

**EXPLORING THE INTERPLAY OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC FACTORS IN THE TEACHING OF ESL
AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL IN ZIMBABWE**

**BY
DUREN JHAMBA**

STUDENT NUMBER: 201615068

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**SUPERVISORS: PROFESSOR B.P. TSHOTSHO
 PROFESSOR M.P. CEKISO**



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KEY TERMS

Communicative competence

Communicative society

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Second Language (SL)

English as a second language (ESL)

Target language

The Status Planning Level

Corpus planning

Acquisition planning state

Reading ability

World Englishes paradigm

World Englishes Debate

Curriculum



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DECLARATION

I, Duren Jhamba, student number 201615068 declare solemnly that this dissertation, entitled:

“Exploring the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of English as a Second Language in Zimbabwe at O level” is my own work and has not been submitted to any other university. I have duly acknowledged all references to avoid plagiarism.

CANDIDATE: DUREN JHAMBA

SIGNATURE: _____

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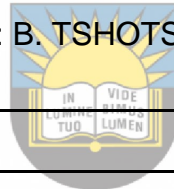
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DEDICATION

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Abstract

The researcher noted that earlier second language teaching models tended to treat language as an artefact to be scrutinised and adhered to with grammatical precision. This tended to reduce all language learning to the mere acquisition of grammatical skills. However, since all language behaviour is embedded in sociocultural and contextual frameworks, all teaching should provide cross-cultural awareness of that complexity as well as of the internal variation within language. Therefore, the research explored the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of English in Zimbabwe. The Mixed Methods design; a combination of the descriptive survey and the case study was adopted. The questionnaire, interview, observation and document analysis methods were used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data to assess the role of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching pedagogy. A combination of convenient sampling and stratified random sampling was used to come up with a sample representative of the school categories and the gender of teachers in the 38 secondary schools in Gweru District. The data for the research was collected from a random sample of 50 teachers. The data analysis supported the need for a re-conceptualisation of ESL teaching in Zimbabwe. Notably, language teaching tended to be exam-centric, unimaginative and not well linked to the needs of the learners in the communicative environment outside the school. This confirmed the initial observation that the secondary school graduates generally lacked sociolinguistic competence skills. The teachers were, however generally not motivated to include culture and sociolinguistics in their teaching. The research therefore recommended a revisit of the

allowance for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors at all the planning stages of the ESL curriculum; the status, corpus and acquisition stages.

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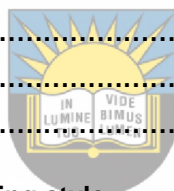
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Chapter 1

Introduction and Background to the Study

1. Introduction

This study is contextualised in present day Zimbabwe, and focused on the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) at secondary school level. This chapter outlines the background of the study. It begins by giving statement of the problem under investigation; the aims, objectives and significance. Thereafter, an overview of the mixed-methods research design to be used is discussed with a view to show its justification in the context of the present study. The chapter ends with an overview of ethical consideration and an outline of the structure of the research report.

1.1 Background

The research is contextualised in today's globalised world where cultural boundaries have become so obscure that individuals are challenged to be linguistically equipped for cross-cultural communication. The question of language and culture in the teaching of ESL continues to become even more complex in the context of the global use of the English language.

The English language has emerged as a powerful language for that kind of communication. Consequently, the challenges of adopting a language for global use have attracted much scholastic research, including David (2003) who explores the implications of culture in the use of English as a global language. According to Crystal (2013) the English language has been adopted as an official language by the United Nations, 67 sovereign states and 27 non-sovereign entities. Consequently, it has emerged as the most widely spoken language worldwide. Crystal (2013) contends that English is spoken by an estimate of between 470 million and 1 billion people worldwide. Non-native speakers, Crystal (2013) believes out-number native speakers by a ratio of 3 to 1 as of 2013.

This presents various challenges for second language teachers in different contexts. For example, learners of a second language often aim for sociolinguistic competence defined against native speaker-like competence. This is applicable where the 'native speaker' and 'culture' are clearly defined and the language is homogeneous. However, in the case of the English language, these terms are elusive in the context of a language adopted by different nations across the globe. Kachru (1985) contends that there are many varieties of English spoken in different parts of the world. He explains the emergence of these varieties of English by the nature of the spread of the English language across the globe where different nations face the challenge of managing the adoption of the language.

The place of English language in the current situation is aptly described by Modiano (2009:208) who notes that the English language has assumed three distinct roles of use and adoption in different nations: "English as an international language, Euro-English, and English as a lingua franca." These three descriptions all present challenges in the different settings of language adoption. According to Modiano (ibid), the nature of adoption of the English language ranges from nations where English is the mother tongue, nations which have adopted the Language as a foreign language or for specific purposes and those that have adopted it as a second language. The problem investigated in the present research stems from the adoption of English as a second language in Zimbabwe.

Corbert (2003) proposes the way forward is to adopt intercultural approaches to language teaching. This is the approach adopted by the present study and the issues of language and intercultural communication will be central through-out the research. As Mizne (1997) contends, the ability to speak a second language, (henceforth L2 or SL), has become increasingly vital as people respond to professional and personal needs like qualifying for educational placement abroad, communicating with colleagues in international corporations and finding their way when they travel abroad. Based on these observations the present research assumed that the teaching of ESL has to adjust to the context it is adopted and taught. As Modiano (2015) explains the ELT

ideologies adopted should develop course materials which support the incorporation of intercultural communicative competence and identity into the instruction.

Kachru (1985) controversially classifies the adoption, spread and use of English on the globe through a cyclic model. He identifies the inner circle at the core, spreading out to the outer and expanding circles to represent the type of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional allocation of the English language in diverse cultural contexts (Mooney and Evans, 2015). Therein lays the problem of defining the native speaker to be modelled. According to Mooney and Evans (2015), the classification model does not suggest superiority of any language variety to another and has little to do with geography, but more with the history. The model is based on a combination of factors including, colonisation, migration patterns and policy.

Though the inner circle countries are perceived as having more ownership of the language by virtue of having inherited it as the First Language (L1), not all nations in this category can claim authenticity of the English language. Evans (2005) observes that even in these inner circle countries, the English used is not homogenous. In other words, there is no agreement on what is 'standard English.' This set-up presents challenges for the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) and this is a backdrop against which the present research is conceptualised.

Against this background, the teaching and learning of ESL has, therefore, become a significant and more complex phenomenon in the present era. The goals of teaching the language have to meet drastic cross-cultural communication challenges of the global village where English is the *Lingua franca*. Accordingly, Second Language pedagogy is under constant change the world over as dictated by the interplay between unfolding new theories in the related areas. The related fields of study include Linguistics, Psychology, Sociology and Education. In equally unstable, diverse sociolinguistic environments, they too are continually in a state of flux.

As a result, Mizne (1997) observes that, scholars in these fields are challenged to take up research in a combined effort for improvements to make second language learning

more efficient and relevant. However, Mizne (1997:15) notes in the same vein that, the changes in language teaching practices so far are not always grounded in scientific research. They are in many cases, apparently equally dependent on 'the agents of change and development,' in particular, their individual intuition, the nature of teacher-education and training and other contextual factors. This has resulted in different brands of Second Language (L2) teaching practices emerging for different settings. In line with this, contention, Kramsch (2014) concurs that the expectation for teachers to learners and bring them to particular levels of proficiency and the impositions at macro level decisions, control classroom teaching practices. Consequently, there are glaring student variances in terms of linguistic and communicative competences, depending on the quality of language teaching/ learning exposure they have had and second language acquisition theories in vogue.

The influence of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory on second language teaching practices is well researched and documented. According to Cook (1991) the formal study of this area, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), roughly dates back to Corder's (1967) pioneering work on the significance of learner errors and Selinker's (1972) interlanguage theory (Cook, 1991). Literature on subsequent research and development of theories to counter or improve on the early theories which impacted on emerging second language teaching is abundant. Therefore, information relating to various practices in second language teaching practices, including the Zimbabwean experience in the transformation from Cambridge to ZIMSEC, is also available.

1.2 Rationale

There is a need to account for the role of the sociolinguistic milieu on how language is taught as the Zimbabwean society transforms alongside the developments in language theory. The available literature reviewed in chapter 4 confirms that the role of sociolinguistic factors in language teaching is a scantily researched area. Furthermore, that role continues to change since societies and second language theories continue to evolve. My research is one contribution that should, hopefully, encourage many more enterprises to come. In the thesis, I therefore, explore how the related societal

variables inform second language pedagogy, thus interrogating the inter-play between second language teaching/learning and sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of English Language at O' level in Zimbabwe.

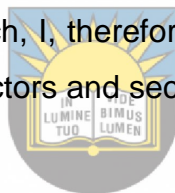
Historically, the setting is a post-colonial state, typically identified with the socio-cultural evolution from colonisation to independence. The relics of colonialism that influenced teaching of English as a second language are evident in many aspects of the English language school curriculum. Initially imposed as the official language, taught by native speakers (mostly the missionaries), and later by non-native (local) second language teachers, the teaching of the second language is a topical area in language acquisition research. Mede and Dikilitas (2015) citing Mizne (1997) contend that it presents fertile ground for investigations to provide valuable insights into second language teaching. The drastically changing sociolinguistic environment had many implications for the learner and the second language teachers and best practices can only be drawn from a close examination of the different factors at play.

The study was spurred by my observations that first year students at university level, despite having had at least thirteen years studying English and using it as the medium of instruction from Grade 1 to Form 6, still lack sociolinguistic competence. As Mizne (1997: ii) observes, 'without this ability, even the most perfectly grammatical utterances can convey a meaning entirely different from that which the speaker intended.' For example, in many cases students evidently do not know the normal social meaning communicated by some of their utterances. They fail to realise that the grammar and lexical meanings of words alone do not account for a person's ability to express one's meaning accurately and appropriately in a foreign or second language. Mizne (1997) terms this phenomenon a problem of pragmatic transfer. Simply put, the problem emerges from a situation where the speaker is unaware of the variances in the cultural rules of speaking and uses the rules of his native culture when communicating in a second language. Such a situation calls for 'the enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language' that Firth and Wagner (1997:285) call for. This is also in line with Mizne's (1997) conclusions that the accurate meanings

of a communication event can only be realised through understanding the cultural and contextual factors.

All these observations indicated that second language teaching should be a holistic process that requires not only the mastery of the structural, discoursal and strategic rules of the language, but also the internalization of sociolinguistic rules. In that way, learners are enabled to choose appropriate forms for the different cross-cultural settings of language use they will encounter (Yu, 2006). The contextual and cultural factors were equated to the sociolinguistic factors focused on in this investigation.

According to Norton and Toohey (2011) the sociolinguistic variables encompass factors like the time and setting of the communication/speech event and the participants' social status, gender and age among others variables like race and sexual orientation. In the present research, I, therefore, sought to explore the extent to which the interaction of these various factors and second language teaching were reflected in the Zimbabwean experience.



1.3 The history of Second Language Acquisition/ Teaching

Corder's pioneering essay of 1967 on '*The significance of learner errors*' and Selinker's (1972) article on 'Interlanguage' roughly mark the beginnings of formal Second Language Acquisition research (Gass and Selinker, 2008). Up till then, the behaviorist account for language acquisition/learning had dominated till Corder's (1967) challenge of the behaviorist account by suggesting that learners make use of intrinsic internal linguistic processes. Selinker (1972) argued that learners possessed their own independent linguistic systems independent from the L1 and L2 (Van Patten and Benati, 2010). Researchers of the early seventies and beyond came up with new theories that further discredited or built onto the earlier theories. Notable examples are Krashen's '*Input Hypothesis theory*' of the 1980s, (Krashen, 1982,1985,1987,) and Chomsky's '*Universal grammar*' (UG), conceptualised in the 60s among others, all of which provided the broad framework in which all second language teaching/learning models were structured.

The resulting three broad teaching model categories as identified by Gas and Selinker (2008), are the learning and the nativist perspectives, on the one hand, and the interactional perspectives, also known as the communicative perspectives, on the other hand. While the former models are driven by sociolinguistic competence objectives, the latter are driven by linguistic competence objectives. This implies that early research findings in teaching/acquisition point to the emerging trends towards the inclusion of sociolinguistic considerations in the teaching of English as a Second language (ESL).

With no single overarching theory for all second language teaching yet identified, further research is called for to fill in the knowledge gaps in the teaching of ESL. Yu (2011) accordingly notes that the second language teaching profession has long been engaged in research to come up with cross-culturally generalizable teaching methods in second language teaching. The direction for such research has invariably been driven by the documented weaknesses of the earlier models, like the grammar and translation methods and the natural approaches, also called the structural approach to language teaching. Cook (2016) says these early teaching models still feature in different ways in current second language teaching.

This observation is also supported by Richards and Rodgers (2001) who observe that the structural models continue to be widely used in different versions and disguises in some parts of the world today. They note that their common distinguishing feature is that they primarily focus on language structures and aim at promoting linguistic competence rather than communicative ability. They also view second language learning as a progression from controlled conscious understanding to automatic actual use of the language outside the classroom. As a result, classroom activities are centred on practice drills and dialogues.

Gas and Selinker (2008) cite trends in the 80s when teaching mostly focused on vocabulary, drills and repetition in line with Skinner's behavioural theories of the 70s which valued punishment and reinforcement. According to Shaffer, Wood and

Willoughby, (2002) the behavioral theories which dominated the 80s, viewed SL learning as learning a set of habits through practice and repetition using situational dialogues, substitution tables and dialogues. Such approaches helped the learners to internalize language structures in the same way habits are formed. Widdowson (1991:160) sums up this approach when he says structuralism is grounded in the belief that “Language learning comes about by teaching learners to know the forms of the language as a medium and the meaning they incorporate.”

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), the nativist theories countered the behavioral theories by proposing that humans are biologically programmed to acquire knowledge about languages through the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), a programmed knowledge of grammatical rules common to all languages. In support of this, Bates (1993) argues that acquisition is made possible because children are born with a powerful brain that matures slowly and predisposes them to acquire new understandings that they are motivated to share with others. This view is also supported by Tomasello (1995). This theory explains why language learning appears to defy logic when learners construct utterances they may not have encountered through practice as advocated by the behavioral theories or everyday language use as suggested by natural language learning processes. Given that the different language theories that have since emerged all have their merits, it is imperative that ESL learning be reconceptualised and the present research intends to give new insights into the ESL classroom practices.

1.4. Reconceptualising Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

As already noted, the earlier models discussed above ignored the sociolinguistic aspects of language learning. Later research work, as reviewed in this study, points to the need for a reconceptualization of second language teaching in a way that opens up for the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors. The need for such a review of ESL teaching practices is also supported by Kramsch (2014) who notes the tension and confusion among ESL teachers with regards to what is taught in the classroom and what the students need in the real world outside the classroom, as will be discussed in detail in

in chapter 2 under the literature. Yu (2006) notes that re-conceptualising ESL teaching is supported by researchers from various related disciplines including, psychology, sociology and linguistics, who confirm the importance of cross-disciplinary contributions to ESL teaching as discussed below.

The Communicative Language Teaching approaches (CLT) emerged as a reaction to the weaknesses of the structural, grammar-based methods, particularly the situational approaches (Richards and Rodgers, 2001; Lucantoni, 2002). These weaknesses became more apparent in the face learners who needed communication skills rather than linguistic skills in the foreign language contexts that they found themselves in for various reasons. Such contexts demanded the use of CLT approaches for best results. Sevignon (2006) traces the elaboration of what is now understood as CLT to the developments in linguistics theory the 20th century in Europe and America due to the increasing number of immigrants.



Researchers from as early as the 90s, amongst them, Nunan (1995) viewed language as a system of expressing meaning and the primary function of language as interaction and communication. Furthermore, they argued that 'consciously learning the grammar' of a language is not synonymous with the ability to use the language in real life situations (Yule, 1999: 193). Such views supported the use of CLT approaches to challenge the artificiality of pattern practice divorced from real life situations, advocated by the grammar based methods.

According to Savignon (2006) research findings have since established that CLT approaches aim to bring language to life by transforming all classroom activities to functional communicative activities like giving and following directions, solving problems, using clues, conversations, dialogues, role plays and debates. Such activities promote the acquisition of communicative skills essential for every-day functions which Yule (2006) earlier contended, should not be memorized but acquired and internalized effortlessly since speech by its very nature is spontaneous. This is in line with Krashen's (1985) distinction between acquisition and learning (Krashen, 1985).

As early as the eighties, researchers like Canale and Swain (1980) differentiate these skills as communicative competence, which involve knowledge of discourse and the sociocultural language rules and linguistic competence which refers to knowledge of grammar and language rules. Developing on these views, Firth and Wagner (1997:285) elaborated on the implied 'contextual and interactional dimension of language' which demanded a reconceptualization of SL teaching. In other words, SL teaching has to go beyond grammar rules, vocabulary lists reading comprehension quizzes or essays. Learning is to be contextualised in specific social settings where learners engage in active negotiation of specific identities with others and are constrained by social factors like gender ethnicity or socioeconomic status (Vitanova, 2005). This implies the opening up of new research-pathways like the present endeavor, a point supported as far back as Taron and Yule (1990) who observe that research into the sociolinguistic perspectives of second language teaching lost its initial momentum following a general sense of disappointment in the type of teaching materials produced.



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The researchers contended that research into communicative competence in second language learning tended to be limited to the study of the learners' mastery of certain types of speech acts in the target language. This approach trivialised language competence to a list of speech acts focusing on the linguistic forms used with no regard to the context of use. Taron and Yule (1990) therefore argue that communicative competence should, instead, involve the construction and comprehension of appropriate sociocultural meaning. Accordingly, Granado (1996) argued that communicative approaches need to be more integrative so that learners are sensitised to the social and interactive functions of utterances within a communicative setting, rather than be furnished with long lists of situations to be learnt. In other words, teaching should encompass all the sociolinguistic phenomena in the communication setting. Scholars are, therefore, challenged to provide supporting evidence through research, as Norton and Toohey (2011) later suggest.

Early research dating back to researchers like Loveday (1982), however, bemoaned the restricted understanding of communicative/sociolinguistic competence and called for research into this area where research so far is still scanty. This view is supported by Granado (1996) who contended that research is needed to inform teachers' appreciation of language as a social phenomenon whereby verbal behavior is embedded in situational and sociocultural frameworks and is dependent on the interrelationship of sociolinguistic factors such as the social status of the speaker, and hearer, the topic of discourse, the setting and the purpose of the interaction.

The present research takes this thrust following up on pioneering research in the role of sociolinguistic factors in language learning including Peirce (1995) who interrogated the importance of social identity, Lantolf, (2000), whose focus was on sociocultural theory and Pennycook (2001) whose area of study was critical ideology studies. They all advocated for the assimilation of sociolinguistic dimensions embedded in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). In support of this view Kramsch (1990) forwarded that current practice then, emphasized the division of language into separate skills. He contended that this was restrictive and detracting from the goal of communication. In later research-work, Kramsch (2015) made propositions for the focus on the cultural context of language practices, the field of language socialization. Against this background, the impending study explored the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching in the Zimbabwean context.

Mede (2015:20) attempts to fill in the knowledge gaps around integrating sociolinguistics competence in SL teaching through her research into teachers perceptions of sociolinguistic competence. Like the present research, she is also spurred by the inconsistency between the language teaching methodologies and the specific needs for language use in the real world, which she observes to have become more distinctive than ever. The same problem is aptly summed up by Kramsch (2014:298) who states that:

...there has never been a greater tension between what is taught in the classroom and what the students will need in the real world once they have left the classroom. In the last

decades, that world has changed to such an extent that language teachers are no longer sure of what they are supposed to teach nor, what real world situations they are supposed to prepare their students for.

Mede (2015) and Kramsch (2014) concur on the seriousness of the lack of sociolinguistic competence exhibited by SL learners when faced with real life communication contexts. Mede (2014) is also concerned about the learners' shortcomings in the actual use of the target language. He argues that teaching/learning English as a Second Language (ESL) today needs not focus on the prescribed curriculum and making the grade, but also the active use of the language in the context of the changing and increasing needs of the globalised world. He concludes that such needs have to be analysed and integrated into the curriculum as they come. These needs are included in the sociolinguistic factors to be focused on in the impending study and therefore have to be clarified.

Firth and Wagner (1997:285) define sociolinguistic factors as 'the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use'. Norton and Toohey (2011) further clarify them as encompassing particular relations of race gender and sexual orientation. In short, language learning has to be contextualised in the target language community, which is not only 'a reconstruction of past communities and historically constituted relationships but also a community of the imagination, a desired community,' (Norton and Toohey, 2011:415), thus summing up the case for sociolinguistic considerations in second language teaching.

