. These students are at a loss to communication in the culture of the language and result speakers who are good in English correspond with a foreigner very smoothly but lacking communicative competence.

Khader (2012) researched on the implementation of the communicative approach and commented that communication skills are difficult to evaluate. Much work and research need

to be done to design tests that evaluate communication. Though the curricula recommend the use of CLT in classrooms, students are predominantly tested on grammar in their formal assessment.

Lui(2007) contends that communicative teaching does not ignore the role of grammar in the process of language learning. CLT insists that grammar rules are useless unless they are applied to real life situation. Students need to know both meaning and function of English Language. The implication therefore is that CLT takes into account all the basic linguistic skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing and also conversational skills. In other words grammar instruction complements communicative language teaching.

Akram and Mehmood (2011) report an experimental study conducted to know the importance of introducing the communicative approach in ELT in teacher training commented that CLT enhances the learner's confidence and it gives a sense of satisfaction to the to the teachers as well as on the sense that he or she is successful in making the students use the foreign language in conversation. CLT is better than all the other teaching methods in general because it establishes a direct link between the experience and the expression.

Saeed (2013) carried out an experimental study to investigate the comparative usefulness of GTM and CLT approaches in teaching English at the intermediate level. The research involved investigation of the teachers' perceptions of CLT approach and their drawbacks in implementing CLT in higher secondary level. The researcher observed that the traditionally used GTM is not producing desired results for it only makes learners experts in language in its written form at the expense of the communicative form. He recommended the use of CLT because it links between what students learn in the classroom and their real life situation.

Larsen – Freeman (2000) professes that the Communicative approach integrates the Grammar Translation, Audio- lingual method and many others in an attempt to make communication in English as easy as possible.

iv. Common techniques of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

Lakshmi (2013) argues that classroom activities should be in such a way that they encourage real life situations. Strategies in CLT may include solving problems, dialogues, discussions, role plays and debates. Those strategies are motivating because pupils are encouraged to cooperate or participate.

Haycroft (2002) purports that CLT involves teaching using four language modes, reading should involve: comprehension, exercises, summary writing, and composition. Listening exercises should also involve but a limited teachers' reading. Group discussions and debates are also some of the techniques involved.

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter has reviewed literature related to aspects related to oral communication proficiency. The different teaching methods have been discussed looking at their background, principals, common techniques and impacts to oral communication proficiency. Each and every method has its strength and weakness and hence teachers ought to choose a teaching method that will ensure that objectives are achieved. It has been revealed that some teaching methods affect pupils' English proficiency and that teachers have different understanding or perceptions of teaching approaches. The next chapter is going to look at methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 3:

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study is about teachers' understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication in English at Ordinary Level. This Chapter will outline and discuss the research design and methodologies to be used. The research design and methodology to be used will be based on the aims of this study as introduced in Chapter 1. The Chapter will be organised under the following subheadings; Research design, Research instruments, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection procedures, data analysis, ethical considerations and summary.

3.2 Research design

This study adopted a qualitative research design drawing largely on phenomenology. Denzig and Lincoln (2000) phenomenology is a qualitative research design which is best suited for an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon with its situational context. This study aimed at investigating the teachers understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication in English Language. It also aimed to see the factors affecting pupils' oral communicative competence and establish how the teaching method that teachers mostly use influence pupils' proficiency (communicative competence).

According to Cresswell (2003)phenomenology aims at describing a person's lived experiences in an attempt to enrich lived experiences by drawing out its meaning. This is also in agreement with Donalek (2004) who asserts that phenomenology examines human experiences through the descriptions provided by the people involved. Drawing from this line of thought, the researcher adopted this qualitative research design because the study sought to

explore and understand the lived experiences the teachers in teaching oral communication at O' Level.

Yin (2000) argues that phenomenological qualitative research design is the best because it produces deeper understanding of the nature of the meaning of everyday experiences through in-depth interviews to elicit their own meaning of their experiences. The researcher chose a qualitativedesign because the main objective was to explore teachers understanding and experiences of the teaching of oral communication and in-depth(semi structured) interviews enabled the researcher to elicit rich and in- depth understanding of their experiences. Yin also recommended the use of this design as he argues that the actual meaning of a situation or phenomena is better explored through the experiences of the participants as described by them.Because the primary source of data is the experiences of the participant, the researcher used in-depth interviews as means of data collection as they were appropriate means of getting information about teachers understanding and experiences of the teaching of oral communication at O' Level.

In addition Green and Thorogood (2004) comment on the advantages of qualitative research and profess that it enables the researcher to understand people and the social cultural context within which they live and it also gives insights into the understanding of human behaviour.Adopting a qualitative research enabled the researcher to get deep understanding of the teachers' understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication. It also helped the researcher understand why teachers use structural teaching methods in teaching English at O' Level.

This study employed the qualitative interview so as to enable the researcher to establish understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication. As Ellesberg and Helse, 2005 propounded the researcher was concerned with the teacher's opinions and

experiences. The researcher used the interview method to get more qualitative data through more probing to elicit interviewees' beliefs and feeling about their experiences in the teaching of oral communication at O' Level. The researcher collected data by use of direct encounters with the respondents (teachers) through the semi- structured (in-depth) interviews.