As the research work on sociolinguistic factors in language teaching ensue, observations made by Pica's (2005) in her review of research work in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), influenced my study in many ways. She notes that the relevance of classroom practice in informing (SLA) research and in being informed by its results necessitates that SLA researchers and SLA practitioners work together to design studies and interpret their findings. My study follows suit since it is derived from both theory and classroom practice.

Through his investigation, Bayyurt (2013) inspires my focus on sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching. He concludes that the inclusion of cultural elements in second language teaching help learners understand new English concepts and provides a new context for their use. The research does not exhaust the elusive concept of culture, hence, my research further explores sociolinguistic factors are closely linked to culture.

All the literature reviewed indicates that the research gap in the area of sociolinguistic factors in language teaching is insatiable since societies and second language theories are ever changing. My research is one contribution that should, hopefully, encourage many more enterprises to come.

1.5 The research problem

Disagreements about the place of linguistic competence and communicative competence are rife. These disagreements are compounded by the evident misconceptions among second language teachers about sociolinguistic competence or what it means to command a language. These contentions attracted the attention of researchers as early as the 90s when issues relating to sociolinguistic and communicative competence were considered to be at the heart of contemporary research (Van Pattern & Lee, 1990). Since then researchers, including, Kramsch (1990, 2006, 2009, 2015), Bayyurt, (2013), Angel 2015 and a host of others later reviewed in the present research have focused on different related themes. These researchers were all spurred by the lack of sociolinguistic or communicative competence among learners; a problem that informed the present research. The problem manifests in the quality of the first year university students in Zimbabwe today. After as many as 14 years of learning and using ESL as the media of instruction, I observed that the students still exhibit lack of communicative competence of the sociolinguistic aspects of language.

1.5.1 Research question

The present research is, therefore, guided by the questions:

- How is the interplay between socio-linguistic factors and second language teaching manifested in the teaching of English at O' level in Zimbabwe?

To answer this question, I address the following questions:

1. To what extent does Second language teaching in Zimbabwe consider the sociolinguistic setting?
2. What are the teachers' views about integrating language and sociolinguistics in English as a second language teaching?
3. To what extent is the teaching material relevant for teaching the 'culture' of the target language?

1.5.2 Research aims and objectives

Through exploring the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching/learning, the objectives of the study were:

- To show the ways in which sociolinguistic factors feed second language teaching.
- To evaluate the sociolinguistic consideration embedded in the Zimbabwean second language teaching materials and practices.
- To proffer a model of teaching that aims at communicative competence.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This research is situated within the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theoretical framework (Halliday, 1995; Eggins 2004; Garcia, 2014). This theoretical framework departs from linguistic theories concerned with language as a mental process and is closely aligned to sociology. It explores how language is used in social contexts to achieve specific goals. The framework also addresses communicative competence, an aspect of second language teaching that has not been fixed nor easily defined. This aspect is closely related to the sociolinguistic factors focused by the present research.

According to O'Donnell (2011), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) focuses on language function rather than language structure. Therefore, SFL is concerned with the system and functions of language (Systemic functional) where two kinds of relations are addressed. These are:

- i. Syntagmatic relations (the order of linguistic elements within a larger unit).
- ii. Paradigmatic relations (the elements that can be substituted for each other in a particular context).

These relations are derived from the sociolinguistic milieu of the language teaching setting and imply a view of language in its total expressive and communicative thrust (Kramsch, 1990), enshrined in the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) models popularized in the early seventies to challenge earlier models (Audiolingual Approaches) which focused on correct output by students imitating the native speaker (Granado, 1996). Early researchers like Canal and Swain (1980) and Spolsky (1989) concur with this stance. They further contended that the rules of grammar are meaningless without the rules of use. They proposed a taxonomy of three distinct but related types of competences which contemporary researchers, curriculum designers and implementers now find even more relevant. The competences are:

- Grammatical competence (correctness),
- Sociolinguistic competence (appropriacy) and
- Strategic competency (effectiveness).

The adoption of these competences as guidelines for framing the goals of teaching English as a second language is backed by Spolsky (1989:3) who argues that the goals of a formal second language course should distinguish between knowledge and use as well as various levels of automaticity and accuracy in language use. Grammatical competence accounts for accuracy and automaticity, while sociolinguistic and strategic competences account for the correct use. Therefore, a Systemic Functional Linguistic

(SFL) theoretical framework is opted for in analyzing the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and ESL.

This theory is appropriate in conceptualising the ideal teaching practices of English as a second language since it contextualises all teaching in the environment in which the language is learnt. As Halliday and Hasan (1995) contend, it takes more than a collection or organisation of lexical items for a text to make sense therefore, it is necessary to have some further information about the environment of that text. The SFL theory focuses on everything that may be necessary for a text to make sense or the way that a connection is made with the culture. This echoes the sociolinguistic factors focused on in the present study.

1.7. Research design

In the section below I outline the research design that was adopted in the present research. I opted for the Mixed Methods (MM) design encompassing a combination of the descriptive survey and the case study. This would enable collection of credible results with the two sets of data, both qualitative and quantitative, complementing each other.

According to Creswell (2014), the MM research design represents an approach to examining a research problem rather than a methodology. This implies that it cannot be defined in absolute terms but varies in the way different data collection procedures are blended. In that regard, Creswell (2014) contends that the MM design falls somewhere in the continuum between the qualitative and quantitative paradigms, depending on the researcher's preferences. Suffice to say, it should not be confused with triangulation as will be discussed in chapter 4.

Creswell (ibid) contends that the MM design is best suited for research problems that require:

- i. a real-life contextual examination and understandings of multi-level perspectives, and cultural influences.

- ii. An intentional application of rigorous quantitative research assessing magnitude and frequency of constructs and rigorous qualitative research exploring the meaning and understanding of the constructs and
- iii. An objective of drawing on the strengths of quantitative and qualitative data gathering techniques to formulate a holistic interpretive framework for generating possible solutions or new understandings of the problem.

Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) and other proponents of the model posit that the Mixed Methods design is not merely a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods but a new 'third way' epistemological paradigm that occupies the conceptual space between positivism and interpretivism. They contend that the design is most suitable for generating new knowledge and insights or uncover hidden insights, patterns, or relationships that a single methodological approach might not reveal. A major strength of this design among others is that it generates more complete knowledge and understanding of the research problem that can be used to increase the generalizability of findings applied to theory or practice. The major weakness of this design is that it generates multiple forms of data to be analysed which demands extensive time and resources to carry out the multiple steps involved in data gathering and interpretation (Creswell, 2007).

1.7.1 Case study

The case study is essentially an in-depth study which narrows down a broad field of research into one or a few researchable examples. This design is most suitable when not much is known about an issue or phenomenon as is the case with sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching. According to Yin (2003) the approach excels at bringing out an understanding of a complex issue through a detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. I opted for this approach because it allows me the flexibility to apply a variety of methodologies to gather data on second language teaching from a variety of sources within the 'case' in investigating the research problem so that the data can be so triangulated that it can be reasonably generalised.

1.7.2 Descriptive Survey

According to Lisa (2007), descriptive survey is most suitable for providing answers to the questions of who, what, when, where, and how associated with a particular research problem. The survey provides large amounts of data for detailed analysis leading to important recommendations. I, therefore, chose this design because it is most suited for obtaining information concerning the current status of the phenomena and to describe what exists with respect to variables or conditions in a situation, in this case how the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and language teaching is manifested in language teaching. However, I realised that a descriptive study would not conclusively ascertain answers to 'why?' which is where the advantages of the mixed approaches came in.



1.7.3 The data collection instruments

In this section I outline the data collection procedures that were adopted in the present research. As already mentioned, the strength of my research is derived from the volume of data collected. Therefore, data were collected using four complementing data collection strategies as outlined below. This enabled the triangulation of data, and clarification of issues that may not have been clearly stated.

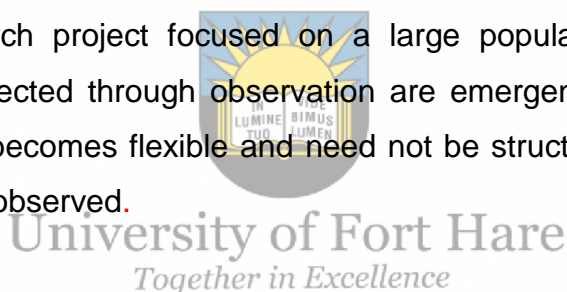
1.7.4 Document analysis

Analyses focused on the school syllabus' provisions as provided by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Zimbabwe. Therefore, I analysed the 'O' level syllabus document, the supplementary document and the assessment scheme. These are documents that spell out the macro level decisions (policy level) on second language teaching and therefore prescribe the commitment or otherwise to incorporating sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching. Thereafter, I analysed the local (school level) documents, the school syllabus, the teachers' records,

pupils' work, assessment schemes and the teaching materials. These are documents that reflect the micro level (teachers') understanding and interpretation of language policy and therefore show the extent to which the sociolinguistics factors are incorporated.

1.7.5 Observation

An adaptation of the Communicative Orientation of language Teaching (COLT) scheme (Allen, Frohlich & Spada, 1984) was used to observe teachers in session. The scheme is considered to be the most comprehensive tool for classroom observation developed so far (Nunan, 1995) and it matched the purposes of the present research. I opted for the observational technique because it provides useful insights into a phenomenon and avoids the ethical and practical difficulties of setting up a large and cumbersome research project focused on a large population. Rosenbaum (2010) posits that data collected through observation are emergent rather than pre-existing therefore my study becomes flexible and need not be structured around a hypothesis about what is being observed.



1.7.6 Questionnaire

Two sets of questionnaires were used. The first was a semi-structured questionnaire modelled against Cook's (1991) four-tier assessment scheme for assessing the teaching styles preferred by different teachers. The second questionnaire was modelled against the Communicative Language Teaching Model 'COLT' scheme to assess the inclination of the actual teaching practices towards including sociolinguistic factors to meet communicative goals, also referred to as communicative competence, by the different teachers.

1.7.7 Interview

An interview, designed on the same lines as the questionnaire so that the sets of data complement each other was used. The purposes of the interviews were two pronged.

First, they served to clarify the issues not clearly presented in or omitted in the questionnaire responses and secondly, to triangulate data collected through the two instruments. This was meant to render the results more comprehensive and relevant for generalisation.

1.7.8 Data presentation and analysis

Data were collected and collated in various forms including narrative, graphic and tabular form. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis procedures were employed to analyse the data. In depth and statistical analysis was used to draw meanings and insights from the data.

1.7.9 Population and sample

The population for the study was all the English teachers in secondary schools in Zimbabwe from which teachers in the Midlands Province which has 38 secondary schools was drawn as a representative case study.



1.7.10 Subjects

English Language at O' level in the Midlands Province was the subject for the study. Samples were accordingly drawn from this subject.

1.7.11 Sampling

Stratified random sampling was used to extract the sample of 150 respondents to be used for the study. The stratified random sampling technique was chosen to insure that a representative sample in terms of the gender of the respondents and the categories of the schools from which the subjects were drawn, was realised.

1.8 Significance of the study

Ellis (1997) contends that most of the knowledge on Language learning has been discovered in only the last twenty years, yet many teaching methods are much older. Therefore, second language acquisition (SLA) as a field of study and in particular, the investigation of sociolinguistic competence/communicative competence is a fairly new field of study. Research in this field is most welcome to inform more proficient teaching methods, appropriate school curricula, and insights into different practices are established. My study breaks fairly new ground by focusing on the interplay between language teaching and sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching in Zimbabwe.

Local studies carried so far are still scanty and so practices in Zimbabwe are mostly grounded in theories developed and tried out in foreign contexts. Second language teaching in colonial Zimbabwe was modelled against the native speakers' education system disregarding the prevailing sociolinguistic factors. The sociolinguistic environment was made even more complex by the unfolding socio-political and economic changes in the aftermath of independence. Only a few studies have so far focused on the transformation of language teaching from Cambridge to ZIMSEC from the sociolinguistic environmental perspective.

The research is, therefore, important resource base to inform curriculum designers in re-aligning the ESL teaching in line with contemporary theory and local needs. For the teachers, it highlights new perspectives that inform them on best practices. The research charts the way towards a holistic approach to language teaching that will benefit learners by providing a balance between linguistic and communicative competence.

1.9 Envisaged ethical issues

Since researchers are guided by ethical principles, which include the responsibility for the protection and the interests of the respondents as well as informed access consent, (Denscombe, 2010)), I completed the Ethical Clearance form from Fort Hare University

and returned it to the university through the supervisor. I also sought clearance from the relevant ministry, (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education) and ensured that I established a cordial rapport with the respondents, who also signed a consent form before the interviews and questionnaires were administered.

The study topic involved ethical and professional issues like fear of being labelled out of compliance with the ministry's language teaching policies. In many schools teachers are given incentives based on the percentage pass-rates achieved. Where teachers deliberately sacrifice their sound theoretically grounded second language teaching practices to get the results, they are likely to be dishonest in their responses. For example, teachers are aware that the ZIMSEC curriculum advocates for communicative approaches yet an O' level pass can be achieved through drilling methods. To minimise the problem, I assured the respondents of the purely academic interests of the research and the strict confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaires minimised threatening questions in relation to the teacher's methodologies.

1.10 Intellectual Property Considerations

The research was subjected to all the terms and conditions of the property rights as sanctioned by Fort Hare University with regards to doctoral students. The relevant forms were completed and submitted to the university authorities before I commenced the project.

1.11 Structure of the Thesis

The research report is structured into six chapters. Chapter 1 gives the introduction and background of the study so that the research is contextualized. This is followed up by an outline of the Theoretical framework within which the research is situated. In Chapter 2, related literature is reviewed to identify the knowledge gaps that the research sought to fill, define and re-contextualize second language teaching and clarify the concepts around sociolinguistic factors and culture. In chapter 3 I outline the theoretical framework that guided the research.

Chapter 4 outlines the research design and methodologies used in the research. The chapter also explains the data collection instruments, the sampling designs and the analysis use. The data are then presented in Chapter 5 and analysed in chapter 6. The structure of Chapter 5 and 6 is guided by the research questions so that data are presented and discussed under the thematic titles derived from the research questions. Chapter 7 wraps up the report with the summary conclusion and recommendations.

1.12 Conclusion

In this chapter, the background of the problem and the present study were presented. The chapter served to provide a statement of the problem as well as contextualising the problem of incorporating sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching. Furthermore, the chapter introduced the methodology to be adopted; outlining its inherent advantages and disadvantages to justify why it was opted for, rather than the traditional qualitative or quantitative paradigms. The chapter wound up with a summary of the entire report structure. In chapter 2, I will interrogate the available literature so as to define the knowledge gaps that the present research sought to fill in and the get insights into the methodologies that can be adopted into a research of is nature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0. Introduction

In chapter 1, the background to the research was presented. This chapter focuses on conceptually related literature. The literature reviewed will be thematically related to the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching as investigated in the present study. A major objective of the chapter is to extract working definitions of the pertinent constructs relating to sociolinguistics and culture to be explored in this study. The chapter contextualises the present research so that what prevails in second language teaching in Zimbabwe today can be viewed as part of the global trends in the teaching of ESL. To achieve these objectives, I describe some comparable research findings from the local (Zimbabwean) and international spectrum to be employed as a base for the present initiative. I also draw attention to the salient sociolinguistic factors that could easily pass unnoticed and I extract insights into methodological and theoretical considerations that illuminate the thrust of my research and give a foretaste of what is to come.

The chapter, therefore, starts off by exploring early research and literature on ESL and Second language acquisition theory. This is done to give the background which has fed theory and practice in contemporary language pedagogy. Notably, the review goes as far back as Kachru's (1985) propositions on the global spread of the English language across the globe as espoused in his cyclic model. Rationalising the model with later developments Kachru and Nelson (2006) and Schneider's (2007) dynamic model of post-colonial Englishes (Schneider, 2007), the literature review positions the present study in the context of the spread and diversification of the English language as a result of both colonization and the prominence of the United States and the United Kingdom in contemporary global society.

The literature review builds up to the conclusion that Zimbabwe typically falls within the 'outer circle' as defined by Kachru (1985). Therefore, the review literature gives insights into the nature, source and impact of the sociolinguistic factors at play for what has emerged as an unparalleled world language (ESL) in the outer circle. Insights are drawn from Kachru's (1985) contentions about how different countries depending on their location, adopted the English language. I also focus on the propositions and implications of how the English language should be taught in the outer circle with specific reference to the sociolinguistic factors that interact with language teaching drawn from related research findings.

2.1 Definitions of pertinent terms

In the following section I define the pertinent terms that will feature through-out the report. It is important that these terms be clarified and contextualised to enable the reader to focus on the perspectives from which the present research was conceptualised.

2.1.1 Culture



Research so far has not exhausted the definitions of the elusive concept of culture- and sociolinguistics in the context of teaching English as a second language. Alptekin (2002; 58) considers the teaching process to be 'a kind of enculturation, where one acquires new cultural frames of reference and a new world view, reflecting those of the target language culture and its speakers.' Such a view of language teaching necessitates a clear definition of culture. Early attempts to define culture include Bates and Plog (1991:7) who defined culture as 'the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, and artefacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning.' Brown (2005) gives a similar definition of culture as comprising of a society's daily life style, artistic work, language religion and traditions. He further contends that culture includes values, ways behaviour considered important in a

specific community, family, hospitality, fairness and other daily routines. Within each community, culture determines the communication style, social values, norms, beliefs attitudes and behaviours to be exhibited.

From these views, culture may be seen as static and transmitted from generation to generation, a point countered by Corbett (2003). They contend that culture is dynamic and always in a state of flux. In other words, it is continuously constructed and reconstructed as new knowledge and experiences are acquired. They further argue that culture emerges and transforms as a result of interaction in different contexts. In other words, culture is situated in social contexts that are constructed from the cultural background. As a result Corbett (2003) further argues that culture cannot be uniform throughout a nation since individual nations have diverse ethnic groups with different cultures.



Sarigul and Ashton (2005:2) identify two types of culture, the 'visible and invisible culture.' They posit that visible culture is readily more apparent. It refers to the style of dress, cuisine, festivals, customs and other traditions. The visible culture covers what Loveday (1982:34) earlier terms 'the aesthetic sense (media, cinema, music and literature,' as well as the sociological sense, family education, work leisure and traditions. On the other hand invisible culture refers to 'the sociocultural norms, world views, beliefs assumptions and values' (Loveday, 1982:34). Loveday (1982) earlier labels this the semantic sense (conceptions and thought processes as well as the pragmatic sense) sociolinguistic sense or appropriacy in language use.

Early researchers have always linked culture with language teaching. For example, Loveday (1982) and Adaskou et al. (1990) explore broader perspectives of culture that link up culture with foreign language teaching. This view is supported by Brown (2005) who argues that the two cannot be separated without losing a significant part of either language or culture. Farnia and Raja (2009) further add that language teaching and culture are inseparable since the two are so enmeshed that one cannot think of language without thinking of the culture.

Culture, is thus, closely linked to Kachru's (1985) controversial model, to be discussed later in this chapter, particularly the 'norm developing' and 'norm adopting' roles ascribed to different nations within the circle. Norms are imbedded in culture and are therefore an important component of the sociolinguistic factors focused in his study. In the face of Kachru's proposition (as cited by Buyyurt, 2013:69) that 'no country and no culture can claim sole ownership of the English language.'

These definitions of culture and norms are inconclusive and present a challenge for theorists and researchers alike to define who determines the what; and whose culture, norms and standards are in play in the teaching of English as a second language in different settings. Research also has to explore the teachability of culture in second language pedagogy as well as the content and nature of the sociolinguistic milieu that interact with second language teaching. It is, therefore, imperative that I highlight some important insights into sociolinguistics and sociolinguistic factors.



2.1.2 Sociolinguistic factors

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Zhang and Wang (2016:830) define sociolinguistics as 'the study of language in relation to society.' They view it as a branch of science that analyses the relationship between language and society on the basis of its use in diverse social contexts. They concur with Bayyurt (2013) who posits that one of the mandates of sociolinguistics is to investigate the aims and functions of language in society to build and sustain meaningful relationships.

According to Zhang and Wang (2016), sociolinguistics is a break-away from the pure linguistics tradition that views linguistics as the study of the language, that is, its grammar and rules. Instead, the new contemporary view is that linguistics focuses on the relationship between the language and social factors. Zhang and Wang (2016) explain that the study of linguistics attempts to explain how language differs from one context to another across geographical borders and how people in one area communicate with people from another area. In short, they argue that linguistics explores the sociolinguistic

phenomena that differentiate different communication settings, opening up a more extensive new field which according to Zengheng (2006) benefits second language teaching in the following two ways:

- Extending theoretical linguistics in the direction of language learning and teaching to enable the teacher to make better curriculum decisions on the goals and content of second language teaching.
- Providing insights and implications of linguistic theories on language pedagogy (Zhengheng, 2006).

Bhushan (2011:311) contends that one benefit of sociolinguistics is that it ensures that language is treated in a social context. He argues that if language learning is to have value in human terms, teaching should relate to the society because 'languages are taught and learnt to establish contact and communication across language boundaries.' He further says language teaching as a deliberate intervention into ethno-linguistic relations best achieved through the incorporation of sociolinguistic and cultural factors that contribute to the bilingualism of a society, as focused in the present study.

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The sociolinguistic phenomena as defined by Bayyurt (2013) include, among other things language registers, varieties, context, pragmatic universals, and modes of interaction among people. In short, the sociolinguistic milieu relate to how language is used in diverse social contexts and the appropriateness of language used in terms of etiquette, inter-personal relationships, and regional dialects. All this is closely related to culture and implies that sociolinguistic factors; and culture are inseparable and invaluable in second language teaching. Yonglin (2004) further argues that understanding the socio-linguistic factors is facilitated by understanding what culture they are drawn from.

Bayyurt (2013) equates culture to the setting or context, which could, for example, be a shopping mall in the city centre or a growth point, while the role relationship could be a distant or close acquaintance. This implies that the teaching of English as a second language in a broader sense, should involve the teaching of communication in the

second language through the use of correct register, or appropriate varieties of the language for different contexts. This is also referred to as the context of situation espoused by Hymes (1972) in his communicative competence theory which is the theoretical framework of my research.

2.2. Contextualising language teaching

In the section below, I explore different theoretical perspective perspectives of how ESL has been adopted in different nations across the globe. Based on these perspectives I contextualise the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe.

As already noted in chapter 1, English has become a world language so widely adopted as a foreign or second language across the globe that its native users are now grossly outnumbered by the non-native users (Seidlhofer, 2005). In the emerging global village where English is the *lingua franca*; used as the language of technology, academia, art, financial, diplomatic interactions and other activities, Alptekin, (2002) observes that new challenges emerge. Notably, the teaching of ESL has become a world-wide phenomenon taught in as many diverse contexts as there are countries that have adopted the use of the English language across the globe. Furthermore Alptekin (ibid) contends that notion of communicative competence variously challenged through such globalisation.

The bottom line is that people from different language and cultural backgrounds use English to communicate in various settings and context. As this happens all the speakers in the communicative event; the native and non-native alike, are engaged in the specific intercultural context and require strategies for interpreting cultures and languages when they communicate. Therefore understanding how ESL is to be taught to enable communicative competence in these different contexts requires that the nations that use the English language across the globe be categorised. Kachru (2005) provides a practical cyclic model that can be used as basis for such classification.

2.2.1. Kachrus cycle model

Kachru (2005) refers to his 1985 cyclic model which attempts to categorise all the nations on the globe in terms of their adoption and use of the English language. His model provides invaluable insights into the different contexts of language usage in different nations. Furthermore, the model classifies all the countries that use the English language into three categories:

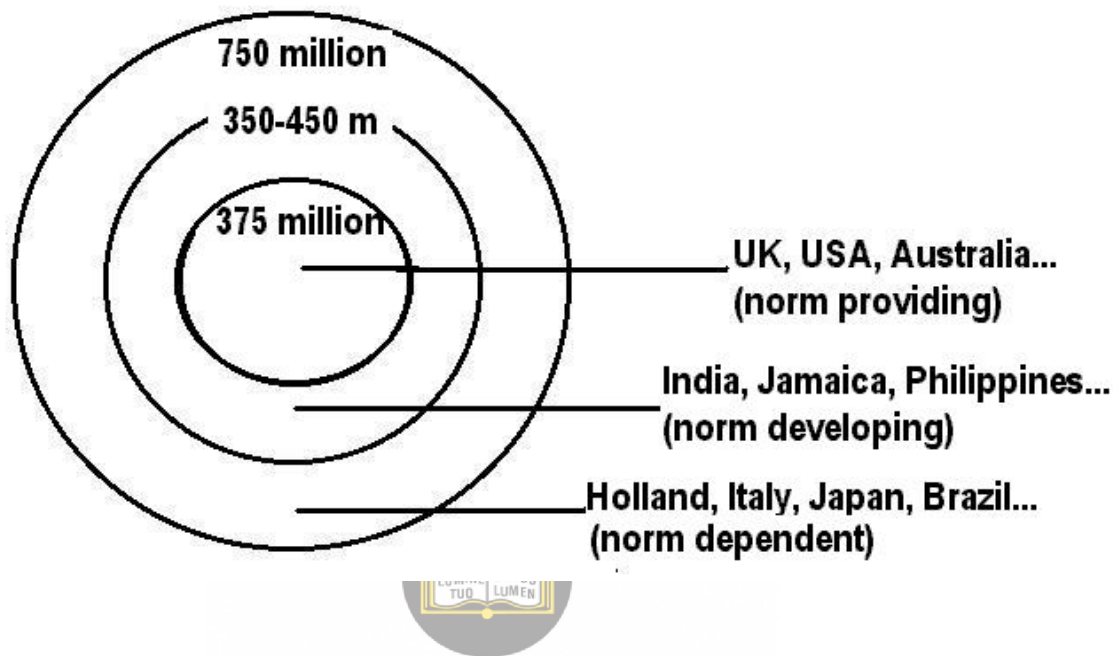
- the inner circle,
- the outer circle and
- the expanding circle

The inner circle is at the core from which the language spread out to the other circles. The model is diagrammatically represented as three concentric circles with the inner circle at the core, in the figure below:



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Fig.1 Kachru's model



Adopted from Kachru (2005) **University of Fort Hare**
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According to Kachru (2005), countries like the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Australia fall under the inner circle category. These nations are either the home countries of the language or nations to which very large numbers of people migrated from the United Kingdom. Kachru's (2005) model classifies these countries as the core English speaking countries. He estimates the number of English language speakers in this category at 375 million.

In these countries, English is naturally the first or dominant language. Kachru (1985) contends the inner circle countries are 'the traditional bases of English, dominated by the 'mother tongue varieties of the English language.' They are, therefore, defined as the 'norm providing.' In other words, all linguistic norms inclusive of the socio-linguistic aspects are set or developed in these countries and spread outwards to the outer and

expanding circles. The inner circle countries set the contentious, 'native-speaker competence' ideal which some teaching models aim for. Scheneider (2007) explains that this is what accounts for the classification of English language varieties like American or British English.

Also referred to as 'norm developing,' the outer circle comprises of countries which are all former British colonies like Zimbabwe, which is the context of the present research. I discuss the contentions and implications for second language teaching in the outer circle in detail later. English is not the native language but is adopted as the official language. On the other hand, according to Kachru's model (Kachru, 2005) the Expanding Circle includes much of the rest of the world where the English language plays no historical or government role. Countries in the expanding circle wilfully adopt English for specific or limited purposes, spurred by the realisation of its importance in the global village. The expanding circle, thus, represents the type of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional allocation of the English language in diverse cultural contexts as illustrated by Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model.

Kachru (1985) defines the expanding circle nations as norm-dependent. In other words, they rely on the standards set by native speakers in the inner and the non-native speakers in the outer circles so that there is a one-directional flow. English is therefore taught as a foreign language based on the standards set in the Inner and Outer Circles. In real terms, this translates, for example, to the teaching of English for business or academic purposes. Kachru (2005) estimates the total number of users of English in this category at 750 million.

2.3. The outer circle: contentions and implications

In the section below, I interrogate the contentions and criticisms raised against the cyclic model. In so doing, I raise awareness to the different perspectives that will foster a better understanding of the theorisation of the spread of English across the globe and the implications to the teaching of ESL in these different contexts.

2.3.1. A Dynamic theory perspective

As already noted the outer circle refers to former colonial states such as Zimbabwe where English language has been adopted as a second language. The mother tongue influences and transfers in this context are important sociolinguistic factors to contend with. One view of the importance of the contextual factors or setting in the teaching of ESL is proffered by Schneider's Dynamic model of the spread of English (Schneider, 2007). This theoretical framework explains the dynamics of a foreign language variety (English) referred to as 'Post-colonial Englishes'; 'how it sheds its foreignness to become an indigenous language in the areas to which it was transported by the forces of colonialism,' as Eggert (2008) puts it. From this theoretical model, I classify the context of my research Zimbabwe, under phase five of Schneider's proposed five phases which are the:

- Foundation
- Exonormative
- Differentiation



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I will discuss the Dynamic theory later in chapter three under the theoretical framework.

2.3.2. 'The English today' debate

Kachru (2005) notes that whereas in the inner circle, the English language is native, in the outer circle the prominence of the English language was imposed by the Historical impact of colonisation. This implies the power distance between the coloniser or native speakers who set up colonial governments in different nations where they imposed English language as the official language. Nations in the outer circle category are, therefore, defined as both 'norm-developing,' and norm adopting. In other words, the outer circle nations both adopt and develop their own norms. Kachru (1997) concurs that the norms in the outer circle come officially from the inner circle, but local norms also play a powerful role in dictating everyday usage in that setting.

Kachru (1985) estimates the total number of the English language users in the outer circle to range from 350 million to 450 million. As the official language, English, therefore, still plays a major role in various post-colonial national institutions. According to Jenkins (2006), the English language permeates the home and other social functions and is typically transmitted through the school but is not necessarily the home language in the outer circle. Through these processes, different Englishes have consequently, emerged in different former colonies precipitating 'the world Englishes debate' (Nordquist, 2015) partially focused in the present research.

The 'World Englishes paradigm' forms the core of what came to be known as the 'English today debate' (Seidlhofer, 2005), an area which touches on the different labels given to the numerous non-native varieties of English, including English as a Second Language (ESL), which is associated with the spread of English language. In that respect, Jenkins (2006:158) draws attention to 'the teaching and learning of English in relation to the realities of the language's current spread and use.' She also notes the absence of publications of articles oriented to the theme of World Englishes in TESOL Quarterly up to 2003 and the persistent scantiness of articles thereafter. Jenkins (2006: ibid) calls this 'a bizarre state' considering the fact that many scholars concur that World Englishes speakers vastly outnumber native speakers.

The thrust of the present endeavour is to investigate the teaching of English as a second language in relation to the realities of the current spread and use of English is most welcome. Locally contextualised research is scanty and the available literature only gives a foretaste of some of the challenges related to theorising the spread of English and the world Englishes paradigm as discussed below.

2.3.3. The 'World Englishes paradigm'

Jenkins (2006) contends that much work is yet to be done in terms of both theorising and practices around the world Englishes paradigm. She further contends that the controversy of confirming world Englishes is an area of much research interest in what came to be known as 'the English today debate' which pits the liberation linguistics and the deficit linguistics championed by researchers like Kachru (1997). Within this debate, researchers are concerned with whether native-like competence should be the ideal for the teaching of English in different contexts and, therefore, the relevance of the Englishes paradigm.

Bolton (2004) identifies three possible definitions of the expression 'World Englishes' (WE). Firstly, it can be viewed as 'an umbrella label' for all varieties of the English language world-wide; the methods for its analysis and description. Alternatively, it is the restricted view of the so called new Englishes in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, labelled the outer circle in Kachru's (1985) model. Lastly, Bolton (2004) says the term could also refer to the pluricentric approach to the study of English associated with Kachru (2005) and his colleagues, also referred to as the Kachruvian approach. While the last two paradigms overlap, Jenkins (2006) points out that the former is also substituted for nativised, indigenised, institutionalised and new Englishes or English as a second language, which is the focus of my research. The latter is also referred to as International or Global English.

The Global Englishes paradigm views English as a lingua franca. Bolton (2004) says that the interlocutors who use English as a lingua franca are in a multilingual setting. In that context the language is seen in its diversity rather than the restricted code defined by the inner circle speakers. In other words, the language has to open up to the influences of local factors otherwise it fails to achieve the communicative roles in the diverse contexts it has now come to be used as a world language. This implies corresponding adjustments to teaching English as a second language. This theme is later explored in the review of language teaching theory below and also investigated in the present research under the label of the interplay between second language teaching

and sociolinguistic factors. The discussions that result, the native and non-native speaker distinction emerges as a major construct.

2.3.4. The native and non-native speaker distinction

Kachru's model makes several contentious propositions that are of interest to second language researchers. One such contention raised Seidlhofer (2005) is the over-reliance of the model on the fundamental distinction between native speakers of English in the inner circle and non-native speakers in the outer and expanding circles. In fact, the whole model is premised on an arbitrary distinction and categorisation of all nations on the globe as users of the English language in one way or another.

From these nations, one category emerges as the 'native user' whose language may be considered standard. Seidlhofer (2005) revisits the position on Standard English arguing that it is difficult to define. The problem arises from the fact that there are, so far, no precise definitions of the terms 'native speaker' (NS) and 'non-native speaker' (NNS). Nevertheless, the model labels inner circle and outer circle Englishes, (old) and (new), respectively, on the basis of that distinction. Seidlhofer (2004) notes that such a view is overly value-laden; it presumes that historically younger English varieties in the outer circle are inferior to the older varieties. It also presents problems for the outer circle to determine the balance of the sociolinguistic-mix and the nature of the interplay with second language teaching that should impact on second language teaching in their contexts. She further argues that in terms of numbers of speakers and domains of use, an insistence of Standard English as the norm is difficult to justify. She, therefore, presents a strong case for the outer and expanding circles to develop their own norms rather than depend on the inner circle.

Research work by Heller and Jones (2001) shows how teachers bring other varieties of English into the multilingual classroom. This amounts to the inclusion of sociocultural factors also similarly focused in the present research which is contextualised in the outer circle. Other problems relating to the native speaker's distinctions proposed by

Kachru's (1985) model are also noted by Mooney and Evans (2015). They contend that even among the inner circle nations, as obviously in the other circles, the English used is not homogeneous. In other words, while the inner circle nations are arguably recognised as the authentic speakers, the variations among them make it problematic to define what counts as 'standard English.' The notion of Standard English presents challenges for researchers to identifying what sociolinguistic factors to incorporate in teaching the target language in the outer and inner circles in the quest towards the so called, 'standard language.' The thrust of my research is to explore what language teaching goals are to be aimed for in the outer circle (Zimbabwe) and through what kind of interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors these goals can be achieved?

2.3.5. The skewed distribution of language users within Kachru's model

Another problem related to Kachru's (1985) model of English language-user categories as native and non-native stems from the skewed distribution of users among the three concentric circles. Within that framework, the inner circle, the so called native speakers, estimated at 750 million users Kachru (2005), as already noted, constitutes a glaring minority of the English language users. Romaine (2006) notes that the native speakers still exert strong proprietary rights over the English language, despite their numbers. From Kachru's (2005) point of view, as already discussed, Romaine (2006) observes that the so called native speakers are the norm providers and therefore determine what sociolinguistic norms to include in language teaching for both the outer and extending circles, to a great extent.

My research explores whether restriction of norms to the inner circle is still prudent in the face of the global nature that the English language has achieved? The emergency of the 'World Englishes Paradigm,' as discussed by Jenkins (2006) and explored in 2.4.2 above, presents interesting areas for future research and insights into why not all language learners need to be preoccupied with being understood by the native speaker. After all, no native speakers can claim full proprietary rights over the language since the

global spread of the language has evidently outgrown those limitations (Kachru, 1985, 2005)

The contentions around proprietary ownership of the English language also emerge from the power relations that exist between native speakers and non-native or local users in the aftermath of colonisation. Linguistic research has focused on different related themes. These include, Norton and Toohey (2011) and Block (2003), who focus on power ownership and identity in second language teaching, identity and investment in language learning. The researchers also explored identity, voice and the development of hybrid English speaker identities. All these themes are closely linked to the theme of the present research which explored the inclusion of culture and sociolinguistics in language teaching. The research builds onto the findings of earlier research-work whose combined thrust was to illuminate some of the concerns that arise in English language pedagogy in different cultural settings. In particular, they relate to the theme of what Jenkins (2006:157) terms, the 'teaching and learning of English in relation to the realities of the language's current spread and use.' In essence this translates to affirmation of the world Englishes paradigm where the English language is affected by the power politics in the way it is adopted and taught; how the language teaching accommodates local and target language norms.

2.4 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

In this section I review some conceptually related research findings. These include studies into Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which is one way of incorporating sociolinguistic factors in language teaching and other works that explore the inclusion of culture in language teaching. I focus particularly on propositions forwarded by Bayyurt (2013) against which I will fashion my research. From the investigations reviewed, I draw insights that are adopted as the basis for the present research. It has to be noted that locally based (Zimbabwe) research-work in this area is scanty therefore the insights drawn from the foreign based research are yet to be tried out locally.

2.4.1 Insights drawn from Bayyurt (2013)

In the following section I focus on various insights drawn from Bayyurt (2013) concerning current perspectives on sociolinguistic and English Language Education. As will be noted further in the data analysis (chapter 6) Bayyurt's perspectives inspired the conception of the present research in many ways.

Bayyurt (2013) contends that foreign and second language teaching should have two broad goals which are:

- Mastering the formal properties of the language and practising to use the language in communication settings created in the classroom set-up.
- Using the language to actually communicate with people outside the classroom.

He further says that verbal communication of this nature among people falls in the realm of sociolinguistics, also labelled as the process of understanding socio-cultural theory and linguistics to achieve communicative competence. Bayyurt (2013:69) also examines the position and significance of sociolinguistics in second language teaching along three dimensions:

- Attitudes towards the target language,
- Inclusion of culture and
- The contribution of planning to foreign language education.

2.4.1.1. Attitudes

Research confirms the importance of attitudes as an important factor in second language teaching. The case for considering this sociolinguistic factor in second language teaching is further developed by Bhushan (2011) through a related study. He argues that the language teacher fares better if he can relate the language to society. The assumption is that languages are taught and learnt to establish contact as well as communication across language boundaries. He further contends that the society and culture; are more than a background and context of language teaching. They both

represent the target community with whom the learners eventually must interact with if language learning is to have any value in human terms.

Bhushan (2011) identifies socio-cultural factors that affect motivation, such as the relative social status of the first language and the second language, the instrumental value of the second language, the cultural value of the second language and political factors. As Bhushan (2011) concludes, research into these areas plays a major role in informing second language pedagogy and profoundly influencing the quality of language programmes as does the present research. Thus, Bhushan (2011) implies that language teaching is a deliberate intervention into ethno-linguistic relations and it demands effective planning to contribute to the bilingualism of a society. My research follows suit in an area and context that is still thinly researched

2.4.1.2 Inclusion of culture and sociolinguistic factors.

Controversy surrounds the extent to which culture should be incorporated in foreign and second language teaching. One view first noted by Canagarajah and Canagarajah (1999) and later expanded on by Canagarajah (2006b) is the non-committal stance. In the extreme, researchers in this ilk argue that incorporating the culture of both the foreign and the native languages is undesirable. They argue for a culture free curriculum since English is viewed as an international language for which no culture has exclusive rights. (Canagarajah, 2006b)

Bayyurt (2013) contends that through including and adopting cultural elements the learners are not only helped to understand new English concepts but are also provided with contexts for their use. As a way forward, therefore, he posits that language instruction needs to promote positive attitudes towards the target language and the nationalities associated with the language. He also advocates for the inclusion of cultural elements in the language curriculum, arguing that language planning should be based on research findings by second language educators.

Linguistic research has shown that the influence of culture in second language teaching is inevitable. As Bayyurt (2013) argues, learners restructure experiences they have encountered in their native language as a result of concepts learnt in the target language. As the language learning process unfolds prior cultural experiences are activated as the learners try to make sense of the new cultural concepts by comparing and contrasting them with previous ones. Fantini (1997 in Bayyurt 2013) calls this a transitional stage during which the student's awareness of the foreign language and the associated culture increases before a universal culture emerges. Thus even without the teacher's effort, culture finds its way into the language classroom.

A contending view noted by Bayyurt (2013) argues that the inclusion of the foreign language culture is a waste of time since the learners will never need such knowledge. The proponents of this view value the protection of the cultural integrity of the 'non-native speaker'. They consider Kachru's (1985) distinctions of inner and outer circle nations as 'norm developing' and therefore instrumental in the process of norm spreading from the 'centre' to the 'periphery,' as undesirable. To them the monolingual/mono-cultural view of English Language Teaching (ELT) typically implied by Kachru (1985) should not apply to an international language like English.