According to Ellesbrg and Heise (2005) to use qualitative method means that you will be generating data that is primarily inform of words, not numbers. Some most common data collection methods are individual interviews. Green and Thorogood (2004) have the same view that qualitative approaches to data collection usually involve direct interaction with individuals on a one on one basis.

Gall et al (2007) argue that the disadvantage of qualitative research that findings based on a difficult to generalise to the whole country. However, the findings highlight what could be experienced by other teachers in Zimbabwe. The other issue which makes qualitative research challenging is the rigor that is associated with it.

3.3RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

3.3.1The interview

This study used the semi- structured interview. According to Gilham (2000) semi-structured interviews involve a series of open-ended questions based on the topic areas the researcher wants to cover. The open-ended nature of the questions defines the topic under investigation at the same time provides opportunity for both the interviewer and the respondent to discuss some topics in more detail. Gilham adds on to comment that semi-structured interviews allow opportunity for the interviewer to use clues or prompts to encourage the interviewer to consider the question further. Semi- structured interview allowed the researcher the freedom

to probe the interviewee to elaborate on the original response or to follow a line of inquiry introduced by the interviewee.

The researcher used non-numerical data in order to explore and describe the quality and nature of how people behave, experience and understand. This research was focused on the investigation of the teachers' understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication. The researcher used semi- structured interview to collect data from teachers of English language at O' level.

Gilham (2000) asserts that semi- structured interviews are also called in-depth interviews. This is when the researcher has particular topic about which she or he seek to get information about. Gilham adds on to say that the questions are open-ended and the questions may not be asked in a similar manner but depending on how the interviewee responds.

According to Creswell (2007) qualitative interviews might feel more like a conversation than an interview to the respondents. The researcher however will be guiding the interaction with the goal in mind that is of identifying relevant information pertaining to the study. In qualitative interview(Semi structured interview) the researcher develops a guide in advance that he or she may refer to during the interview session. The researcher prepared a list of interview guides in advance. These were used as guidelines that outlined issues relevant to the study. The interview guides were derived from the research questions. The interview guides helped the researcher to focus the interview on the more important issues without constraining them to a particular format. Creswell recommended the use of interview guides for allowing flexibility and maintenance of focus. Of the same view are Babbie and Mouton (2001) assert that semi- structured interviews do not have fixed wording or ordering of question. The interviewer instead has a list of the main themes or topics and some open questions called probes to be covered so that the interview do not go far off track. This kind

of an interview generates qualitative data. The researcher used interview guides and as many probes as possible depending on how interviewees will be responding.

3.3.2 Advantages of semi- structured (in-depth) interview

According to Cohen, Manion and Morison (2007)the benefits of semi- structured interviews are that the researcher is able to get more in- depth with each subject by asking open questions and follow up questions. If the subject does not understand the question, the researcher can ask the question in a different way. The researcher has also a chance to gather much information from non- verbal responses for example facial expressions and tone of voice to get deeper understanding of what the subject means. The researcher has the opportunity to ask additional questions in order to explore a particular point of interest that develops during the interview. The researcher will execute face -to -face interviews with 7 teachers. Then interview was a powerful instrument for eliciting narrative data that allowed the researcher to investigate the teachers' understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication. Interviews also enabled he participants to speak through their voices and to express their own thought and feeling in a less constrained environment.

Gall et al (2002) assert that an interview reveals real feelings, it leads to the researcher to specific destination through good level of control and will allow the researcher sufficient freedom to digress and probe beyond the answers. The researcher used the semi-structured interview because of its flexibility. The researcher got in-depth information through probing.

Cohen et al (2007) argue that semi- structured interviews provide reliable, compatible and qualitative. The interview was useful to this study because the subject was too complex to be

answered by yes or no responses. The research was focused on the investigation of teachers' understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication.

3.3.3 Disadvantages of semi-structured interview

According to Neuman (2006) the limitations associated with semi- structured interviews are that it takes a lot of time to conduct, thus limiting the researcher from interviewing many people. The researcher in this study is going to interview 7 English Language teachers from the seven schools in Sadza Cluster. It is also very difficult to record responses at the same time asking questions. Payne and Payne (2004) assert that the disadvantage of collecting data using the interview is that there are risks of interviewer bias. However to counter interviewer bias and maintain validity and reliability the researcher avoided asking leading questions the and at the end of the interview asked the interviewees to highlight major issues discussed and give a general comment.

The rigour associated with the interview was the reason why the researcher did not use other instruments. Neuman (2007) argue that qualitative interviews tend to generate large amounts of data and the data collection process itself is time consuming. The interview is time intensive in that the researcher had to design an interview guide, identify a sample, conduct the interview, transcribing the interview (rigorous) and code the data. Therefore the researcher had to use only one instrument.

3.4 Population

According to Mursid (2002) population is a group of objects, events or indicators that become targets of the research. It is the entire group of entities or persons to whom the results of the study are intended to apply. Green and Thorogood (2007) argue that the population

may be all the individuals of a particular type or more restricted part of that group. The population in this study was made up of fourteen teachers of English language in Sadza Cluster with seven schools it is from this population that a sample was drawn.