The interface position advocated by MacKay (2003) proposes that culture and language are inseparable therefore both the native and the Target Language Culture (TLC) are essential in second language teaching. This position is supported by early research including Adaskou, Britten and Fahsi (1990) and they added valuable suggestions on the decision to include cultural content in the teaching of ESL based on an investigation in the teaching of ESL at secondary school level in Morocco. In a related study by MacKay (2003), he makes significant recommendations on the inclusion of culture in second language teaching. First, he proposes that the cultural content to be incorporated in the teaching of the English language should not be restricted to the inner circle societies whose native language is English. Instead, local culture and other countries' culture should be balanced in line with the status of English as an

international language. He further maintains that each country where English is taught as an international language should take the responsibility to select and develop language materials together with appropriate language teaching methods within the context of the learners (MacKay 2003).

This view is also supported by Modiano (2009) whose position is that the international status of the English language demands that its teaching be inclusive rather than exclusive of local culture. Based on Kachru's propositions, Modiano (2009) also notes the emergence of two contending approaches in second language teaching differentiated by their position with regards to the inclusion and interaction of sociolinguistic milieu in the teaching of English as a Second language. According to Modiano (2009), the traditional exclusive position conceptualises English as a *lingua franca* for non-native speakers while the contemporary view considers the inclusive nature of the English language.



From the former perspective, English is viewed as a prescriptive entity defined by the idealised inner circle speakers. In line with the Kachru's (1985) script, the inner circle develops the norms for consumption by the outer and extended circles, so that the sociolinguistic factors in the environment in which the language is taught are irrelevant (Kachru, 1985). Modiano (2009) concludes that learners in this context are challenged to pursue knowledge of the language as if it is a foreign language. They idealise the native-speaker competence since the norms typically flow from one direction. The native speaker is therefore conceptualised as the best teacher.

On the other hand the contemporary view conceptualises English as a world language adopted by the outer circle nations and, therefore, *norm* adopting and norm developing according to the Kachruvian (1985) script. The culture in which the language is taught is relevant and according to Modiano (2009) special consideration needs to be paid to the expectations related to the teachers' and the students' roles in the teaching of the language in that context. He contends that the bilingual teacher is best suited for second language teaching since his dual qualities and mastery of local and international

culture contributes to the sociolinguistic factors that impact on second language teaching.

Bayyurt (2006) makes appropriate policy recommendations concerning culture in second language teaching in line with the inclusive view. He posits that policies yet to be developed on the teaching of English as a second language must take into consideration the international status of English. This is aptly summed up in his proposition that English teachers can teach English effectively when they integrate the local culture into their curriculum while also incorporating the broad picture of international use (Bayyurt, 2006).

This implies that cultural dimensions are important in English language teaching. My interrogation of culture above is based on what different researchers have said and gives deep insights on the close link between culture and the sociolinguistic factors investigation in the impending study as well as the challenge to incorporate culture in second language teaching. In the next section, I explore literature on current methodologies with a view to show how they fare in terms of interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors, thereby justifying research that feeds the improvement in this area. From these and other notions of second language learning theory, numerous teaching models have emerged. In the next section I review methodologies starting off with those that have fallen short.

2.5. Contribution of planning

In the section below I explore the interplay of sociolinguistic factors at different stages in the language curriculum implementation stages. Notably, I contend that the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in language teaching can be evaluated at three levels as identified by Bayyurt (2013). He argues that sociolinguistic factors play a major role at the three levels that he the terms:

- the status planning,
- corpus planning and

- acquisition planning stages

The status planning stage

The status planning stage relates to the official status of the language as dictated by the policy makers. In the context of the model proffered by Kachru (1985) as already discussed, nations in different categories, the inner outer and extending circles adopt different language policies. In a general sense, therefore, status planning entails the selection of an educational framework for the adoption and teaching of a language (Ricento, 2000). Such a policy framework presumably covers the inclusion of culture and sociolinguistic factors.

The language may be given the official language status. For instance, the target language may be given the same weighting as the native language or be, used as the medium of instruction and so forth. Such policy decisions are guided by the status of the nation within the model; the national aspirations and the identities assumed by the learners in relation to the target language and the native speaker. In the present research, I focus on second language teaching in a former British colony and, therefore, investigate the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in language teaching in the context of the evolving status of the English language as the nation moves on from pre- to post-independence. This shift was accompanied by a shift in power relations and therefore changing attitudes towards the L1 users of the target language and their culture.

The corpus planning stage

Cooper (1989) says that the corpus status relates to the language itself; what to teach in terms of the vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and so forth, as well as the inclusion of culture. In short, it translates to how the national second language curriculum is constructed. This includes the course content and resource provisions, methodology and assessment schemes.

The acquisition planning stage

Lastly, the acquisition status relates to the actual teaching and learning experiences. Acquisition is concerned with the interaction between the teacher, the target language curriculum and the learners in a given sociolinguistic environment. The present research focuses on the acquisition stage which is conceptualized as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. In investigating this stage I explore how the former stages also reflect the interplay of sociolinguistic factors.

For the purposes of the impending research, I translate this conception of the implementation of the ESL curriculum to a focus on the curriculum from the three distinct perspectives discussed above (status, corpus and acquisition); the policy position (how the curriculum is conceptualized), the learning materials, and the learning activities and outcomes in the classroom. In particular, I explore the implications for the interplay of language teaching and sociolinguistic factors.



2.6. The inclusion of Sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching

In a related study, Onovughe (2012) investigates 'Socio-linguistic inputs and English as a second language classrooms'. His study employs the survey research design and focuses on a population of 240 secondary school students drawn from a random selection of 6 schools Nigeria. Parallels can be drawn from this study to inform the present study since the contexts for the investigations are similar.

The study provides more insights into the definitions and functions of sociolinguistics in second language teaching. Onovughe (2012) notes that sociolinguistics is concerned with exploring the difficulties involved in assessing the values of different functions performed by language. He contends that language, through speech, performs two major social functions; a means of communication and a way of identifying social groups. As such, the study of a language without reference to the society, which uses it,

excludes the possibility of finding social explanations for the structures that are used in utterances.

He concludes that in many ways, the ability of students to communicate verbally cannot be divorced from their sociolinguistic backgrounds. My assumption is that the sociolinguistic factors provide the learner with an opportunity of being better or less equipped in oral communications. This justifies the focus of the present research on sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching as it will feed on best practices in second language teaching.

In the same vein, Onovughe (2012) investigates how the different sociolinguistic backgrounds of ESL learners in any context influence the teaching and learning of English in schools. Her key finding is that a child from the high social class will have little or no problems in communication using the English language in the classroom situation since the plays the English language is also used for interaction more often in the home. Conversely, she contends that the learner from a low social class where the indigenous language is dominantly used in the home with little or no English, might find it strenuous to use the English language in a classroom situation during the teaching – learning process.

Onovughe (ibid) therefore argued that the learners' understanding and speaking of the target language is largely influenced by their sociolinguistic background. In the present research I assumed that this signified the importance of sociolinguistic factors in language teaching. Therefore my research explored the implications of sociolinguistic factors like the family background and home language in the local (Zimbabwean) context.

Breaking fairly new ground in that area, Mareva and Nyota (2014) focus on the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) in Zimbabwe. The present research draws many insights from the former research so that many parallels will be evident. For example, the geographical setting and the researchers' choice of the mixed qualitative

and quantitative designs coincide with the present endeavor. Moreover, the context of language teaching and the factors involved are similar. This renders the two research-works comparable in several ways.

Firstly, the research provides insights into the advantages of employing a combination of the quantitative and the qualitative designs also opted for in my study. Secondly, it is like the present initiative, spurred by the observed weaknesses in what Widdowson (1991) terms, communicative competence. Mareva and Nyota (2014) note symptoms discussed in chapter 1 among O' level school graduates which spurred my research. The researchers contend that the mastery of language use entails the realisation that sentences or utterances are only appropriate in a particular context. They note that students struggle to accomplish every-day language functions like greeting, criticising, inviting, complaining, congratulating, requesting, arguing and disagreeing in their daily interaction with fellow students, lecturers and assignment tasks.



The study concludes that the structural approach and its associated methods and techniques are mainly used in the teaching of ESL instead of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), recommended by the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) O' Level English Syllabus. According to ZIMSEC (2015:2) the O' level English language syllabus is intended to provide pupils with 'the communication skills necessary for the different roles and situations in which they are likely to find themselves after leaving school...to make the learning of the English language more functional and purposeful....' This obviously recommends a Communicative Language Teaching Model (CLT). As evidence, the syllabus explicitly discourages teachers from teaching language learners structures in isolation.

Mareva and Nyota (2011) attribute lack of communicative skills partly to ignorance, of the principles and advantages of CLT on the part of teachers. They also suggest that the tendency could be a result of conservatism. These findings are particularly relevant

to my study since they point to the little attention given to sociolinguistic factors in Second language teaching.

2.7. A summary of methodologies that have fallen short

Literature on second language teaching research shows a trail of failed methodologies that have come and gone as the search for the ideal second language teaching methods continued. In this section, I review literature on some methodologies with a view to show how they fared in terms of the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching.

According to Taber (2006:3), up to the late nineteenth century, second language teaching methods mirrored the so-called 'Classical Method' of teaching Latin and Greek lessons. In other words, language teaching was based on what he calls 'mental-aerobics exercises-repetition drills and out-of-context vocabulary drills as well as lots of reading and translations of ancient texts.' As Brown (2005:15) contends languages were "not being taught primarily to learn oral/aural communication, but to learn for the sake of being 'scholarly' or...for reading proficiency." All of this was achieved in the confines the restricted classroom based language curriculum.

The methodologies in this framework are the Grammar Translation Methods which ruled up to the turn of the nineteenth century to the 1940s, and the Direct Methods, which were popular in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Taber (2006) explains that the Grammar and Translation method focused on translating literary passages from the target language into the native language, a skill developed through drills to facilitate memorising vocabulary lists and creating sentences using the new words. The method produced learners whose grammatical accuracy was impeccable but mostly 'artificial', as Taber (2006:3) says, since teaching method did not focus on language as a tool for communication in socio-cultural laden situations drawn from the learners' settings. The behavioural theories came in in response to the failure of the former methods. These included the audiolingual methods and situational approaches, as reviewed in below.

2.8 The Communicative Method (CLT)

In this section I explore the history of CLT approaches and how these approaches have developed over the years. The discussion reveals a trend from the traditional, prescriptive and teacher centred approaches to the current inclinations towards CLT.

2.8.1 Origins of CLT

Several researchers including Larsen and Freeman (2000) and Lucantoni (2002) concur that Communicative Language Teaching methods (CLT) were a reaction to the perceived failure of methods like the Situational Language teaching, Structural and Grammar based methods. To that effect, Larsen and Freeman (2000) argue that the situational approaches engendered students who could produce sentences accurately in the classroom but could not use them appropriately to communicate outside the classroom walls.

Available literature, however, does not accurately pin down the exact period of the emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching Approaches. Some researchers contend that the communicative approaches date back to the 1960s while others view them as a more recent but gradual phenomenon whose exact entry point cannot be pinpointed. Taber (2006) traces the visibility of communicative approaches to as early as the 1990s to their present popular position in second language teaching, where, according to Brown (2005) they can be said to be the current dominant methodology.

2.8.2 Definition of CLT

Worth noting from the onset is that the Communicative Approach is not a method but a synergy of various methodologies, also sometimes referred to as the Natural Approaches. Taber (2006), however, notes that there is a fine difference between the Communicative Approaches and the Natural approaches. For example, while these two approaches share some common elements, the fine difference between them is that unlike in the Natural Approaches, the Communicative Approaches discourage use of the native languages. A further distinguishing feature noted by Canale and Swain (1980) and developed later by Hedge (2001) is that the communicative approaches aim to impart what they term 'communicative competence skills,' also labelled the

‘communication principle’ by Richards and Rodgers (2001:161). Hedge (2001:45) explains that that communicative competence entails being able to know a language and to put that knowledge to use in communicating with people in a variety of settings and situations. He further notes, the communicative competence has five currently recognised manifestations; linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence and fluency.

In other words, the authors suggest that the communicative competence skills involve knowledge of discourse and the sociocultural rules of language. They consist of meaningful tasks that allow learners to use language that is socio-culturally meaningful to them. From these observations, Richards and Rodgers (2001:172) draw a definition of CLT as a set of diverse principles that that reflect a communicative view of language and language learning.’ They posit that a working definition can be gleaned from enumerating and analysing features and principles which the authors claim can be inferred from CLT practices.



The cited principles are: the task principle and the meaningfulness principle. Simply put, these principles suggest that all learning activities in CLT teaching involve real communication and consist of meaningful tasks that ensure meaningful communication. (Richards & Rodgers 2001) The other features of CLT propounded and subsequently endorsed by a variety of scholars including Nunnan (1995), Larsen-Freeman, (2000) and Richards and Rodgers (2001) are:

1. Use of authentic texts
2. Focus on learning process
3. Focus on learners’ personal experiences
4. Linking language and learning in the classroom with language activation outside
5. Emphasis on tasks that encourage the negotiation of meaning
6. Grammar encouragement of risk taking and tolerance of errors.

My research focuses on the extent to which all these areas benefit or can be improved through the inclusion of sociolinguistics in second language teaching. Taber (2006) notes that communicative approaches teach the language rather than teaching about the language. They, therefore, bring language to life by transforming all classroom activities to functional communicative activities. In other words the communicative approaches recreate real-life social and functional situations in the classroom to guide students toward communicative competence, rather than linguistic competence. They are closely related to the Functional-Approach, whose emphasis is on the functions such as time, location, travel, measurements, rather than the linguistic aspects.

In other words, the linguistic accuracy which was deemed so essential in the Grammar-translation method, the Direct Method, and other approaches is a mere trifle in the communicative classroom. Instead, Taber (2006) contends that the communicative classrooms value the communicative aspect while placing less emphasis on the linguistic accuracy idealised by the former methods. In fact, grammar is ideally not taught at all or as Taber (2006) dramatically puts it, the teachers 'avoid upsetting their students by requiring them to identify or recognize nouns, verbs, or direct objects.' Folse and Vitonova (2006:48) similarly call for a departure from the 'artificiality of pattern practice divorced from real life situations' which they claim characterize the grammar based methods. Furthermore, they argue that 'being able to communicate in a second language demands more than mere grammatical competence. In line with that, Yule (1999: 193) concurs that 'consciously learning the grammar of a language is not synonymous with the ability to use the language in real life situations.'

My research was spurred by a preliminary evaluation of the sociolinguistic competence of secondary school graduates which revealed serious flaws in the current ESL syllabus. I noted the limited research in this area, both on the global and local scale. Lack of sociolinguistic and communicative competence indicates the need for research work to perfect communicative teaching methodologies through focusing on sociolinguistic factors. Researchers like Taron and Yule (1990) noted a decline in the

initial momentum of research in this area from as early as the 90s thus confirming the long standing relevance of research efforts channeled in this direction.

2.9. Reconceptualising sociolinguistics and communicative approaches in Second Language Teaching

While the communicative approaches are appealing because they are grounded in sound and tested theory and have been practised over many years, Taber (2006) cautions that, they are not flawless. He argues that they are far from being a fit-all panacea for second language learning. From observing second language teachers on the ground, Taber (2006) concludes that the communicative method is ‘excessively superficial, uninspiring, and hopelessly without structure’ so that behind the closed doors of their classrooms they prop up their language teaching with mini-grammar lessons.



To me, this implies that communicative approaches are only a rough framework or guideline within which research-work needs to be continued to fine tune strategies for different contexts of language teaching. Evidence of this lays not only in the aspersions levelled against the approaches but also the problems of poor sociolinguistic competence among learners. The need to reconceptualise communicative approaches is well supported by research findings as discussed below and the present research will complement the on-going research-work into the place of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching.

More insights on the importance of research into sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching can be drawn from Mede's (2015:20) investigation of teachers' perceptions of sociolinguistic competence. His research is spurred by his initial perceptions of what he terms 'the inconsistency between the language teaching methodologies and the specific needs for language use in the real world' which he observes to have become more distinctive than ever. The same problem is aptly summed up by Kramsch (2014) who posits that tension between what to teach in the classroom and what the learners will need in the real world after they have left the

classroom is at its greatest level today. He observes that the world has so changed in the last decade that, language teachers are no longer sure of what they are supposed to teach and what real world situations they are supposed to prepare their students for.

Mede (2015) recommends that teaching/learning of English as a Second Language (ESL) today, should focus beyond making the prescribed curriculum and making the grade. Learners should also master the active use of the language in the context of the changing and increasing needs of the globalised world. He concludes that such needs have to be analysed and integrated into the curriculum as they come. I translate this observation as relating to the sociolinguistic factors to be explored in impending study.

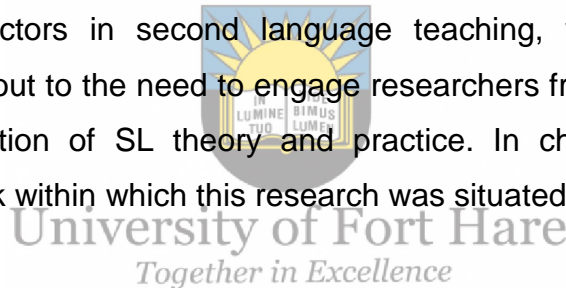
Kramsch (2014) sees the division of language into separate skills as restrictive and detracting from the goal of communication, and partly responsible for the failure to impart relevant communicative skills in learners. Kramsch (2014) and Mede (2015) concur on the seriousness of the lack of sociolinguistic competence exhibited by second language learners when faced with real life communication contexts. The pioneering research work in this area includes, Peirce (1995) who interrogates the importance of social identity in language teaching, Lantolf (2000), sociocultural theory and Pennycook (2001) critical ideology studies.

All these researchers advocate for the assimilation of sociolinguistic dimensions in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). From these and other studies, I draw insights into the inherent problems, like defining what the sociolinguistic factors should entail, and how they are to be integrated into second language teaching. There seems to be no agreement on what the sociolinguistic factors are, whence they are to be drawn from, how and in what measures they are to be adopted in second language teaching. My research will attempt to fill in the missing links in respect of the way forward towards the full incorporating sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching.

2.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I reviewed research work and other literature related to the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors. Pertinent terms relating to culture and sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching were drawn from various related research works, to arrive at the working definitions for the present research. In doing so, the variances, confusions and misconceptions prevalent among both researchers and second language teachers were highlighted before exploring the major theoretical and pedagogical developments in the teaching of English as a second language.

Kachru's (1985) classification of countries that use the English language was used to give insights into the sociolinguistic variables that emerge in the outer-circle context in which the present research is situated. A cross-section of research findings on the role of Sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching, was then reviewed. The literature all pointed out to the need to engage researchers from related fields to inform the re-conceptualization of SL theory and practice. In chapter three I review the theoretical framework within which this research was situated.



Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

3.0. Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the theory guiding the present research. It has to be noted that most Second Language (SL) teaching practices precede the conception of most theories. As Banks (2016) observes, many approaches, views and assumptions about second language teaching originate from *ad hoc* or intuitive bases and not theoretical grounding. However, I believe, in line with Banks' (2016) claim that intuitive assumptions need to be anchored in a sound theoretical framework in order to be of academic interest. Otherwise, they remain at a fairly subjective level. The present research is based on views and assumptions on the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching which are to a great extent, similarly intuitive and *ad hoc*. However, in this chapter I explore the sound theoretical framework that makes my assumptions less subjective and, therefore, of academic interest.

The chapter explores two key theoretical frameworks in which the research is grounded. In line with the thrust to focus on the functional utility of language, I adopt second language teaching theories that subsume the inclusion of socio-linguistic factors in second language teaching. These are the Systemic Functional Linguistics theoretical framework, (henceforth referred to as SLF) (Halliday, 1995; Eggins, 2004) and Garcia's (2014) Communicative Language Teaching Theory (henceforth CLT).

3.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

In the section below, I interrogate various perspectives of SFL theoretical framework which is the backbone against which the present research is constructed. The discussion explores the birth of SFL and its development through the years to the current position.

The importance and utility of SFL is widely acclaimed. Banks (2016) calls it an interesting useful and powerful tool for text analysis which O'Donnell (2011)

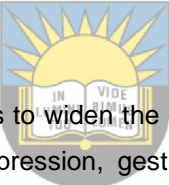
acknowledges is now used world-wide, particularly in language education and text analysis. A major function of this theory is that it attempts to isolate areas of cross-linguistic interface between the first and second languages which may be a source of some communicative challenges for second language learners. In the context of the present research, the interface is between English and Zimbabwean Indigenous languages, mainly Shona and Ndebele, which are assumed to be closely linked to the communication challenges identified amongst secondary school graduates in chapter 1 and discussed further in chapter 2, which spurred the present research. SFL is purposefully adopted for its distinctively social oriented approach which renders it relevant in analysing the sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching focused in my study.