3.5 Sample and sampling technique

Chiromo (2009) asserts that sampling is characteristic of qualitative research. The researcher collected data from a sampled population.

According to Haycraft (2002) a sample is a subgroup of the population that affects the conclusion which refers to the results. It is a limited number of elements from a population to be representative of the population.

Ellsberg and Heise (2005) are of the view that samples in qualitative research are usually purposive. This means participants are selected because they are likely to generate useful data for the project. Participants for this study were selected using purposive sampling. Creswell (2008) argues that purposive sampling gives the researcher authority to seek individuals and sites that can best supply relevant information to answer research questions. He also claims that the logic and power of purposive sampling is derived from the emphasis of in-depth understanding of phenomena. The researcher selected O' Level English Language teachers for they were the best informants to the issue under study.

According to Schutt (2009) purposive sampling is a non- probability sampling procedure in which the researcher purposively chooses participants who are relevant to the research topic. From a population of 14 teachers of English Language in Sadza Cluster, the researcher purposively sampled 7 teachers. Purposive sampling enabled me to select research

participants who supplied rich and detailed information about their understanding of teaching oral communication to Ordinary Level students.

According to Schumacher (2010) in purposive sampling the researcher selects particular elements from the population that will be representative or informative about the topic of interest on the researcher's knowledge of the population, a judgement is made about which subject should be selected to provide the best information to address the purpose of the research. In this research the researcher intended to establish teachers' understanding of the teaching of oral communication to Ordinary level students and it would be most informative to interview the O' Level teachers of English Language rather than a sample of all teachers or having a random sample of all the teachers in the cluster. I purposively sampled 7 teachers from Sadza Cluster to cut on expenses of the study. From Sadza Cluster 7 English Language teachers were selected purposively on the basis of them being O' Level English Language teachers and would be best providers of required information for this study.

Being a qualitative study the researcher used a small sample that she could interact with in-depth and closely. According to Ellsberg ad Heise (2005) sample sizes are typically small in qualitative work. Data collection methods are typically time consuming and as a result data is collected from a smaller number of people than would usually be the case in Quantitative approaches, the benefit is richness of data and deeper insights into the phenomena under study. The sample size will constitute 7 Ordinary Level English Language teachers out of 14 Ordinary Level English language teachers. To ensure that this sample is credible the researcher selected key demographic variables that are likely to have an impact on participants' view of the topic the researcher asked the participants to complete a to provide biographical information like age, professional qualifications and teaching experience.

3.6Data collection procedures

The researcher sought permission from the Provincial Education Director for Mashonaland East province. After being granted permission, the researcher then distributed the introductory letters to introduce the researcher's aim of study and significance and sought informed consent from the participants. The researcher went from school to school collecting participants' biographical data and carrying out interviews.

According to Neuman (2006) as they collect data many qualitative researchers also begin jotting notes about their initial interpretation of what they are seeing and hearing. The researcher recorded the responses by writing notes during the interview. Neumam however argue that the problem with collection of data from an interview by writing note is a time consuming. It produces a lot of written work text as one interview can run up to many pages.

3.7Data analysis

This study adopted a qualitative data analysis drawing from a qualitative case study design Kerlinger in Neuman (2006) claims that data analysis from this design is through categorization and interpretation in terms of common themes. The purpose of analysis is to reduce data to be intelligible and interpretable so that the relation of research problem can be studied. He adds on to say that it is a process of resolving data into its constituent components to reveal its characteristic elements and structure.

The researcher used a qualitative approach to analyse data. According to Gall et al, (2003) to use qualitative method means that you will be generating data that is primarily in the form of words, not numbers.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) qualitative data analysis requires the researcher to process data into codes of various principles obtained from interviews that is the researcher has to identify major themes within the interviews and code the data. The researcher conducted data analysis using the Thematic Analysis Model. Ritchie and Lewis describe this as an approach for analysing data which focuses on identifying recurring patterns of behaviour in collected data with research questions as the frame of reference. Green and Thorogood (2004) agree with Ritchie and Lewis by saying that thematic analysis of data requires the researcher to look across all data to identify the common issues that recur, and identify the main themes that summarise all the views you have collected and then code the data.

The researcher firs scrutinized the interview excerpts and identified recurring ideas. The synthesized the ideas into themes guided by the research questions.

3.8Limitations of the study

The following are limitations of this study but the researcher made directions for future research studies.

- The sample was drawn from only one cluster (Sadza Cluster) from the whole district; therefore it is not representative of the all teachers in Zimbabwe. Further studies need to be conducted in other districts as well. It can however be argued that qualitative research is not very much worried about generalizability because it deals with a specific group of situation.
- The sample consisted of only 7 respondents. More research, with a bigger sample would be done so as to improve on generalization of the findings.

In spite of these limitations mention above, this study has achieved its objective of getting to understand teachers' understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication in English at O' Level.

3.9Ethical considerations

According to Chiromo (2009) the researcher engages in the research process and data collection techniques are developed he or she has to consider whether his or her research procedure are likely to cause any physical harm or emotional harm to the participants involved in the research. The researcher informed the participants of her intention (informed consent) before executing the interview. The researcher asked teachers to participate in the interview to use pseudonyms so as to maintain anonymity. The researcher kept the interview notes in a secure place so as to ensure privacy and secrecy. To act ethically, the researcher also acknowledge works by other authors by citing them as the source of information

3.10 Summary

This chapter has alluded to the methods and procedures in line with research design, sampling, research instruments and data collection and analysis. Chapter will then detail the analysis and interpretation of research data. The next chapter will also discuss the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4:

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The researcher used qualitative data collection method to elicit information about the teachers' understanding and experiences in the teaching of oral communication in English at O' Level. This chapter presents an analysis and discussion of data generated during the field study. Green and Thorogood (2004) describe thematic analysis of data as one that looks across all data to identify the common issues that recur and identifying the main themes that summarizes all the views you have collected. Thematic analysis is the common method for descriptive qualitative projects.

Findings of this research study were given in the following manner. Firstly, the researcher presented and analysed biographical data responses. Secondly the researcher presented the interview excerpts. Thirdly the chapter tries to respond to the research questions by way of presenting significant themes which emerged from the study and from semi–structured interviews with the participants.

The discussion linked the findings of the study to literature reviewed in Chapter 2. According to Chiromo (2009) the researcher's discussion and interpretation of the findings should be linked to the research questions and related literature. It should also demonstrate that the researcher has found a solution to the research problem. The researcher tried to show how the problem stated in Chapter 1 can be solved.

This chapter is organised under the following subheadings; biographical information, research findings, discussion of the findings from the study and summary.

4.2 Biographical information

There were 7 respondents; 5 were mature people of over 30 years of age whilst only two were below thirty. Of the 7 respondents 4 were male teachers and 3 were female teachers. Below are biographical data for each individual participant. Names used by interviewees were pseudonyms in order to maintain anonymity.

Shumba

Shumba is a female teacher of between 30 and 45 years of age. She is a holder of a Diploma in Education. Shumba has been teaching English Language for about 5 years.

Mr. Q.

Mr. Q is a male teacher and he is between 30 and 45 years of age. He has been teaching O' Level English classes for a period between 6 and 10 years. He is a holder of a Bachelors degree.

Mr. Zvenyika

Mr. Zvenyika is a male teacher and he is between 26 and 30 years of age. He has been teaching O' Level English classes for a period between 6 and 10 years. He is a holder of a Bachelors degree.

Mr. Mhaka

Mr. Mhaka is a male teacher and he is between 30 and 45 years of age. He has been teaching O' Level English classes for a period between 11 and 15 years. He is a holder of a Bachelors degree.

Mr. Dehwe

Mr. Dehwe is a male teacher and he is between 26 and 30 years of age. He has been teaching O' Level English classes for a period between 1 and 5 years. He is a holder of a Bachelors degree.

Mrs. Jemu

Mrs. Jemu is a female teacher and she is between 30 and 45 years of age. She has been teaching O' Level English classes for more than 16 years. She is a holder of a Bachelors degree.

Esther

Esther is a female teacher and she is between 30 and 45 years of age. She has been teaching O' Level English classes for more than 16 years. She is a holder of a Diploma in Education.

The biographical information above revealed that all the participating teachers were qualified teacher. Basing on their maturity, work experience and academic qualifications, the teachers were the appropriate informants to provide research data.

The biographical data is necessary in that the researcher would get responses from both male and female teachers who are of different age groups and as well with varied teaching experiences. Although the sample was small it undoubtedly provided a wide range of information and opinions regarding the teaching of oral communication in English at O' Level. The next section is going to present the research findings.

4.3 Research findings

This section will present research findings under the following questions which the researcher used to generate information;

Question 1: Tell me your understanding of oral communication.

Question 2: What are your experiences in the teaching of oral communication in English?

Question 3: What do you think has to be done to improve pupils' oral proficiency?

Question 4: tell me about the methods of teaching English that enhances oral communicative competence.

4.3.1 QUESTION 1: Tell me your understanding of oral communication

When asked to talk about their understanding of oral communication their understanding of oral communication, the participants gave the following comments. Shumba commented

It's all about communicating using English as a second language. Pupils must interact always in English.

When probed to talk about how important oral communication was, she also had this to say,

It's essential for effective interaction in the classroom and out of school.

Mr. Q was also asked to say something about his understanding of oral communication and he had this to say,

It is the art of communicating through the word of mouth with the intention to deliver or disseminate information to the audience. It is important because it is a tool for classroom interaction. Students learn by listening and speaking.

Most teachers were of the view that oral communication involves the use of language through word of mouth. Mr. Dehwe another teacher narrated,

Oral communication is basically the spoken part of the language communication via word of mouth. It is one thing that is very important for students for after they leave school they need the use of it.

On the same question Mr. Zvenyika responded,

I think it is when we use English spoken language. It's important because we use it on daily basis. It is also the language used in different subject areas to communicate ideas.