For these and other reasons extensively explored in this chapter, I consider SFL integral in second language teaching and ground my research in the SFL theoretical framework. A deeper understanding of SFL; its origins, basic tenets and distinguishing features is imperative. This will help position second language teaching practices in individual social contexts as dependent on the interplay of sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching.

While I adopt the (SFL) theoretical framework, I concede to the view cautioned by Banks (2016) that this should not imply the exclusion of other frameworks which may be powerful in their own right in different ways. The scope of this discussion and the ongoing research will, however, be limited to the SFL theoretical framework and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) theoretical framework. The discussion will first focus on SFL, outlining its origins and its leaning towards sociolinguistics. The chapter defines SFL and its distinguishing features, touching on comparative considerations against traditional grammars like structuralism. This is done to clarify SFL traits and justify the decision to opt for this theoretical framework. Suffice to say, the decision is not based on a comparative weighting of different theories but only the need to fill in knowledge gaps in an area in which other research-work grounded in any of the other available theoretical frameworks can also contribute. The second part of the chapter will explore COLT in similar fashion.

3.1.1. The Origins of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

Systemic Functional Linguistics was developed by Halliday (1995) who was influenced by the work of earlier research-work by linguists including the Prague school and Firth in the 1960s. O'Donnell (2011) explains that Firth's (1968) work was based on ideas from Malinowski (1935). SFL is therefore a framework that Halliday (1995) provided based on the contributions of several linguists who rallied on some key principles, like the context of situation as explained by O'Donnell (2011), who further argued that the context of situation is essential to understanding an utterance. To make his point, he contended that even a sentence is not a self-contained, self-sufficient speech unit so that like a single word, except in special circumstances, its meaning is derived from the context of other sentences contributing to the significant whole. According to Malinowski (1935: 22 in O'Donnell *ibid*: 6):



... It is very profitable in linguistics to widen the concept of context so that it embraces not only spoken words but facial expression, gesture, bodily activities, the whole group of people present during an exchange of utterances and the part of the environment on which these people are engaged.

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Malinowski (1935: in O'Donnell 2016) further proposed that that language/words are used with a borrowed or indirect meaning so that to understand an utterance one has to reconstruct the real context in which the words have been used, inclusive of '...the pragmatic vigour of a request, or imperative, with all the emotional content of hope or despair' (Malinowski, 1935 in O'Donnell, 2016). In other words, contextualising the utterance or word, in the original situation, ensures that the meaning is not lost. Citing Malinowski (1935), O'Donnell (2016:6) contends, that the word should be contextualised in the situations 'in which it is fraught with weighty consequences for the speaker and hearers and not in isolation.' Firth (1968) developed on Malinowski's (1935: in O'Donnell, 2016) contentions on the centrality of the context in language. Both believed one could only look at language in relation to the context it occurred in. In SFL,

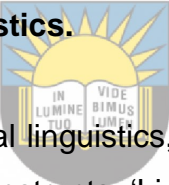
therefore, the context, labelled as 'the context of situation', is one of the central concerns.

Based on these ideas, Halliday (1995) modelled the basic Systemic Functional Linguistics concepts. In the next section, I will attempt to define the pertinent terms in the context of linguistics and sociolinguistics below.

3.2. Definitions

In the section below I define the terms pertinent to the ensuing discussion. The research focused on sociolinguistic factors therefore, the first point of call is to define sociolinguistics and related terms.

3.2.1 Linguistics and sociolinguistics.



Before defining Systemic Functional linguistics, it is imperative that it be contextualised under the definition of the broad constructs, 'Linguistics' and 'sociolinguistics' since SFL is derived from these broad guidelines. Zhang and Wang (2016) define linguistics as simply the scientific study of language. They see linguistics as a study that defines the nature of language in connection with various theories and which is designed to inform language learning. The two researchers contend that linguistics defines the nature of language learning in connection with various linguistic theories so that it enables language teachers to design teaching methods and techniques.

A similar definition is offered by Finnegan (2012) who conceptualises linguistics as the systematic inquiry into human language; its structures, uses, the relationship between them, as well as its development through history, its acquisition by children and adults. He contends that, the study of linguistics concerns both language structure including the underlying grammatical competence and language use and the underlying communicative competence. Grammatical competence means knowledge of the grammar rules and their application whereas communicative competence is to do with

the actual use of the language to achieve communicative goals which brings in culture heritage, poetic traditions and orality.

Sociolinguistics, which Zhang and Wang (2016) claim to have risen in the 1960s and to which Systemic Functional Linguistics is closely aligned, is a wide ranging discipline. Zhang and Wang (2016) define it as a branch of macro linguistics which studies language in relation to social factors, such as gender, age, social class, race and so forth. In other words, Sociolinguistics views language as part of the society, culture, and its objective is to explore how to relate the rules of language with social factors. Ultimately, sociolinguistics is concerned with the use of language in the society and its related issues simply expressed as, 'Who uses what kind of language to what kind of people in what time?'

These definitions of linguistics and sociolinguistics imply two broad approaches in the study of linguistics. These are identified by Hall (2005) as the theoretical linguistics approach and the social systems approach, also labelled the socio semiotic approach by Eggins (2006). My research is closely linked to the former theoretical framework. The theoretic approach theorises language as a mental process whereas the former views language as a social system played out in human interactional patterns and networks of beliefs. According to Hall (2005), theoretical linguists study linguistic knowledge as an abstract 'computational' system, an academic subject as it were, ultimately embedded in the human brain while the contending view simply focuses on language as a skill for social functions, therefore embedded in the sociocultural backdrop, the sociolinguistic factors focused in the present study.

Although Hall (2005) acknowledges the role of theoretical linguistics, he argues that this approach is sometimes accused of seeing human language as strictly a formal, abstract system, and of marginalizing the importance of sociolinguistic grounded research. For this reason my research adopts the SFL theoretical framework discussed below.

3.2.2. Definition of Systemic Functional linguistics (SFL)

The present research is grounded in the Systematic Functional Linguistic theory, a branch of linguistics also referred to as Systemic Functional Grammar, (Halliday, 1994), Systemic Linguistics (SL) and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) According to Lukin et al. (2011) the SFL theory is thickly imbedded in the Socio Cultural Theory (SCT), originated by Vygotsky's (1978) extensive work on child development. The scholars contend that the SFL theory links up with the Interactional Sociolinguistics Theory which concerns how speakers signal and interpret meaning in social interaction and attempt to bridge the gulf between empirical communicative forms like words, prosody, register shifts and what speakers and listeners take themselves to be doing with these forms. From this perspective, SFL aptly relates to the sociolinguistic factors focused in the present study. In particular, how the interaction of these factors inform pedagogical approaches in second language teaching.

Although this approach to language has been variously defined, most definitions centre on its focus on function. Banks (2016) defines it, (SFL), as a theory of language centred round the notion of language function. He posits that while SFL accounts for the syntactic structure of language, it considers the function of language as central. In other words, Systemic Functional Linguistics is concerned with what the language does and how it does it. This marks the departure of SFL from the structural approaches, which place the elements of language and their combinations as central. In contrast, to the structural approaches, SFL starts at the social context where it looks at how language both acts upon, and is constrained by, this social context (Banks, 2016).

Schleppergrell (2014) gives a similar definition also confirming the focus on function. He postulates that Systemic Functional Linguistics is the study of the relationship between language and its functions in social settings. In this definition, Schleppegrell (ibid) notes that a central notion in SFL is what he calls stratification. In other words, he contends that language is analysed in terms of the following four strata: the context, semantics, and Lexico-Grammar and phonology-graphology levels.

The context refers to the situation or setting of the language discussed in detail under 3.4 below, while semantics relates to the meaning making function of the language, again detailed under the functional concept of language below. The Lexico-Grammar concerns how language is structured, as focused by structural methods while phonology and graphology refers to the sound systems of the language. Eggins (2004) contends that the SFL approach explains how these systems all work together in serving the functional purposes of language.

In line with the above observations, Eggins (2004) defines SFL as an approach which views language as a strategic, meaning-making resource. She contends that systemic linguistics focuses on the analysis of authentic, everyday texts, focusing on two basic questions. They ask how people use language to make meanings; and how the language itself; the context, semantics lexico-grammar phonology and graphology systems referred to by Halliday (1994) and espoused by subsequent scholars work. Notably, Schleppergrell (2014) as discussed above, shows how these elements of language are organised to enable the realisation of meaning and other functional ends.

The centrality of the concept of function in defining SFL is further asserted by Trask and Stockwell (2007) who define Systemic Functional Linguistics as a strictly functionalist approach to language. They contend that the functionalist approach is distinguished by the explicit attempt it makes to combine purely structural information with overtly social factors in a single integrated description. The writers further note that SFL focuses on the purposes of language use. Put differently, Stockwell (2007) argues that SFL theorists constantly ask the defining questions:

- What is this writer (or speaker) trying to do?
- What linguistic devices are available to help them do it, and
- On what basis do they make their linguistic?

From these definitions of SFL, some typical features emerge. These are the features which further clarify the SFL perspective and it from other approaches as discussed below.

3.3. The distinguishing features of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

While scholars focus on the application of contexts from different perspectives in SFL, there is a consensus on several views of language that differentiate SFL from other theoretical frameworks of language. Firstly, there is a consensus that language is a socio-semiotic system (Halliday, 2003). In other words, language is viewed as a tool used by people in accomplishing everyday social life. Halliday (2003) advances four major theoretical claims as the base for Systemic Functional Linguistics as follows:

- that language use is functional
- that its function is to make meanings
- that these meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged
- that the process of using language is a *semiotic* process, a process of making meaning by choosing

These four points imply that language use is functional, semantic, contextual and semiotic and can be summarized by describing the Systemic approach as a *functional-semantic* approach to language defined in terms of its distinguishing features as outlined below. Halliday observations, these features that set SFL apart from other grammars can be discussed at the three strata that make up the linguistic system. These are defined as meaning (semantic), sound (phonology) and wording/Lexico-Grammar (syntax and lexis) levels.

It has to be noted that Systemic Functional Linguistic treats grammar as a meaning-making resource and insists on the interrelation of form and meaning all adding up to the functional concept of language. An understanding of the basic tenets of SFL,

discussed below is essential for second language teachers to design an appropriate SFL informed language teaching curriculum as well as to show how all this relates to the interplay of sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching as investigated by the ongoing study.

3.3.1. The concept of social-functional needs

One basic tenet of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is that it affirms the role of texts to serve the distinct social function of conveying information and establishing and maintaining relationships. However, according to O'Donnell (2011) SFL realises that language is not merely a tool for conveying ideas but a tool for getting things done. He defines language as 'functional', from whence the label 'functional' linguistics is derived. He contends SFL views language function (what it is used for), as often more important than language structure (how it is composed). Furthermore, he argues that SFL is distinguished by its focus on language function rather than language structure. O'Donnell (2016) further notes that the SFL theoretical framework departs from structural and other linguistic theories that are concerned with language as a mental process and is closely aligned to sociology. In contrast, SFL explores how language is used in social contexts to achieve specific goals. In so doing, it addresses communicative competence, which O'Donnell (2016) says is an aspect of Second Language teaching that has not been fixed nor is easily defined.

This aspect is important in second language teaching closely related to the sociolinguistic factors focused by the present research. The view is supported by Schleppergrell (2007) who contends that research has proved that teachers who use SFL to inform their classrooms can unlock for students some aspects of text and text construction that may otherwise serve as barriers to student learning.

The functional orientation of SFL is confirmed further by Streeck and Benjamins (2010). They contend that the functional perspective in SFL is taken on several levels, in line with their citation of Halliday's (1975) contention that language has developed in response to three kinds of social-functional needs. At the basic level, Streeck and

Benjamins (2010) argue that language serves to construe our experiences in terms of what is going on around us and inside us. In other words, language portrays our social reality.

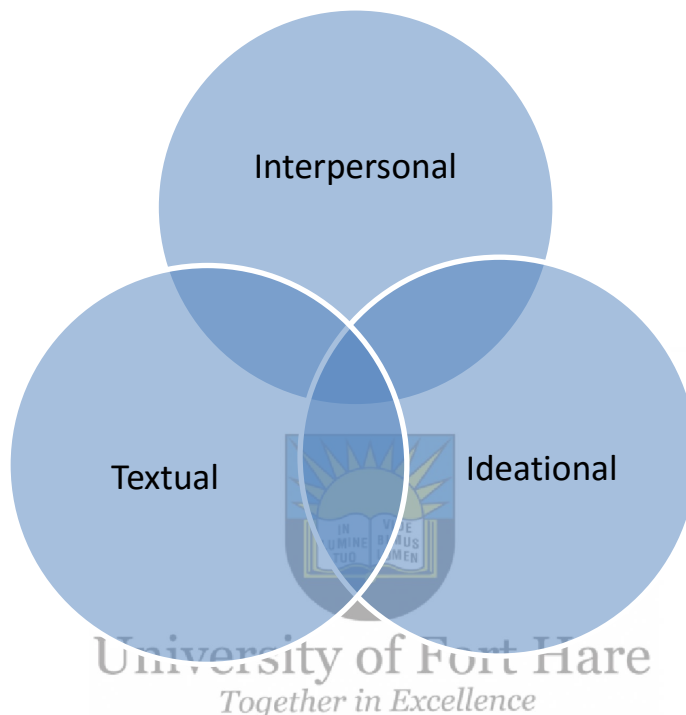
At another level, the language function is to interact with the social world. In other words language is used to negotiate the social roles and attitudes for any given context. Further, language has a function of making meaning. In other words, interlocutors use language to express their conception of the reality around them, share information, inform or persuade. Bache (2013) calls it the meaning potential of a language which is closely related to the paradigmatic relations in any given context. In other words, language is used to create messages packaged with meanings in terms of what we know or conceive of a situation.

Based on this observation, Halliday (1975) developed a theory of the fundamental functions of language, which analyses Lexico-Grammar. The theory is premised on the assumption that language serves different functions. It refers to what Halliday (1975) terms the 'theme' from which we derive what he terms the three meta-functions of language from an SFL perspective. He labels these functions the:

- the ideational
- the interpersonal and
- the textual

According to Wilcock (2015), each of the three meta-functions is about a different aspect of the world, and is concerned with a different mode of meaning of clauses. The meta-functions encapsulate the notion that language is used to construe our experience of the world and our consciousness (ideational, alternatively, the experiential meta-function), talk about relations (inter-personal meta-function) and helps to organise the discourse and create continuity in the text (textual meta-function) (Matthiessen, 2004). These functions are illustrated in **Figure 1** below and then separately discussed in the ensuing section.

Figure 1: The three meta-functions



(Adopted from Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004)

Figure 1 above shows that any piece of language calls into play all three meta-functions simultaneously. These are depicted by the three overlapping circles in Fig 1 as:

- The ideational
- Interpersonal and
- Textual

According to Muntgil and Ventola (2010) (in Streeck and Benjamin, 2010), this implies that language is developed in response to the three kinds of social-functional or needs; construing experience or what is going on around us and inside us (ideational), interacting with the social world, negotiating social roles and attitudes (interpersonal)

and creating the messages and finally packaging the theme (textual). These needs are equated to the meta-functions in SFL as discussed below.

3.3.1.1 The ideational

According to Wilcock (2015), the notion of the ideational meta-function is greatly influenced by Malinowski's (1935: in O'Donnell 2016) theories. Also referred to as the experiential, the ideational presents our individual view of the reality around us; it relates to the context of culture and is about the natural world in the broadest sense, including our own consciousness. Halliday and Mathiessen (2004) say that it is the propositional or content aspect of an utterance, and is concerned with clauses as representations. In short, the ideational is therefore linked to the field, to be discussed in detail later under 3.4.1.



3.3.1.2 The interpersonal

Halliday and Mathiessen (2004) regard the interpersonal function as one of exchange in the social world. To that effect, they contend that the interpersonal focuses on the exchange structure; the expression of attitude, negotiating and maintaining relationships in interpersonal encounters and so forth. He concludes that the interpersonal therefore reflects the relationship between the speaker and hearer, failure to understand which, would result in the communication breakdown cited as the impetus of the current research in chapter 1.

In practical terms, the interpersonal is concerned with clauses as *exchanges* in the daily interactions in which language is the tool for portraying meaning. Wilcock (2015) illustrates some related aspects of language teaching that could benefit from the adoption of the SFL perspective. He cites a case where an interlocutor initiates or responds to the act of giving or demanding for goods-and-services or information. He contends that the interpersonal meta-function relates to the context of situation as opposed to the textual meta-function which relates to the verbal context.

Furthermore, he argues that the interpersonal is concerned with the speech function of language, in particular, what he terms 'the MOOD network' as the principle grammatical within which are located. For an example, he cites the choice between the imperative and indicative. Within the choice of the indicative he also points out that a further choice could be made between the declarative and interrogative. These are choices strictly dependent on the sociolinguistic environment in which the language is taught; the manipulation of the MOOD element in a way that is appropriate to the context, captured as the sociolinguistic factors in the title of the present research.

3.3.1.3 The textual

Halliday and Mathiessen (2004) define the textual meta-function as the theme and rhetoric structure of the text; in particular how all these systems contribute to the linguistic function. He posits that the meta-function is to do with how the text is structured as a message and how that structure contributes to meaning. In line with this view, Wilcock (2015) adds that the textual meta-function is about the verbal world, especially the flow of information in a text, and that it is concerned with clauses as *messages*.

Halliday and Mathiessen (2004:234) refer to this notion as 'textual semantics', which they contend is closely linked to lexico-grammar in SFL. The researchers contend that this system is also concerned with the syntactic organisation of words into utterances in such a way that particular functions are achieved. O'Donnell (2011) says even at this level, systemic functional linguistics takes a functional approach, involving analysis of the utterance in terms of their roles. Such roles include the Actor/Agent, the Medium, Theme, Mood, and some such roles as fully enumerated by Halliday (1994) and contextualised in the sociolinguistic environment.

From an SFL perspective, these are some of the aspects Second Language teaching should focus on and because they are derived from the 'world', they are closely linked

to the sociolinguistic factors investigated in this research. These functions also correspond to the functions discussed by Bache (2013) earlier, and referred to as the meaning potential of language at play in every communication event or text. As Muntigl and Ventola in Streeck and Benjamins, (2010) confirm that, any piece of language calls these three meta-functions into play simultaneously. This view of language is what defines the Systemic Functional Linguistics theoretical framework.

3.4 The concept of language as a system

Chandler (2011) contends that the Systemic Functional Linguistics model views language as a system of systems. He further notes that in fact the SFL (Systemic Functional Linguistics) label is derived from SFL's concern with the systems and how these systems work to achieve the function of language (Systemic functional). He says the basic assumption in SFL is that every text or utterance addresses two kinds of relations, which form the systems at play in the structuring. Chandler (2011) defines these two systems as:

- The Syntagmatic relations and
- The paradigmatic relations

The notion of the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic relations being tied down in every text is in agreement with Eggins (2004) earlier definition and conception of SFL as a semiotic system, consisting of genre, register and text. She says the three (genre, text and register) are realised through the interplay between the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic systems in the construction of a text. Eggins, (2004) notes that in contemporary everyday life people are constantly required, not only to react to different texts, but also to produce different texts.

Texts are produced through the use of semiotic systems to generate texts designed in different genres, like poetry, narratives public speeches among others. In these texts appropriate registers, where appropriateness is determined by the paradigm, are used in the construction of different genres. The text is constrained by cohesion and

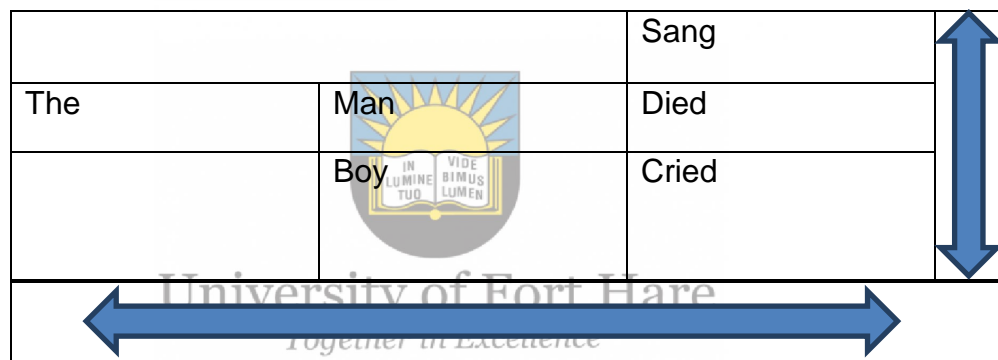
grammatical considerations, which relate to syntagmatic relationships (Chandler, 2011) above and according to Eggins (2004) SFL questions how the texts work on us, and how we work to produce the texts. It is in this process that SFL reveals how texts and culture interact so that texts apparently mean all things to different readers. This makes the SFL theoretical framework relevant to my focus on sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching in Zimbabwe.