Mrs. Jemu commented,*oral communication is the ability of the student to communicate effectively with any speaker of the language.*

Mr. Mhaka another teacher also said, *it is whereby pupils converse verbally or teaching ofpupils to speak proficient English.*

Esther had the same understanding of oral communication with others and she commented,

I think oral communication refers to the art of imparting pupils with spoken or verbal communication skills. It is very important because it equips students with the skills the may require when they leave school. Oral communication makes it possible for preparing students who can express themselves effectively in oral terms.

From the above excerpts the teachers showed a common understanding of the aspect of oral communication and that it is important for it facilitates learning in the classroom and is also needed in life after school.

4.3.2 QUESTION 2: What are your experiences in the teaching of oral communication in English.

The respondents were asked to talk about their experiences i n teaching oral communication at O' Level since they were all O' level English Language teachers. Below are various responses from the seven interviewees.

Shumba said,

Our pupils lack confidence, they cannot read and they come from primary school lacking reading and speaking skills. They can't stand in front of the class speaking in English. Pupils can hardly express simple statements like greetings. Students mostly use Shona their native language in class and outside the classroom.

Responding to the same question, Mr. Q another teacher commented,

Some pupils are shy; they become sheepish when it comes to oral communication.

When probed to elaborate more on his experiences in teaching oral communication, he added on,

The students rarely speak in front of audience. I also discovered that pupils with better command of the language find the area enjoyable especially when we do sessions like impromptu speech. However, oral communication is a difficult area to teach some teachersdon't take oral communication seriously because it is not examinable so they tend to concentrate on writing.

Mr. Dehwe also said,

most of us have the examination in the mind and want to target the exam. Oral

communication is not tested and we end up ignoring it. Some students go for A' Level with As and Bs in English language but they can't even express themselves.

Mr. Zvenyika acknowledged,

For more than ten years I have been teaching English at O' Level, i have noticed that most that most pupils lack confidence and besides that teachers aren't worried because there is no examination designed for oral communication, so i personally concentrate on written work. Oral communication is a bit difficult to teach because this part of language is not examined.

When asked about his experiences in teaching oral communication Mr. Mhaka another teacher showed a different opinion. The teacher reported,

The teaching of oral communication is very interesting; the only challenge is that pupils aren't interested in speeches. The students were poorly groomed at lower levels so to begin teaching them at O' Level becomes difficult. Teachers are only concerned with the written aspect of English that is foregoing the oral aspect. Teachers are worried about results.

When he was probed to elaborate on factors that influence pupils' oral proficiency, he commented,

Most pupils lack self-esteem. They lack exposure to communication platforms. Some pupils have pass grades at O' Level but cannot utter a simple statement in English.

Mrs. Jemu indicated the idea that, most pupils were competent in written English but lack communicative competence. She related this to factors like negative attitude, lack of resources, teaching methods used and class sizes is inhibiting them from teaching oral communication using the interactive approaches. She commented,

Most of our pupils are Shona speakers and they are not willing to converse in English. You can speak to them in English and they answer back in Shona. The students lack confidence and motivation to speak in English. We have a very few pupils who are good orators. The major drawback is lack of exposure to platforms where they can communicate other than being taken from the classroom to go and represent the school at a public speaking competition.

Esther another teacher narrated that she has also experienced the same with other participants in her teaching of oral communication. She acknowledged,

This is now my 5th year teaching O' Level English but to tell the truth i have never been concentrating much on teaching speaking. My focus is on making my pupils able to write Error free compositions and answer comprehension questions because that is what is tested.

4.3.3 QUESTION: 3 What do you think has to be done to improve pupils' oral proficiency?

When asked to suggest intervention strategies that could be put in place to enhance pupils' levels of oral English proficiency. The participants gave the following responses. Shumbasaid, *Provide pupils with reading materials and educational tours so that they interact with others and have self esteem.*

Mr. Dehwe commented, *I suggest that the curriculum should include oral tests at O' Level. Teachers should also attend in-service training for English language teaching.*

Zvenyika agreed with Shumba on the view that pupils need to be provided with resources and also agree with Mr. Q that there should be examinations designed to test oral communication. He commented,

Pupil s must be provided with resources like audio-visual aids projected media, novels and Magazines, to improve their command of English. The students should be exposed to debate and quiz and role plays in classroom situation. There is also need for teachers to attend workshops on English Language teaching to improve their ways of teaching. ZIMSEC should also establish means of examining oral competence so as to make sure that teachers and pupils take it seriously.

Mr. Mhaka suggested,

I think we ought to teach pupils oral communication from lower level. The schools should have oral English Language policy for pupils to speak in English at school. The teacher is also on the driving seat therefore should have appositive attitude towards oral communication. I think we should have workshops to improve the teaching of oral communication.

In agreement with Mr. Mhaka was Mr.Zvenyika who also suggested the establishment of school language policy. He commented; *make speaking in English a policy*

Mrs. Jemu suggested,

I think teachers should always use English when teaching. Teachers should motivate students. Finally the curriculum should have oral communication continuous assessment tests so as to motivate pupils to take oral communication seriously.

Esther also agreed with most of the participants that there should be oral communication tests. She suggested, *I think students should be taught to express themselves orally beginning at lower level not starting at O' Level. There should be a culture of reading.*

4.3.4 QUESTION : 4Tell me about the methods of teaching English that enhances oral Communicative competence

The participants were asked to talk about methods of teaching English that enhance oral communicative competence. A variety of responses were given which were indication .of the teachers' understanding of the teaching of oral communication. The participants however showed that they were pressured to use structural methods because the examinations focus on testing written English.

Shumba opined, *teachers can use group work, discussion and role plays because they relaxes situation and allows pupils chances to interact in English.*

Mr. Q also suggested*, I think the use of dialogue*. *The students will be exchanging words. The method is likely to remove shyness and develop confidence. Activities like group work, role play, and drama are effective methods.*

Mr. Dehwe also understood that the use of interactive methods was effective in the teaching of oral communication.He proposed,

Use of teaching methods which allow pupil-pupil interaction. The teacher may use debate, role play and discussion. The direct method is the best that is if we speak to them in English; they understand it better that teaching those rules like subject- verb agreement. We can also use the CLT but the only problem is that we have to teach our pupils accuracy because that is what is tested in the examination and not fluency.

In agreement to Mr. Dehwe is Mr.Zvenyika who opined*, adopt teaching methods which put emphasis on oral communication like discussion and presentation.*

Mr. Mhaka also understood that the use of interactional method has positive influence to pupils' oral competence and like most teachers also argued that they could not implement these methods efficiently because of time limitation. He commented,

I think CLT is the best method to enhance oral communicative competence. However time is a limiting factor and you end up reading the passage for pupils and give instructions to pupils to let them do the work as homework.

Mrs. Jemu also understood that the use of interactive teaching approaches were useful in enhancing pupils' oral competence. She argued*,*

Teachers can use techniques like groups like role plays that affect us linked to large class sizes we have.

When probed to highlight more on challenges she face in teaching oral communication, she had this to say,

You see there are requirements by the Ministry of Education. The main thrust is on producing results. They want results and the unfortunate thing is that the examination itself putemphasis on development pupils writing skills. We teach a class of about 45 minutes and using group work becomes difficult. The other factor is that oral communication is not examined and we are pressured to prepare our students for written exams.

Esther also agreed with other teachers that use of methods which allow for pupils to practise speaking in English are the best. She also highlighted that they are pressured by the examination into using structural method. Esther commented,

I think CLT is the best, i mean the teacher should use activities like role play, drama, discussion because they give opportunities for pupils to interact and use English in real life like situations. However, I teach rules of grammar and structures of language to make my pupils pass the exam.

The next section will discuss the findings from the study following a careful scrutiny of the interview excerpts presented above.

4.4 Discussion of the findings from the study

As indicated in Chapter 3 the researcher adopted a qualitative approach drawing from the interview method to address the research questions raised in Chapter 1. Following a careful scrutiny of the interview excerpts the following themes emerged.

i. Interaction in the classroom enhances oral competence
ii. The teaching of oral communication should start at lower levels
iii. Need for resource materials to support the teaching of oral communication
iv. Lack of self- confidence affects oral competence
v. Demands of publics examination influences the selection of methods of teaching English

4.4.1 Interaction in the classroom enhances pupils' oral competence

Most of the interviewees were found convinced that interaction in the classroom enhances pupils' oral communication proficiency. They emphasized that oral communication was an indispensible tool for classroom interaction. The results also revealed that teachers perceived it was useful to use interactive teaching methods like dialogues, role plays, quiz among other interactive techniques because they allow for people to engage in oral communication. Mr.

Zvenyika argued,*Oral communication is important because it is the tool for classroom interaction. Some pupils learn more by speaking and listening.* The results also revealed that the use of the Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT) was also effective because the method is interactive which means that it gives students opportunities to speak in English during the lesson Shumba suggested, "*Pupils must interact always in English*". This was in agreement with Inbaraj (2002) who argues that in order to enhance pupils' oral communication skills, teachers should use methods that provide opportunities for interaction that is giving them chances to practice oral communication during class.

The research findings also indicated that students should always engage in real life use of English through interacting with other pupils in the classroom. This is in line with Yao (2011) who argues that the teaching of oral communication is important as it prepares students to better communicate orenter into a dialogue with peers and academics. He adds on to argue thatit prepares them for various professional environments.

4.4.2 The teaching of oral communication should start at lower levels

The research findings indicated that it was difficult to start teaching oral skills at O' level. Most interviewees were of the opinion that it was best to begin teaching oral communication at lower level for example at primary school. Shumba, one of the interviewees had this to say, "*They cannot read and they come from primary school lacking reading and speaking skills".* Agreeing with her was Mr. Mhaka another teacher who also complained,*"The students werepoorly groomed at lower levels, so to begin teaching them at O' Level becomes difficult".* Esther also agreed with them and said, "*I think students should be taught to express themselves orally beginning at lower levels not starting at O' Level."*

4.4.3Pupils need access to resource materials

Findings from the interviews revealed that lack of resource materials is also another variable which affect pupils' oral proficiency. Most participants indicated the need for resources that promote or enhance oral communication like reading materials and audio-visual media. The interviewees indicated that pupils should be provided with adequate reading materials and should have exposure to television, radio, pictures and various platforms that allow for the use of oral English. Mr. Zvenyikaindicated,*lack of exposure to media which encourage oral communicative competence, when he was asked to comment on factors which affect pupils' proficiency in oral communication.* Esther also suggested that schools should buy audio-visual or projected media for use in the teaching of oral communication. This agrees with Wilder in Brown (2000) who asserts that teaching methods for oral communication should provide resources for pupils to practise oral communication outside the classroom.