The paradigmatic system refers to the different meanings that the same words can assume in different contexts. O'Donnell (2011) says that they are also concerned with the elements which can be substituted for each other in a particular context. The paradigmatic relations are sensitive to meaning and context appropriateness, hence, Chandler (2011) says the paradigmatic relations are regarded as primary in SFL theory. This is captured by organising the basic components of the grammar in interrelated systems of features that suit a particular context.

On the other hand, the syntagmatic relations are to do with the order of linguistic elements within a larger unit. Different languages adopt different patterns in the order of the different linguistic units of a text. For example, the order of the adjective and the noun in the nominal phrase in English is *the tall man* (det+ adj +noun) as opposed to *murume murefu* (n+adj) (man tall) (Shona). In English, the adjective comes before the noun while in Shona the adjective comes after the noun literally meaning '*the man tall*.'

While the SFL theory affirms the importance of both the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic relations in second language teaching, Systemic Functional Grammar differs from Chomskian (1965) Grammar in terms of its focus on function rather than structure. Chandler (2011) diagrammatically illustrates the syntagmatic axis and the paradigmatic axis in **Figure 3.4.3** below. He shows how the two systems function simultaneously in every utterance.

Figure 3.4.3: Differentiating the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes



Paradigmatic axis Syntagmatic axis

(Adapted from Chandler, 2011:253)

In the typical sentence, a particular horizontal sequence of linguistic units is accepted in line with the syntagmatic protocol of the language in question. This is realized in the syntagmatic axis in **Figure 3.4.3** above. In that syntagmatic axis each linguistic unit serves a prescribed function, the agent and the action, for example in 'The man died.' Typical sentences in English are constructed in a particular way, as illustrated in Figure 3 later in this discussion. This depicts the inter-link of the units in a sentence.

At the same time, different words or units can be substituted in the sentence on the vertical axis, labeled the pragmatic axis in **Figure 3.4.3** with different consequences. For example, 'man' can be substituted for 'boy' while 'died' can be substituted with 'sang' or 'cried'. This makes up the vertical axis labeled as the paradigmatic axis in **Figure 3.4.3**. Substitutions along the vertical axis are constrained by the context or meaning intended. For example, in talking about a young person of the male species, the choice to use 'boy' is neutral but where a new dimension is to be construed, 'brat' would substitute 'boy' in a context where the subject has displayed qualities of bad upbringing.

According to Chandler (2011), these terms; the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic axis are glossed as 'chain' and 'choice' respectively. In SFL grammar the focus is on the interplay of the chain and choice with particular emphasis on the choices made to achieve the different linguistic functions. Bache (2013) explains the importance of grammar in these choices since whatever choices are made have to be grammatical. He proposes a radical SFL approach which is motivated by communicative objective so that the right choices are made. The choices made take into consideration all the social and linguistic dimensions of language use. Banks (2016) view the SFL approach that emerges, as a model for text analysis. In other words through the SFL approach One can work out how a particular text is constructed and how that text takes cognisance of the sociolinguistic factors to construct meaning.

According to O'Donnell (2011) the SFL approach can be contrasted to the Chomskian (1965) grammar which focuses on the structure of a sentence along the syntagmatic axis as depicted in Figure 3 below.

Table3.4.1: Showing the sentence structure

Sentence	Nominal Phrase Verb Phrase
Noun Phrase	determiner noun
Nominal phrase	determiner adjective noun
Nominal Phrase	Pronoun
Verb phrase	verb- intrans
Verbal Phrase	verb-transitive Nominal Phrase



The above table shows the distinct structures that the sentence (chain) or order of words in a typical English sentence can take. The paradigmatic relations are however, not shown in the illustration. For example, the options that can substitute each of the sentence components (*det*, *adj*, *noun*, *pronoun* etc.) with differing consequences of meaning in different contexts are not shown. O'Donnell (2011) contends that systemic grammar focuses on these paradigmatic relations, setting out the choices that are available in any language context. It also suggests the possible sequence of elements (syntagms) that could be produced.

Thus, Systemic Grammar also describes the structural options available for any utterance. For example, whether to a clause, group/phrase or word. From these structural options, other systems from which choices are made in SFL also emerge. These are detailed in the ensuing discussion where I differentiate the constructs related to the meaning functions of language. Systemic semantics, for example, is one construct that is closely linked to the meaning function of language and includes what is

usually referred to as pragmatics. The starting point is therefore to understand what pragmatics entails.

Nordquist (2016) notes that semantics is divided into the three components:

- Ideational Semantics
- Interpersonal
- Textual semantics

These are the three meta-functions of language earlier discussed in detail under 3.3.1. They are relevant to the SFL framework and are dependent on the sociolinguistic milieu that interacts with language teaching. According to Halliday (1995) the meta-functions are achieved through an appropriate choice of linguistic resources in any given context as discussed below.



3.5. The concept of choice in SFL

Another defining concept of SFL is that of choice. Chandler (2011) explains that in Systemic Functional Linguistics, the term 'choice' is typically used for features and their selection. Chandler (2011) says all language modelling is a choice potential with choices operating in a particular context so that engaging in language can be seen as a process of making meaningful choices for different contexts. He contends that 'meaning implies choice' and without alternatives but to do something, there is no meaning. If on the other hand, there is a choice in any context, then that choice is meaningful.

To Chandler (2011) all systems display choice relations designed to achieve the desired functional needs like passing information or negotiating meaning or social relationships. Bache (2013) in Fontaine, Bartlett and O'Grady, (2013) confirm that the notion of choice is fundamental in SFL. They posit that Halliday (1995) often stresses the importance of

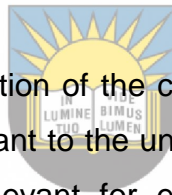
the notion of choice. They also note Halliday's contention that 'text' implies a continuous process of semantic choice so that '...text is meaning and meaning is choice' (Halliday, 1995:137).

3.6 Context of situation

The context, also referred to as the context of situation by Halliday (1995), is the most important factor in determining the linguistic choices in SFL. Initially introduced by Malinowski some eighty years ago, the concept context of situation has, according to Hasan (2016) since become a key element in the discussion of any linguistic theory whose aim is to reveal the nature of language. He calls it a pivotal aspect in the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory. This claim is also asserted by Halliday (1995) who contends that linguistic study should focus on text in context. This contention is premised on the assumption that language usage; the linguistic patterns and structures are determined by the context of a given text so that conversely, from these very structures the context can also be construed. This interrelationship is closely linked to the interplay of sociolinguistic factors and language teaching focused in the present study.

The context of use and its role in language learning have been variously defined by different linguists. Hasan (2016) conceptualises all language use in some recognizable social context. To him, the context of situation is not a mere backdrop for the occurrence of words but an active element of the communicative event. He contends that on the one hand, the context plays a crucial role in the progression of human discourse and on the other hand, it enters into and shapes the very nature of language as a process and as a system, furnishing the foundation for functionality in language. Hasan (2009) concludes that context also acts as the interface between language and society so that context analysis ultimately reveals the power of language for creating, maintaining and changing human relationships.

Hasan (2016) also argues that like most current linguistic theories, SFL tends to abandon the spurious distinction between competence and performance in the language learning process. In so doing it gives room for the study of language use strictly related to the context of use, thus, further ascertaining the rightful position of this concept in the study of language. O'Donnell (2011) also acknowledges the importance of the context of situation. He notes that the appropriateness of linguistic options is conditioned by the current context of situation. He contends that from the SFL perspective, an utterance may mean one thing in a given context but may mean something completely different in another setting. To him, the context refers to the situation in which the language event unfolds, at least those parts of the situation which condition the language use. In other words, the context provides the background; the attitudes, culture and traditions as well as the past experiences that condition the meaning of the utterances.



Halliday's (1995) founding conception of the context of situation is that it comprises of those aspects of the context relevant to the unfolding language event. This renders it a theory of context, particularly relevant for exploring language teaching in a given context. As Eggins (2004) explains, that context constitutes the elements of register and genre where register, to be explored in detail later, refers to the different ways in which language is affected by the context of situation. The context should be considered in terms of the three strands: the field, tenor and mode. These three aspects of the context of situation are explored in detail below.

3.6.1. The Field

Eggins (2014) posits that the field refers to what the text is about. In other words it denotes the subject area; what is being talked about or what is going on. For example, a text can be contextualised in a specialist field like science, education, war medicine or sports, so that the language used has specific nuances relevant and meaningful to those in the profession. The field may be more specific like a focus on specific scientific areas like biology, microbiology, virology or plant viruses.

Similarly, in the field of education, focus could be on Language education: English Language education: Secondary level English Education. Furthermore, the field could be further specified as for example specialised vs. non-specialised field. Specialist areas use vocabulary specific to the field which may not be familiar to non-specialists and may not be common to other fields. The specialised vocabulary may be used in other fields but have different meaning in the current field. For example, in the field of linguistics 'constituent' refers to a syntactic unit whereas in politics constituent refers to a member of a political unit. (Matthiessen et al., 2008)

3.6.2. Tenor

According to Matthiessen et al. (2008) Halliday adopted the term 'tenor' from Spencer and Gregory (1964). Drawing from Ure's (1968, 1971) work, Halliday (1995) initially conceptualised tenor as the cluster of all socially meaningful participant relationships. This includes both the permanent relationships and temporary situation-specific attributes including what he terms, 'speech roles' which correspond to the relationship between the participants.



In other words, tenor denotes the social roles and role-relationships between the participants. According to Hasan (2016) the relationships between the participants may be viewed from different clines like: power relations, degree of formality, closeness or distance between the participants. These role relations are echoed in the tenor which he says models three distinct features; the agentive role, the social hierarchy and social distance. Put simply, tenor results from the different role plays in relation to the different social statuses on the interlocutors in a communicative event, a point further developed by Hasan (2016), who exemplifies tenor with specific labels such as 'doctor/patient' or 'parent/child' relationships. Other example could be the unequal relationship as in the case of a father and a daughter, a teacher and a student and so forth. Alternatively, Halliday (2007) says there could be equality between the interlocutors as in the case of two friends, fellow students or fellow professionals. All these relations result in an appropriate tenor.

Tenor could also relate to the degree of formality where a dialogue could be very casual, informal or formal or very formal. O'Donnell's (2011) example of the use of the alternative 'lad' for 'boy' and 'fag' for 'cigarette' illustrates the idea of formality and informality inherent in the aspect of tenor. Another example of tenor is illustrated in the case cited by Chandler (2011) of two students submitting assignments whereby one says,

- 'I handed my essay in kinda late coz my kids got sick' and the other one says:
- 'The reason for the late submission of my essay was the illness of my children.'

The former is very informal whereas the latter is very formal. Tenor also depicts the closeness, distance or neutrality of a relationship. The tenor in the two utterances is different since tenor subsumes the formality vs closeness of the participants in the exchange. Chandler (2011) however cautions that the tenor relationships categories in real life are not clear-cut and often tend to overlap.

It is worth noting that the situations referred to above are often brought to life in the second language classroom through situational dialogues and drama. For them to be meaningful, the language teacher relies on the environment the language is being taught. In view of the fact that these situations are grounded in the SFL aspect of tenor, the SFL theoretical framework is relevant for a research focused on the interplay of second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors.

3.6.3 Mode

The mode depicts the contextual variations that the language takes whether it is written or spoken and whether there is visual or no visual contact. According to Chandler (2011) it also refers to what part the language is playing in the interaction. This determines the form that the language will take to achieve that role. For example, the language could be accompanying the action and whether it is written or spoken. An appropriate mode is adopted for each situation. Shrum and Glisan (2010) define three

modes of communication; the presentational, the interpersonal, the interpretive and the presentational.

Chandler (2011) contends that any given context determines the linguistic choices which comprise of three aspects of the context of situation and translate to the mode as defined above. According to Shrum and Glisan (2010) the presentational mode is one way and intended for an audience of listeners or viewers who do not have the access to negotiate the meaning. Chandler (2011) describes this mode as monologic, a context in which the utterance is one sided and the speaker merely expresses her views for a passive on non-existent audience.

On the other hand, the mode may be dialogic alternatively, referred to as interpersonal by Shrum and Glisan (2010). In such a case, Chandler (2011) explains that the communication is part of an exchange. Lastly, the interpretive mode like the presentational is one sided. The speaker however has to consider the language, culture and context of the receiver. For all these modes, therefore, the linguistic choices one makes centre on how best to achieve communicative goals and therefore justify my choice of the communicative language teaching theoretical framework for the present study.

3.7 Register

According to Halliday (2007:19) the origins of the concept of register date back to Reid (1956) who first uses the term 'register' to capture the notion of 'text variety.' Lukin et-al (2011) note that Halliday (2007) later uses the term 'register' in a paper titled 'The users and uses of language.' In the paper, it is observed that the importance of the context of situation had been noted much earlier since linguists generally agree that people speak differently in different situations. The systemic approach framework which underlies the present research is premised on the assumption that different registers apply for different contexts. This observation sums up the notion of text variety or text and registers which I now explore in detail.

Halliday (1985:29) defines register as a variety of language, corresponding to a variety of situations', with situation interpreted 'by means of a conceptual framework using the terms 'field', 'tenor' and 'mode' (Halliday, 1995: 38). In other words he contends that the notion of register projects how language is influenced by various sociolinguistic factors, including the eco-social environment and the dynamics of social change.

In line with definition Lukin et al (2011:12) call register 'a model well suited to calibrating the shuffling and reshuffling of cultural space-time and its boundaries.' In other words, through the use of appropriate registers one can locate the context of a communication. As Halliday (1995) concludes the notion of register is particularly well geared to describing language variation and consistency. Furthermore, the notion of register helps us recognize, or at least frame, test, identify and evaluate the differences in what could normally be considered as the same social activities.

The concept of registers therefore reflects the need to explain variation according to use. This concept is concerned with explaining language in action; how meaning is constructed in different contexts. Such a focus on language in action justifies an investigation of sociolinguistic factors since such action is contextualised in the society. The second language teacher is informed by by different sociolinguistic factors so too is the target language.

3.8. Rationale for the SFL theoretical framework.

As already noted adopting the SFL framework should not minimise the importance of other theoretical approaches in the study of second language acquisition. The SFL framework marks a significant departure from the traditional well researched grammars like structuralism. Chandler (2011) notes that SFL emphasises on the importance of function (use of language) rather than structure, (how it is composed). A focus on structure explains how the language is modelled so that the language itself is the subject of academic study whereas a focus on use equips learners with communicative skills so that it addresses the needs of language teaching and learning. My research is

concerned with teachers' and learners' language needs in a particular context and SFL was designed specifically for that.

O'Donnell (2011) contrasts SFL from cognitive linguistics in that it views language as something shared by a society and which can therefore best be studied as it is used in its context (external manifestation) without having to speculate on the internal mental processes. My research was spurred by external symptoms of defective language usage in O' level school leavers, therefore the need to adopt a theory that addresses the external manifestation of language.

The Systemic Functional Linguistics theoretical framework is appropriate in conceptualising the ideal teaching methods of English as a second language since it contextualises all teaching in the environment in which the language is learnt. As Halliday and Hasan (1995) contend, it takes more than a collection or organisation of lexical items for a text to make sense. Language learning in the classroom setting involves different texts. Therefore it is necessary to have some further information about the environments or contexts from where the texts are drawn. The SFL theory focuses on everything that may be necessary for a text to make sense or the way that a connection is made with the culture and every-day life. This role of the second language for learners in Zimbabwe is captured in the aims of language teaching in the O level school curriculum. Aim 3.3.2 stipulates that learners should be able to 'communicate effectively in both spoken and written English in different situations and registers' ZIMSEC (2013:2). Such an approach implies that learning/teaching scripts have to be derived from the student immediate contexts: their homes, the school environment and the current setting. All this echoes the sociolinguistic factors focused on in the present study.

The first reason for opting for SFL is that it is linked to Sociolinguistics, a breakaway from the much researched pure linguistic tradition which Zhang and Whang (2016) say studies language itself; its rules, grammar, vocabulary, voice and so forth. SFL instead studies the rules of language use focusing on the relationship between language and different social factors and in so doing opens the more extensive new field which Zhang

and Whang (ibid) contend will have far reaching impact on second and foreign language teaching, benefiting the language teaching in the following ways:

- Extending theoretical linguistics in the direction of language learning and teaching so that the teacher is empowered and better informed in making decisions on the goals and content of language learning.
- Stating the insights and implications of linguistic theories to language teaching methodology.

From these views, I realise that many language learning theories are proposed based on certain linguistic theories. In fact it can be said that linguistic knowledge belies the root of understanding what language learners can learn, how they actually learn and what they ultimately learn. A study grounded in SFL theory provides new perspectives to approach second language teaching. However, the choice of methods is pre-constrained by the functional notions of language so that belies the SFL approach. This dictates that second language teaching methods that extol language use rather than language structure are more desirable. Consequently my research also adopts the Communicative Theory of second language teaching as espoused in the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) models alluded to earlier in the chapter which I will now explore.

3.9 Communicative Language Teaching Theory (CLT)

The discussion on SFL above highlighted the current trends in second language learning. As already noted by Zhang and Wang (2016), contemporary trends view language learning as a socio-cognitive process rather than the earlier conception of language learning as a cognitive matter. Adoption of this view makes it mandatory to incorporate communicative approaches in second language teaching. Therefore the ensuing discussion focuses on the Communicative Language Teaching theoretical framework, henceforth alternatively referred to as CLT. This theory derives a lot from

the social environment in which the language is taught, learnt and used and is therefore relevant to a study that explores the interaction of sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching. The impending discussion explores CLT, by way of locating its origins, defining it and outlining its constituents and explaining the rationale for choosing it as one of the underlying theoretical frameworks for the current study.

3.9.1. The origins of the Communicative Language Teaching Theory (CLT)

Communicative language teaching models are derived from the notion of communicative competence as the major goal in second language teaching. According to Yu (2008) this notion (communicative competence) was first used by Hymes (1972) in his discussion of the concept of 'competence and performance.' Mede and Dikilitas (2015), however, note that the term (competence) was derived from the concept of performance earlier proposed by Chomsky (1965), a point also supported by their citation of Coupland and Jaworski (2009) who similarly, trace the origins of the notion of communicative competence and performance to Chomsky's (1965) generative grammar.

Mede and Dikilitas (2015), contend that Chomsky's (1965) conception of 'competence' omitted the linguistic ability linked to the production or use of utterances which are grammatically incorrect but appropriate to the context or the situational and verbal context of the utterance. Therefore, later endeavours were challenged to come up with more comprehensive definitions.

Consequently, communicative competence in the context of second language teaching has since been extensively interrogated and researched over the years. In the process, Yu (2008) notes that the notion has been defined and redefined but it still continues to excite further investigations by scholars from various related fields. The research trail left in this area charts a gradual shift in focus from studying linguistic forms to focusing on the actual language use. Savignon (2001) contends that this new thrust has sucked

in more researchers and curriculum developers and provides them with a sturdy framework for integrating linguistic theory, research, and the practice of teaching.

In the same vein, the present research shifts from research work into methodologies that explicitly focus on the language itself: the grammar, vocabulary, and phonology and so on, to approaches that have an enthusiastic focus on the expression and comprehension of meaning through language use. The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approaches to second language teaching meet this criteria, therefore, it is the theoretical framework adopted as the bases for the present research as further rationalised in the ensuing discussion.

3.9.2 The Rationale of CLT

As already noted, traditional methods of second language tend to focus on the structural, functional, and discourse rules of the language. Contemporary trends on the other hand show a deliberate slant towards a focus on language function or use. In this light, Yu (2008) explains, that modern methods tend to extol the internalization of sociolinguistics rules that can guide learners in the choice of appropriate forms of language to use in different contexts. He argues that second language learners are not able to employ such rules and may also not know when to use particular forms and under what circumstances. Faced with the challenge to make contextually appropriate correct linguistic choices, the researcher contends, that the second language learner is challenged to master more than grammatical competence in order to communicate more effectively in the second language.

This view is supported by Yu (ibid) citing Hymes' (1972) who argued that the language learner needs to know how language is used by members of a speech community to accomplish communicative goals. Developing the line of thought which focused on actual language use, Hymes (1974) further argued that the rules of language use depended on the fusion of pragmatic sociocultural elements, grammatical and strategic competence by the speaker to manipulate language to fulfil communicative goals. According to Johnstone and Marcellino (2010) Hymes (1974) is particularly critical of

Chomsky's (1965) idea of linguistic competence which he contends, fails to account for linguistic variation. In support of this point, Hymes (1972b, 1989) argues that ungrammatical utterances may be socially appropriate, in the same way grammatical utterances could be socially inappropriate.