The results have also showed that the teachers have experienced shortage of adequate authentic materials to use in the teaching of oral communication. The participants bemoaned lack of materials like novels, magazines and audio- visual aids. All the teachers agreed that lack of these materials affected pupils' proficiency in oral communication. Literature has revealed that some teachers have felt restrained in teaching oral communication using the Direct method because of shortage of adequate resources like audio-visual aids, pictures, overhead transparencies and computers (Inbaraj, 2008).

Gazu (2006) reported that there is need to expose learners to technologies like audio-visual devices, computer assisted language learning devices and pictures to enhance effective language learning. The findings from the interviews are in line with Gazu's argument in that most participants indicate that materials like novels, magazines and audio-visual are essential to the teaching of oral communication. Mr. Dehwe commented, *what I have seen is that,*

students who are exposed to TVs, movies, cell phones and social networks are able to speak than those who are not. Esther also said,*Pupils should be provided with the resources like audio-visual aids, projected media, novels, magazines and pictures in order to improve their command of English*. This implies that exposing learners to authentic materials is a means to improve pupils' oral communicative competence.

4.4.4Lack of self-confidence affects pupils' oral proficiency

The result showed that most pupils were shy and lacked self confidence to speak in English and this was affecting their competence. According to Brown (2001) in order for students to overcome challenges in learning speaking, it is necessary for the teachers to figure out factors that affect speaking performance and try to address them so as to enhance pupil's oral communication proficiency. Results of this study have revealed that quite a number of variables are responsible for pupils' oral proficiency in English. The respondents indicated that affective factors have impacts on development of oral proficiency.

All the interviewees indicated that affective variables like lack of self-confidence, self-esteem and motivation impeded the development of oral proficiency in pupils. Stephen Krashen (1982) has developed *The Affective FilterHypothesis* to account for the effects of affective variables on Second language acquisition. He argues that affective variables can act as a mental block, also termed affective filter and prevent input to be absorbed. Teachers indicated the understanding that affective factors like lack of motivation and low self confidence are contributing to the pupils' low levels' of proficiency. All the seven interviewees were unanimous of the view that self confidence influences oral proficiency, they reported that pupils' lack of motivation had detrimental impacts to their levels of proficiency in oral communication. This is in agreement to Krashen (1982) who argues that

when the learner is unmotivated and lacks confidence the affective filter goes up and prevents learning from taking place.

The findings also revealed that lack of self-esteem and self confidence also lead to low levels' or lack of oral communicative fluency. All the interviewees indicated that their students lacked self- confidence and self-esteem and hence could not express themselves orally. Shumba exclaimed, *The students lack confidence in themselves, so that they resort to telling themselves that they can't speak in English. They have an anti-oral communication feeling*. MR. Dehwe reported, "*They lack confidence from the fact that they don't have the language. They aren't sure of what they want to say so they lose confidence to speak*." Mr. Mhaka, Mrs.Jemu and Mr.Zvenyika also reported that pupils' lack of self confidence affects their interest in speaking in English. This is in agreement with Hyde in Brown (2000) who claims that self confidence can be negatively influenced when the language learner thinks of oneself as deficient in target language. On the other hand, high self confidence can be positively correlated with oral performance hence there is need for teachers to create classroom environments which are stress free.

The interview also revealed that teachers were complaining about pupils' lack of interest in the aspect of oral communication. All the respondents were linking this negative attitude or reluctance in developing oral proficiency to lack of an oral examination at O' Level. When asked about his experiences in the teaching of oral communication.Findings from the interviews revealed that most students have negative attitude towards oral communication.

4.4.5. Demands of public examinations influences selection of the teaching methods

Results from the interviews with teachers indicated that despite their understanding that they should use interactive teaching strategies, they are pressured by the exam oriented curriculum into teaching grammar rules. ZIMSEC (2013) stipulates that the English Language examination constitutes aptitude tests which are written tests consisting of grammatical items, reading comprehension, writing essays, letter and paragraphs. Mrs. Jemu commented*, you see there are requirements by the Ministry of Education. The main thrust is on producing results. They want results and the unfortunate thing is that the examination itself putemphasis on development pupils writing skills.*

Esther also acknowledged,*i also am concerned about at least making them write correct sentences and understand what they read for them to be able answer comprehension questions*. This goes in line with Mareva and Nyota (2012) that teachers using structural approaches like the GTM will be concerned much with making learners write correct grammar.