Hymes (1972) builds a strong case against the Chomskyan (1965) focus on Transformational-Generative grammar which aims at linguistic competence. Furthermore, he acknowledges the invaluable role of the socially-contextualized ways in which utterances are shaped in different communicative events. His main argument is that there is more to language use than the mere construction of grammatically possible linguistic utterances. Therefore, he objects to Chomsky's (1965) definition of linguistic competence in the strongest terms. He contends that 'a child from whom any and all the grammatical sentences of a language might come with equal likelihood would be a social monster' (Hymes, 1974:75).



In other words, such a child would not be able to adjust his utterances to the different social contexts. Furthermore, he argued that this could be averted when the child acquires both the system of grammar and the system of its use from the same matrix. According to his theory, the system of use is conceptualised as 'communicative competence,' an alternative to Chomsky's linguistic competence'.

All these contentions add up to the notion of communicative competence, as later defined under Section 3.9.4 below, as the major goal of language teaching. Communicative competence is one of the theories that underlie the communicative theoretical-framework that I adopt as the second theoretical framework for the present research. In the ongoing research, I explore the sociolinguistic factors that teachers may need to pay close attention to, when teaching English as a second language.

Based on the challenges that second language learners have in communicating, my research shifts from the explicit emphasis on language itself: the grammar, vocabulary, and phonology, among others, to an enthusiastic focus on the socio linguistic factors enshrined in the context in which language is used. I deliberately focus on the roles of

the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction. These are the factors that determine the appropriateness of the language used in a given context and, therefore, second language teaching. The methodology best suited for achieving this are the communicative oriented models which are closely related to the broad relevant areas, earlier defined by Hymes (1972) as competence and performance which I will define in the ensuing discussion.

3.9.3 Definition of CLT

Although the notions of competence and performance have been extensively researched, defining the construct and its full implications to second language teaching is still fairly elusive. It still provides fertile ground for further investigation to follow up on Hymes' (1972) earlier conceptions. Such research projects serve to inform the teaching of English as a second language in ways that link up second language teaching with the sociolinguistic environment as investigated in the present study.

In the same vein therefore, Hymes (1972) premises his theories on communicative competence on the observation that there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless. Mede and Dikilitas (2015) theorise that over and above linguistic competence the language user possesses an intuitive system in which the rules of grammar would be useless. This implies that the language user adjusts her language as demanded by factors like the topic, the situation and the human relations. In other words, as Mede and Dikilitas (2015) explain, communicative competence includes both linguistic competence and implicit and explicit knowledge including the grammar rules as well as the contextual or sociolinguistic knowledge of the rules of language use in contexts. In simple terms Mede and Dikilitas (2015:15) sum up Hymes' theory as including 'what is formerly possible, what is feasible, what is the social meaning or value of a given utterance and what actually occurs.' The writers define competence, in line with Hymes (1972), as the grammar, or linguistic knowledge that one knows without being aware of it. Performance, on the other hand is viewed, after

Coupland and Jaworski (2009) observations, as the way people use that linguistic knowledge when communicating.

Competence and performance are constructs closely linked to the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) theoretical framework. Mede and Dikilitas (2015) note the departure of CLT approaches from earlier models of second language teaching. The traditional approaches are distinguished by their focus on the rules of speaking that depend on pragmatic sociocultural elements, among other things. The two writers further explain that the rules that govern CLT are derived from the grammatical and strategic competence employed by the speaker to manipulate language to fulfil communicative goals. To fully understand the CLT theoretical framework, however, it is imperative that I outline its main tenets which according to Hymes (1972) add up to four components. These are:

- Grammatical
- Discourse
- Sociolinguistics and
- Strategic competence



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I discuss the components in detail in the next section of this presentation.

3.10 The main tenets of CLT

In this section I outline the main tenets of CLT. The research assumed that the way forward in ESL teaching was to open up the teaching practices in the ESL classroom, therefore an understanding of the tenets of ESL, among other approaches would widen the readers' perspectives.

3.10.1 Grammatical competence

Most scholars argue that grammatical competence; also called linguistic competence deals with sentence-level rules only. To add to the debate, Mede and Dikilitas (2015)

contend that it concerns the acquisition of phonological, morphological syntactic and sematic rules or simply the mastery of the language code itself. However, the researchers caution that mastery of the language code alone is not enough for the achievement of communicative objectives.

3.10.2. Discourse Competence

Discourse competence is another important area of knowledge that contributes to communicative competence. Mede and Dikilitas (2015) explain that it stresses the mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meaning to achieve unified written texts in different genres including narratives and argumentative essays. This implies that discourse competence encompasses the structuring of the text to achieve its communicative goals. The writers note that in doing so, it focuses on the rules that govern the relationship among sentences to form a meaningful whole.

This implies that second language teaching should, among other areas, focus on cohesion (grammatical skills) and coherence (appropriate combinations of communicative functions) in a variety of discourses. The communicative language theoretical framework suggests means towards this end and the present research adopts the same framework to broaden the perspectives.

3.10.3. Sociolinguistic competence

As already noted, the concept of sociolinguistic competence is closely related to the context in which the language is used. According to Mede and Dikilitas (2015) it also refers to the rules of speaking that depend on pragmatic sociocultural elements. The writers further contend that sociolinguistic competence implies the mastery of the pragmatic aspects of various speech acts such as the cultural values, norms and other sociocultural conventions that shape communicative events in social contexts. In other words, sociolinguistic competence is reflected through the styles and registers of

speech as influenced by the topic of discourse, the social status, gender and age of the participants.

As Yu (2008) sums it up, sociolinguistic competence also reflects the social context the participants, the information they share and the function of the interaction. Citing Savignon (2006), he explains that the context determines the appropriateness of a particular utterance. Furthermore, Yu (2008) contends that Sociolinguistic Competence can be divided into two broad areas:

- Pragma-linguistics
- Socio-pragmatics

Pragma-linguistics is to do with the appropriateness of form. Leech (1983), in Yu (2008) further says that it signals the particular resources that a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions. Socio-pragmatics on the other hand, refers to the appropriateness of meaning in a given context. In that way, as by Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993), socio-pragmatics defines the ways in which pragmatic performance is subject to specific sociocultural conventions and values.

All this closely links to the focus of the present study on the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching. As already noted in discussing what inspired the current project in chapter 1, the failure to convey meaning and using the appropriate language in different contexts by second language speakers, referred to as O' level school graduates inspired the present research. Furthermore, there is a need to investigate the causes of the language problems that relate to Pragmatic linguistic and Socio-pragmatic competence in the context of cross cultural communicative acts. The present research is grounded in the communicative theoretical framework and aims at addressing the related issues and suggesting the future course for second language pedagogy.

3.10.4. Strategic competence

Mede and Dikilitas (2015:16) define strategic competence as ‘the mastery of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to compensate for communication breakdowns.’ The writers explain that this may include, among other strategies, the activation of the background knowledge that belies the communicative event and contextual guessing. It therefore concerns the way the speaker falls back to his past experiences and manipulates language to fulfil communicative goals in the present event.

This implies that if the second language course is to enable learners to reach a level of communicative competence, all the four components are important. This entails the rules of speaking that depend on pragmatic sociocultural elements as well as the grammatical and strategic competence employed by the speaker to manipulate language to fulfil communicative goals. All these factors are closely linked to the focus of my research on sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe. This renders the communicative theoretical framework relevant for this research. The research thrust is premised on the assumption that if a foreign or second language course aims to enable learners to reach a level of communicative competence, all four components, which are inseparable from the sociolinguistic factors of the society in which the language is used, are of great importance.

3.11 Focus of the study

The research is concerned with how second language teaching should reflect or be influenced by the social context the learners, the information they share and the function of the interaction in language teaching. A strong case for focusing on communicative theory is presented by Yu (2008:16) who says that ‘in addition to learning structural, discourse, and strategic rules to meet the needs of linguistic accuracy and fluency, learners have to internalize sociolinguistic rules that can assist them in the choice of appropriate forms.’ Furthermore, the study adopts the view that the teaching of sociolinguistic competence is not to be treated lightly if foreign language teachers intend to assist learners not only in employing grammatically correct forms but also in knowing when these forms are appropriate and under what circumstances? (Yu, 2008)

All these contentions are congruent with the main thrust of the study in progress whose primary aim is to link theory with practice. In particular, I interrogate the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in an environment where a second language, English is taught. This serves to inform ESL pedagogy based on the shortcomings of the present practices. The research is, therefore, grounded in sociolinguistic as enshrined in the SFL theoretical framework which emphasises the functional approach to language, and the communicative language teaching theoretical framework which transcends from the functional approach.

3.12. Conclusion

In this chapter, I outlined the theoretical framework in which the present research is situated. The discussion also focused on the main theoretical frameworks; Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), adopted for the research. The theories were defined from different perspectives showing their interrelationships. They were further differentiated by their distinguishing features and comparative analysis against traditional grammars. Special emphasis was focused on the functional role of language and the importance of the context of situation in attaining that function. The context of situation is closely related to the setting which in turn implies the role of sociolinguistics in second language teaching thereby rendering SFL and CLT the relevant theoretical frameworks for the current research.

The discussion also highlighted the intuitive claims and assumptions about how English as a second language should be taught in Zimbabwe, which influenced my conception of the current study. The research sought to explore these claims and assumptions. This line in research is supported by Banks (2016) who notes that providing a sound theoretical backing for any such claims and assumptions that are based on intuitive or ad hoc assumptions reduces subjectivity. He argues that when subjectivity is reduced, an area of academic interest is realised. Consequently, in the present research I focus on sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching in Zimbabwe using the SFL framework. In chapter 4, I will discuss the methodology adopted in the study.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.0 Introduction


This chapter outlines and justifies the research methodology adopted for the present research. Rather than the conventional qualitative or quantitative research paradigms, I opted for the Mixed Methods design, (henceforth MM) research paradigm, based on the practical reasons presented in the ensuing discussion.

This chapter opens with an outline of the scope of the research. Thereafter, a definition of the Mixed Methods design adopted for the present study is given. The discussion explores and rationalizes how the present research blends the survey and case study designs so that two strands of data; the qualitative and quantitative data are concurrently collected. The discussion shows how the data are collected through the questionnaire, the interview and focus group discussion techniques. Furthermore, the chapter explains the data collection, presentation and analysis procedures, of the two strands of data focusing on the triangulation function achieved through the mixed methods design. Lastly, the discussion focuses on how the researcher ensured the validity and reliability of the research.

4.1. Scope of the research

The research investigates the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching in Zimbabwe, focusing on the teaching of English as a second language at O' level. The nature of the research necessitates multilevel perspectives ranging from the second language curriculum planning level, the implementation to the evaluation levels.

This scope meets the criterion defined by different researchers including, Creswell (2014); Tashakkori and Creswell (2007); O' Cathain, Murphy and Nicholl (2007) for research projects best suited for the use of the mixed methods design as discussed below. The choice of the mixed methods is influenced by the progressive developments, as noted by Creswell (2014) in the last decade. He contends that a profound re-examination of the nature of reality, epistemology, values, the rhetoric of research and methodology has emerged mostly in the social sciences. According to him, researchers in that area generally confirm that including only qualitative or quantitative methods falls short of the approaches suitable for research in social and human sciences. The ensuing discussion therefore defines Mixed Methods research design as adopted for the research; its major constituents and variations. The discussion prepares the reader for what is to come by explaining how the MM design adds value to the findings, their interpretations and application in a research project of this nature.



In line with the criteria proposed by Creswell and Tashakkori (2014) for research-work best suited for the MM approach, the on-going project seeks to generate new knowledge. This is achieved through exploring theory and practice to bring out new insights into the relationships between the constructs: second language teaching and the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. The research gathers both quantitative and qualitative data on issues like the teacher attitudes and practices with regards to the integration of sociolinguistics in language teaching.

Furthermore, the research combines qualitative data with quantitative data. For example, the teachers' attitudes, views and practices are first captured through the questionnaires and interview-responses. They are then converted to broad numeric trends to be subjected to simple statistical analysis so that generalisations could be made. In short, the scope of the research is to explore the participants' views; their introspection on what they do as opposed to the ideals in language teaching on the one hand and their actual practices, on the other hand. All this is presented as numeric data to be analysed so that meanings and conclusions on the prevalence of different practices and attitudes can be drawn.

4.2. Definition of the Mixed Methods (MM) Research Design.

The present research adopts the Mixed Methods (MM) design; a method encompassing a combination of the descriptive survey and the case study and variously defined by different authors. Creswell (2014) broadly defines the Mixed Methods design as a combination of the quantitative and qualitative research designs. He describes the design as consequence-oriented, problem-centred and pluralistic; an approach strictly designed to suit the research task at hand, rather than a method.

According to Creswell and Clark (2007), the MM design comes in different blends so that different labels such as multi-methods, convergence design, integrated methods and combined methods have been used in reference to the design. Creswell (2014) notes that, despite the fact that there are slight variations between the categories; the labels assigned to the MM variations may be used interchangeably. Furthermore, he contends that a major defining feature of the mixed methods variations is that they all attempt to integrate qualitative and quantitative procedures into the same study. They all collect comprehensive data including numeric and textual information using a variety of instruments.

The authors explain that using the Mixed Methods design is a kind of triangulation, whereby one type of data collected confirms prior data. However triangulation is only one aspect of the MM design's strengths so that the two cannot be viewed as interchangeable. Apart from the triangulation aspect, data collected in the MM at any one stage, determined by the prior data and turn, they influence the subsequent data. Furthermore, Creswell (2014) explains that different strands of data may be collected concurrently in the MM design, whereas in the triangulation process one strand data is collected and subsequently verified (triangulated).

After considering the peculiarities of the problem at hand a blend of the MM design is adopted by the present research. Two research designs: the case study and the survey,

as explained under 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 were adopted. The research adopted a two-strand approach whereby both quantitative and qualitative data were concurrently collected using various data collection instruments. The questionnaire survey, the interview and the focus group discussion, were successively used. Using the instruments successively was done so that prior data would be triangulated through data collected using the preceding instrument, in line with Creswell's observation on the advantages of the mixed methods design and notion of triangulation.

4.2.1. Case study

According to Creswell (2014), the case study is essentially an in-depth study which narrows down a broad field of research into one or a few researchable examples. He further postulates that the case study design is most suitable design when not much is known about an issue or phenomenon as is the case with sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching. According to Yin (2003), the case study design excels at bringing out an understanding of a complex issue through a detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships.

In the context of the present study, the complex phenomenon under investigation is the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching in Zimbabwe at O' level. There are 203 secondary schools spread over 10 provinces in Zimbabwe (MOESC, 2015) and including all the schools for the study was not practical given the time and resources at the researcher's disposal. Therefore, the case study was considered most suitable. The Midlands Province which has a total of 337 schools was taken as the case and measures, as explained later under 4.10, were taken to ensure that the results obtained from the case could be reasonably generalised to other schools in Zimbabwe.

4.2.2. Survey

Glasow (2015) contends that a survey is simply a data collection tool for carrying out survey research where the survey research is a kind of investigation where independent

and dependent variables are used to define the scope of the study but cannot be explicitly controlled by the researcher. The oral survey is labelled the interview and the written survey the questionnaire. In the typical survey, the researcher predicts a model that identifies an assumed relationship among the variables so that the survey is constructed to test this model through observations of the phenomena.

The present research was premised on the assumption that there was a relationship between second language teaching and the sociolinguistic environment in which the language is taught. The survey was therefore used to explore emerging patterns and trends; what exists, in what amount, and in what context so that generalisations could be made. Quoting Kraemer (1991:xiii), Glasow (2015) identifies three distinguishing characteristics of survey research, namely that:

- it is used to quantitatively describe specific aspects of a given population like examining the relationships among variables
- the data required for survey research are collected from people and are, therefore, subjective and
- the it uses a selected portion of the population from which the findings can later be generalized back to the population.

The present research drew a sample from the selected case as explained earlier. From that sample data concerning attitude, otherwise difficult to measure through observations were collected for analysis.

4.3. Triangulation

In the social sciences triangulation refers to a situation where two or more methods are used to check the results of one and the same subject in a study. According to Rothbauer (2008) triangulation is a powerful technique designed to facilitate the validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources. He posits that by combining multiple observers, theories, methods, and empirical materials, researchers

can hope to overcome the weakness or intrinsic biases and the problems that come from single method, single-observer and single-theory studies.

In the present research, therefore, methodological triangulation is used, whereby document analysis is followed by the case study, after which the questionnaire survey. Lastly, the observation design comes in with each stage cross-checking the previous data to produce accurate results as suggested by Creswell (2014).

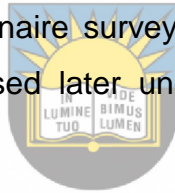
4.4. The qualitative strand

As already noted, the present research adopted two tiers; the qualitative and the quantitative strands. According to Hancock, Windridge and Ockleford (2009) the qualitative component is essentially exploratory and focused on how people or groups of people can have somewhat different ways of looking at reality. The reality in the context of the present study is the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching as reflected by the practices/behaviour of the participants in a natural setting (teaching of English as a second language in Zimbabwe). Therefore, the study collects the participants' accounts as data without any manipulation of the variables. Hancock, Windridge and Ockleford (2009) contend that this approach is best for situations when the researcher does not know what to expect, in the bid to define the problem or develop an approach to the problem.

Hensen (2006) notes that qualitative procedures have the advantage of being flexible and emergent but at the same time remain systematic in their focus on the description and interpretation of data, leading to the development of new concepts or theories. The writer contends that the approaches are also used to go deeper into issues of interest and explore nuances related to the problem at hand. The data collection instruments used to collect qualitative data in this research, as later discussed, are the focus group discussion, the in-depth interview and questionnaire.

4.5. The quantitative strand

According to Hancock, Windridge and Ockleford (2009) the quantitative component of the research requires the research process to be defined in advance. Furthermore, it tends to focus on ways of describing and understanding reality through the discovery of what the researchers term the general “laws”. They further contend that the quantitative procedures achieve this understanding through the use of statistical techniques that allow the researcher to speculate how likely it is that something is ‘true’ for a given population in an objective or measurable sense. In other words, the quantitative component of the research is conclusive in its purpose, as it tries to quantify the problem and understand how prevalent it is by looking for projectable results to a larger population. In the present research, quantitative data collected relate to the frequency of particular practices that reflect a response in language teaching practices to the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching theory. Data was collected through a questionnaire survey. The details on how the questionnaire instrument was used are discussed later under the section on data collection and analysis.



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4.6. Subjects

Teachers of English language at O' level in the Midlands Province are the subjects for the study. Samples were accordingly drawn from these subjects.

4.6.1. Population

In the present research the concept of ‘a case’ is used in generalised sense, where I restrict my research to the Midlands Province, assumed to be the case picked from the ten provinces in Zimbabwe. There are 337 secondary schools in the province, spread over 8 districts, and categorised as government and non-government (Secretary's Annual Report, 2015). This is the population of schools, from which a sample was extracted using a combination of the stratified random sampling and convenient sampling techniques. The school population is summed up in the table below.

Table 4.6.2: Summary of Secondary Schools in the Midlands Province

District	Govt	Non-Gvt	Satellite	Total
Chirumanzu	2	16	8	26
Gokwe South	1	24	34	59
Gokwe North	1	45	8	54
Gweru	13	18	12	43
Kwekwe	6	33	16	55
Mberengwa	1	36	8	45
Shurugwi	3	23	4	30
Zvishavane	2	17	6	26
	29	212	96	337

The Midlands Province Annual Report (2015)

4.6.2. Sampling

The stratified random sampling technique was used to extract the sample for the study. Agresti and Finlay (2008) define the stratified random sampling technique as a probabilistic sampling option whereby the population is first split into strata. This is done so that relevant segments of the population are equitably captured and represented in

the final sample. The texture of such a sample justifies the generalisation of the findings.

For the present research the population consisted of two strata; 29 government schools and 337 non-government schools. This works out to a ratio of 1:11, therefore, stratification of the schools according to their categories worked out to 10 government and 110 non-government schools. To select these, the schools were given identification labels so that these could be placed in two boxes, one for each stratum, and a random draw was made. One teacher was then conveniently drawn from each of these schools so that a total of 140 respondents were the subjects of the study.

4.7. Research instruments

As already mentioned the strength of my research is derived from the volume of data collected. Therefore, data were collected using five complementing data collection strategies as outlined below. This enabled the triangulation of data, and clarification of issues that may not have been clearly stated.