All participants were unanimous on the idea that the examination system puts emphasis on the teaching of writing ignoring the oral aspect. Harmer (2001) asserts that under the Grammar Translation approach, more emphasis is placed on written language with little attention paid to speech. Most teachers using this approach hence put main focus on reading and writing skills as compared to speaking and listening skills. This accounts therefore for the reason why most pupils are exhibiting better writing competence as compared to oral competence. Mareva and Nyota (2012) claimed that the explicit teaching of grammar affects pupils' proficiency for they will end up knowing about the language, writing correct spellings and grammatically correct sentences but lacking ability to use English proficiently in interaction. All the 7 teachers reported that they have through their experiences in the

teaching of English Language, noticed that most pupils have linguistic competence and lacked what Luccantonni (2000) referred to as the ability to use English effectively for purposes of practical *Since the examination is in written form, the students have better competences in written English than in oral communication.* Mrs. Jemu, another teacher also commented, *wehave avery few students who are good orators. You will see that a student with an A grade inEnglish Language in engaged on a light topic won't be able to say anything articulate.* This implies that due to the demands placed on written grammar tests by the syllabus most teachers and pupils are concerned with perfecting their writing skills at the expense of oral proficiency.

Despite the pressure from the examination to teach structures of English or explicit grammar to prepare pupils for written tests and examinations, most teachers indicated their understanding for strategies and techniques that enhances communicative competence. Most teachers indicated the use of dialogues, drama, group work, class discussion, presentation. However, they professed that implementation of those strategies was hampered by factors like lack of material resources, class sizes (large) and time limitation. Khader (2013) discovered that implementation of Communicative Language Teaching was done by fits and starts because most teachers were constrained by the system under which they operated. Mr. Mhaka commented, *I think CLT is the best method to enhance communicative competence. However time is limited, only 35 minutes per lesson and you end up reading the passage and give instructions then let the pupils to do the work as homework.* Mrs. Jemu also commented,*Time is another issue that affect us, linked with large class that we have. We are looking at a class of 45 students per 35 minutes. Group work or presentation is then difficult to use.*

4. 5Summary

This chapter has presented, analyzed and discussed the results from the qualitative analysis. The main theme that came out was that oral communication was ignored at O' Level in Sadza Cluster. As indicated in the sub-themes there were various reasons that caused this phenomenon. The next chapter focuses on summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5:

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENTATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings, formulates the conclusions and outlines the recommendations that have been formulated based upon the results of the study and the central themes that were identified. This was presented under the following sub- headings; summary, conclusions and recommendations respectively.

5.2 Summary

Overview of the study

Chapter 1

This chapter gave an introduction of the research. It covered background of the study, statement of the problem, rationale of the study, significance of the study, research objectives and research question. It also covered delimitations of the study, limitations of the study and definitions terms.

Chapter 2

Consisted of a review of related literature

Chapter 3

This chapter dealt with research methodology,design, instruments,population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection procedures, data analysis, ethnical considerations and limitations of the study.

Chapter 4

This chapter presented, analysed and discussed data collected and linked it to the research questions.

Chapter 5

This chapter gave the summary of the study and drew conclusion based on the research findings and made recommendations.

The study was designed to investigate teachers' understanding and experience of the teaching of oral communication. This study was prompted by the need to know why most pupils who could write error free composition and who were generally performing very well in written English at O' Level were struggling to express themselves orally, lacking oral communicative competence. The findings revealed that most teachers argued that it was the teaching methods they used which placed primary focus on enhancing pupils' writing skills in preparation for the written O' Level English Language examination.

The study revealed that teachers were focused much on producing pupils who would pass the written examination yet ignoring the oral aspect. The research findings revealed that there was need to expose pupils to resource materials for the improvement of their oral skills and general command or English.

The research indicated that oral communication should be taught in lower form or levels not to start at O' level

The findings from the study showed that interaction was important towards developing pupils oral communication proficiency and they understood that they should use interactive teaching methods that gives pupils opportunities to interact in English during the lessons. The findings indicated that pupils have to be engaged in role plays, discussions, group work and debate among other interactive activities so as to enhance their oral competence. The findings of this study however indicated that despite the fact that teachers knew the strategies like group work and role plays for enhancing pupils' oral proficiency but they were constrained from using them because they had large classes and were pressured by the written English examination into teaching using structural approaches. Only a few teachers indicated that they were using CLT related strategies in class.

From the study pupils' self-confidence, self- esteemand motivation contributed much to their proficiency in oral communication. Most teachers reported that pupils lacked self -confidence as they put little effort in practising oral communication and the students also lacked motivation.

Finally all these findings were obtained from the data collected after the researcher had carried out semi-structured (in-depth) interviews to the O' Level English Language teachers in Sadza Cluster.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Result from this study demonstrates that most teachers were using structural approaches to the teaching of English language at O' Level because they wanted to make their students pass examinations. The study showed that lack of oral communication examination procedures makes teachers ignore teaching the oral aspect of English. The results from this study also portrayed that pupils' lack of self-confidence, self- esteem and motivation also contributed to their low levels of oral communicative proficiency.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends that:

- The ZIMSEC syllabus should also include oral communication tests.
- Teachers should use authentic instructional media to support the teaching of oral communication
- Teachers should be eclectic in the way they use teaching methods in the teaching of English language so as to produce students who have both linguistic and communicative competence that is pupils who have both written and spoken proficiency.
- Schools should emphasize the teaching of oral communication beginning at lower levels or forms.
- Teachers should always encourage pupils to interact in English in the classroom

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