4.7.1. Document analysis

The analyses focused on the school syllabus provisions as provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Zimbabwe. Therefore, I analysed the O' level English language syllabus document, the supplementary document and the assessment scheme. These are the documents that spell out the macro level decisions (policy level) on second language teaching and therefore prescribe the commitment or otherwise to incorporating sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching. Thereafter, I analysed the local (school level) documents, the school syllabus, the teachers' records, pupils' work, assessment schemes and the teaching materials. These are the documents that reflect the micro level (teachers') understanding and interpretation of language policy and therefore show the extent to which the sociolinguistics factors are incorporated

4.7.2 Questionnaire

Two sets of questionnaires were used. The first is a semi structured questionnaire modelled against Cook's (1991) four-tier assessment scheme for assessing the teaching styles preferred by different teachers. The second questionnaire is modelled against the Communicative Oriented Language Teaching Model 'COLT' scheme to assess the inclination of the actual teaching practices towards including sociolinguistic factors to meet communicative goals, also referred to as communicative competence, by the different teachers.

The questionnaire schedule consisted of two sections; the first part being an assessment scheme of the inclination of the teaching practices towards communicative approaches and the second part assessing the teachers' self-evaluation of their own teaching with regards to the influence of sociolinguistic factors. The two sections had 24 and 10 items respectively, with the first section presenting closed questions and the second part presenting open-ended questions.

The assumption made was that an inclination towards communicative oriented teaching was indicative of the influence of the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors and the interplay would be further explored through the self-evaluation component.

The questionnaires were distributed to a proportional 110 respondents from non-government schools against 10 respondents from the government schools. The samples were randomly selected from each stratum (government and non-government schools)

4.7.3. Observation

An adaptation of the Communicative Orientation of language Teaching (COLT) scheme (Allen, Frohlich and Spada, 1984) is used to observe teachers in session. The scheme is considered to be the most comprehensive tool for classroom observation developed so far (Nunan, 1995) and it matches the purposes of the present research. The

observation focused on the content of the language lesson and the teacher- student interaction with a view to explore how the sociolinguistic factors influenced language teaching. I opted for the observational technique because it provides useful insights into a phenomenon and avoids the ethical and practical difficulties of setting up a large and cumbersome research project focused on a large population. Rosenbaum (2010) posits that data collected through observation are emergent rather than pre-existing therefore my study becomes flexible as it responds to the emerging data. Furthermore, the data collection procedure need not be structured around a single source of data, since data will emerge from the interaction of all the participants in the classroom observed.

For practical reasons, like time and distance, 12 teachers; 1 from the government schools and 11 from the non-government schools were observed in line with the school category distribution/strata proportion. I spent an average of 20 minutes in each lesson and used an observation schedule appendix 3 to capture the observed details.



4.7.4. Individual interviews

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An interview, designed on the same lines as the questionnaire so that the sets of data complement each other was used. The purposes of the interviews are two-pronged. First, they served to clarify the issues not clearly presented in or omitted in the questionnaire responses and secondly, to triangulate data collected through the two instruments. This is meant to render the results more comprehensive and relevant for generalisation.

For the interviews a total of 36 respondents were interviewed. Of these 3 teachers were drawn from the government schools and a proportional 33, from the non-government schools. Again, the stratified random sampling technique was used. The size of this sample was determined by practical reasons like the distribution and the time available.

4.7.5 Focus Group discussion

Five sessions were organised for the discussion. There were 8 respondents for each discussion session and these were conveniently selected for logistics reasons. In view of the spread of the respondents in the Midlands Province, convenience and availability was the major factor considered for the focus discussion groups.

4.8. Data presentation analysis and interpretation

As already mentioned, two strands of data; the qualitative and the quantitative were collected in the present study. Processing both strands of data was guided by general principles of data collection and processing and principles relevant to particular types of data as discussed in the sections below. Worth noting was that the data were collected concurrently therefore an elaborate attempt was made to split the data for further processing in subsequent stages.



4.8.1. General principles in data processing

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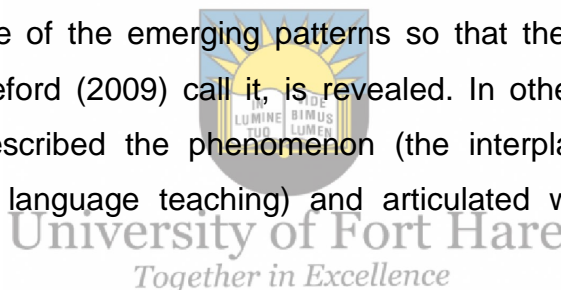
For all the data collected the processing stretched from the preliminary stages, also referred to as the descriptive or manifest level, by Creswell (2014), to the data generating process. According to Creswell (2014) data processing ideally goes through three levels; the preliminary, the descriptive and the interpretation levels. Throughout these stages, Hansen (2006) contends that the presentation and analysis should be guided by the consideration to communicate the most important features.

For all types of data Cooper and Schindler (2011) contends that the starting point is to define the words and phrases as they are used in research context. Therefore, in the present study, after making the pertinent definitions the data were collated and summarised. The data were presented in various forms including narrative, graphic and tabular form in line with the need to highlight pertinent features as already advocated by Hansen (2006). Both quantitative and qualitative analysis procedures were employed to

analyse the data at two levels as suggested by Hancock, Windridge and Ockleford (2009); the descriptive and the interpretive levels.

4.8.2. Qualitative data

For the qualitative data, a table was designed to summarise the responses from different respondents so that the frequencies of particular responses could be quantified. For this to be done the data were first coded. Fisher (2007) defines coding as a formal process involving the identification of themes, against which the research material is divided into chunks or organised into manageable units. He contends that in the process, the great bulk of the interview material considered to be of no value is cut out. At this stage disparate elements are connected and recurring features are identified and cross-referenced so that patterns can be identified. This helps to highlight the statistical significance of the emerging patterns so that the 'big picture' as Hancock, Windridge and Ockleford (2009) call it, is revealed. In other words, the data was so presented that it described the phenomenon (the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching) and articulated what it means for second language teachers.

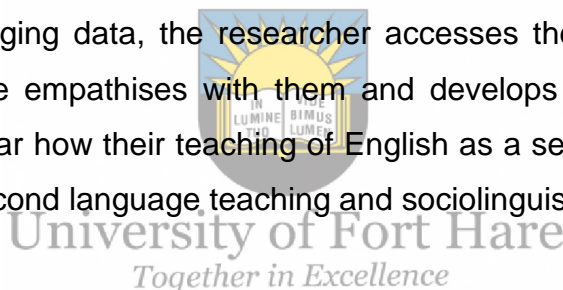


In the present research, the prevalence of particular teaching practices and trends is summarised at the same time noting the similarities and differences in different contexts and comparing the relationships. This is in line with Kombo and Tromp (2009) who posit that data are raw information, and not knowledge as academics know it. Data has to be processed to become information which can then be used to explain a phenomenon. In short, for data to be transformed to coherent and relevant information, the data has to be organised thematically in line with the research objectives.

This pre-determined deductive angle of approaching data analysis is viewed by Chisaka (2013) as pattern matching, so that generalisations can be drawn from the emerging patterns. He further explains that noting the patterns as the data flows in is a formative strategy of comparing empirically based patterns. Matching makes it possible to observe the patterns that emerge through the research and be able to align them

against the research hypotheses. Chisaka (ibid) contends that pattern matching is also a useful strategy that links the data to the research questions. The strategy also helps to relate the research questions to the theoretical propositions in which the research question is grounded.

After pattern matching, the next level is the interpretive level, also referred to as the latent level by Hancock, Windridge and Ockleford (2009). They point out that at this level the researcher extracts meaning from the emerging data patterns, linking the findings to the initial assumptions. In the present research, for instance, the assumption made was that there would a relationship between the teaching of English as a second language and the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching environment. Therefore, the data are to be interpreted in terms of how they reflect this interplay as proposed by the research questions. As Creswell (2014) explains, through such an analysis of the emerging data, the researcher accesses the world of the participants (teachers) so that he empathises with them and develops an understanding of their worldview, in particular how their teaching of English as a second language reflects the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors.



4.8.3. Processing of data collected from different sources

As already noted, various data were typically collected from different sources through different techniques. The data collection techniques used were, document analysis, the questionnaire, and observation and focus group discussion, respectively. This was in line with the contention made by Creswell (2014) that the MM approach draws its strength from the volumes of diverse data collected for analysis which makes it possible to generalise the findings.

For all the data collected through each of the above techniques (1-5), appropriate, data processing sheets were designed. For each data collection instrument, a corresponding record sheet for capturing data from each respondent was designed. All the data were then collated and summarized. Designing the analysis documents was in line with the suggestions about pattern matching made by Hancock, Windridge and Ockleford (2009)

and Fisher's (2007) propositions on coding, as already discussed under 4.8.2. This was done so that the emerging patterns were highlighted and rendered suitable for statistical analysis.

4.9. Validity and reliability

In this section, I explore how the study worked towards the goal of validity and reliability, which is closely related to trustworthiness, credibility and dependability. According to Glasow (2015), validity relates to the extent to which the measurements of the survey provide the information relevant to the study while reliability refers to the consistency of the survey results. In other words, Glasow (2015) explains that reliability is an assertion that the research was a truthful investigation and that its process, if repeated under similar settings, would produce the same or similar results.

The first step towards this goal was to ensure that the data collection instruments: the interview schedule, the questionnaire and observation schedules were clear and well-structured to avoid ambiguity. This was ensured by a rigorous construction and editing process which involved consultations with colleagues in the Communication Skills Department at Midlands State University. Furthermore, the revised instruments were tried out in a pilot study in three schools. Thereafter, the instruments were modified. At the implementation stage, I made sure that the instruments were correctly used to measure what they were meant to measure and that the responses elicited were the desired information. I personally explained the instructions to all the respondents and carried out the various processes involved, so that a reasonable degree of trustworthiness was ensured. In line with the concept of trustworthiness, Chisaka's (2013) proposes a five-tier yardstick or standards of trustworthiness. He contends the first measure of trustworthiness is that a credible research generates data from different angles. He argues that this provides a broad picture of the problem under investigation.

In the support of this view, Runesu and Host (2009) suggest that triangulation, is enabled by the use of different data. They explain that triangulation simply means the

use of protocols that ensure accuracy through the generation of complementing data from many sources. In compliance with these assertions, therefore, the present research generated data from five sources; interviews, document analysis, focus group discussions and direct observation. The data were so generated that one set of data built up on previous data and was in turn, complemented by the subsequent data.

The second measure of trustworthiness is what Runesu and Host (2009) call, member-checking. The process entails giving a participant a transcript of their interview to authenticate. This rationale for this is that the interviewer could have missed aspects of the participant's responses. Member-checking therefore gives the participant an opportunity to correct and re-affirm their position.

The third measure was thick description. In line with Runesu and Host's (2009) suggestions, the researcher gave a clear and detailed explanation of the processes and practices that the research would focus on. Participants were given the opportunity to closely reflect on their individual experiences and practices in the teaching of English as a second language in a manner that would reflected the interplay of the sociolinguistic environment and language teaching in different settings. In the study, thick description emerged from the elaborate data generating process and an equally elaborate presentation of the findings.

The fourth measure was achieved through the nature of the engagement of the researcher with participants. The research required an honest self-appraisal by the participants and this could only be done if there was trust between the researcher and the respondents. There was therefore a need for a relatively prolonged engagement, based on the assumption that the longer the engagement period the more open and honest the interaction was likely to be. Therefore, a one-off visit to the schools was considered inappropriate. Instead, the researcher interacted with the participants physically and by telephone constantly so that the participants felt fully involved in a project that had to be perceived as beneficial for all parties.

The last measure, trust, is concerned with the extent to which the participants opened up to the research questions or whether they were suspicious and inhibited. Runesu and Host (2009) explain that the lack of trust is indicated by reluctance and even refusal or pulling out of the investigation. How I related with the respondents as a colleague in the teaching profession helped establish the trust. To ensure reliability further, I also took precautions against the predicted weaknesses of the MM design as extensively elaborated by different researchers including, Creswell (2014), Grant, (2007), Creswell and Plano (2007). The researchers concur that in choosing the Mixed Methods, a design grounded on diverse philosophical assumptions, problems can stem from the fact that such a pragmatic approach, easily invites attacks focused on the absence of a sophisticated philosophical backing of the paradigm.

According to Creswell and Plano 2007), Grant (2007) suggests the possibility of what he terms 'method slurring.' He cites this as a major concern among qualitative researchers and defines it as the adverse consequence of mixing incompatible paradigms. In the present research, I kept an open mind for discovering common ground so that methods belonging to different schools of methodology and based on seemingly incompatible assumptions are readily synthesized in the mixed methods.

Another problem was anticipated from the very nature of the present research, namely that it necessitated the generation of multiple forms of data whose. Analysis of such volumes of data would obviously be very challenging. In line with his challenge, Creswell (2007) cautions that the volumes of data collected in MM researches tend to be overwhelming, demanding extensive time and resources to carry out the multiple steps involved in data gathering and interpretation. Having weighed all this in the context of the present research, the end however justifies the means, in an area where research is still scanty and new questions are always cropping up. The researcher designed elaborate data processing procedures to run through all the stages from collection to analysis.

Another challenge emanated from the fact that the descriptive aspect, if not properly handled, could degenerate to a mere description. According to Creswell (2014) this

often happens when the descriptive data collected amounts to mindless fact gathering or what he calls 'abstracted empiricism.' He contends that failure to check this tendency can translate to unfocused surveys and case studies that extract trivial information and fail to provoke any 'why' questions or provide any basis for generalization are abundant.

In the ongoing research, research therefore, I ensured that the descriptions came out as an integral aspect of the research problem. Such descriptions were so presented that they effectively added to in-depth knowledge of the nature and shape of the sociolinguistics factors under investigation. As Creswell (2014) suggests, the descriptions should therefore provoke the 'why' questions or explanations that grounds the advancement of new theory the interaction of second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors. This is in line with the further contention in Creswell (2014) that the mixed method approach is best suited for developing elaborate theories as to why?



4.10. Ethical considerations

The present research is guided by the ethical principles, as explained by Kaiser, (2009). These include the responsibility for the protection and the interests of the respondents as well as informed access and consent. I first ensured that respondents were aware of all their rights through an elaborate process of explanations. The same explanations were also espoused in the accompanying instructions for the interview and questionnaire procedures.

Furthermore, in line with the regulations, I also completed the Ethical Clearance form from Fort Hare University and returned it to the university through the supervisor. After that, I also sought clearance from the relevant ministry, (Education, Sports and Culture). In Zimbabwe the clearance, to carry out a research in schools is given by the Provincial Director of Education.

At the school level, I ensured that the participants were aware of their rights, including the right to non-participation and withdrawal, more-so in view of the various contentions

implied. For instance, the study topic touches on ethical and professional issues, the fear of being labelled out of compliance with the ministry's language teaching policies, is a reality. Furthermore, in many schools teachers are given incentives based on the percentage pass-rates achieved. Where teachers deliberately sacrifice their sound theoretically grounded second language teaching practices to get the results, they are likely to be dishonest in their responses. Furthermore, the Zimbabwe School Examination (ZIMSEC) O' level English curriculum advocates for communicative approaches (ZIMSEC, 2014) yet an O' level pass can be achieved through drilling methods. To reduce these many dilemmas I assured the respondents of the purely academic interests of the research and the strict confidentiality of their responses. I also assured the teachers that they could get access to the final document and above all, I minimised threatening questions in relation to the teacher's methodologies.

4.11. Conclusion

In this chapter the Mixed Methods research paradigm was identified as the methodology adopted for the ongoing research. The discussion underscored the rationale for opting for this fairly new development in research methodology in the social sciences. The research followed the current trend to prefer eclectic methods, somewhere in the continuum between the qualitative and quantitative designs, rather than a pure form of the two extreme paradigms.

The discussion particularly highlighted how the choice of the MM design was determined by the researcher's experience and preferences as well as the nature of the problem under investigation. Therefore, after outlining the mixed methods design, the discussion focused on the scope of the investigation, the data collection and analysis procedures. The ethical considerations implied by the present research and the precautions taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the study were also discussed. In Chapter 5 the data that were subsequently collected are analysed.

Chapter 5: Data Presentation and Analysis

Part 1: Data from document analysis

5.0 Introduction

In chapter 4, the methodology used for the present research was outlined. The chapter outlined the Mixed Methods Research (MM) design adopted for the present research. I rationalised that collecting diverse data, as provided for by the MM design would provide adequate masses of data to justify the generalisation of the research findings for a project of this magnitude. This argument is based on Creswell's (2014) arguments that the major strength of the MM design is the provision for the collection of diverse data. The research focused on the socio-linguistic milieu that determines communicative competence.



In this chapter, I present data collected in exploring the interplay between the socio-linguistic factors and second language teaching in second language teaching at secondary school level in Zimbabwe. In line with Creswell's (2014) recommendations on triangulation, two strands of data; qualitative and quantitative, were collected concurrently or successively. The following five data collection techniques were used:

- Document analysis,
- The questionnaire schedule (*Appendix 1*),
- The interview schedule (*Appendix 2*),
- Observation Guide (*Appendix 3*) and
- The focus group discussion guide (*Appendix 4*).

Data in this chapter is presented in two phases, where the first phase focuses on data from the document analysis and the second is from different instruments as stated above (the questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion and observation). Data from the document analysis are presented in two parts; data from the national level documents and data from the school level documents. The national documents analysed were the ZIMSEC O' level syllabus (2013-2015) and the new curriculum document, Curriculum Development and Technical Services (2015). The school level documents analysed were the teachers' scheme and plan books. A sample of ten, randomly selected documents, were analysed.

In the second phase, data from other data collection instruments is presented in corresponding schedules labelled against Appendix 1-4 as,

- *Appendix 1b:* Data from teacher questionnaire
- *Appendix 2b:* Data from Interview
- *Appendix 3b:* Data from Observation
- *Appendix 4b:* Data from Focus group Discussion



Data in the tables are partially processed by way of collation so that the emerging patterns are highlighted. The second part of the chapter focuses on the analysis of all the data against the research questions. Data analysis adopts Bayyurt's (2013) propositions that second language teaching can best be analysed at the Status, Corpus and Acquisition Planning levels. Therefore, the research question, 'Exploring the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of English at O' level in Zimbabwe,' is interrogated at each of these levels in the data analysis section.

5.1. The Syllabus documents

Data presented below is extracted from the two policy documents on teaching English as a second language in Zimbabwe:

- The ZIMSEC O' level English Language Syllabus (2013-2015) (see *Appendix 1*) and
- The Curriculum Development and technical Services Syllabus (2015-2022) (*Appendix 2*)

When the present project was first conceived in 2015, one source policy document, *the ZIMSEC O' Level Language Syllabus 2013 to 2015*, was the official language teaching document in the Zimbabwean schools. It was the document initially tabled for the analysis to give insights into how the interplay between second language teaching theory and sociolinguistic factors influenced the teaching of English in Zimbabwe. However, developments since then have seen the introduction of the new Curriculum Development and Technical Services 2015; *the English Language Syllabus, for form 1 to 4, 2015-2022*.

This document effectively replaces the former document. However, the rationale for the analysis of the two documents is the assumption that they both still inform second language teaching in Zimbabwe. A close look at the two documents reveals that the former is mostly an elaboration on the latter document, with only two major shifts; the introduction of a continuous assessment component and the replacement of the language register section, (ZIMSEC, 2013:4) with a section on 'Supporting language structures' Curriculum development and (Technical Services, 2015:3). These changes imply slight differences in the teaching and assessment schemes. Otherwise, the two documents mostly complement each other and do not imply a radical shift in ESL teaching practice which is conceptualised in the topic of the present research, as the interplay between ESL theory and sociolinguistic factors.

5.1.1. The Zimbabwean ESL Syllabus

The Curriculum Development and Technical Services (2015) O' level English language syllabus is presented as a forty-four paged document, which spells out the philosophical and theoretical stance behind the syllabus design as well the guidelines for its

implementation. In this section, I extract relevant data on how ESL teaching is conceptualised and the suggestions made for its teaching.

The document starts off with a preamble, followed by statements on the presentation of the syllabus, the aims, objectives and the methodology. In the data presentation, I focus on how the different sections of the syllabus document suggests in both subtle and explicit ways, the interplay of sociolinguistic factors; how the SL teachers are prompted to keep in mind this view of the SL acquisition process in the planning and actual teaching practices.

5.1.2. Preamble

In the introductory remarks, to the O' level syllabus, (Curriculum Development and Technical Services 2015:5) aspersions are made to the sociolinguistic perspectives of ESL teaching in Zimbabwe. ESL is accorded the official language status, valued as 'a vehicle for communication and a tool for cultural, political, religious, social and economic development.' The document contends that ESL teaching seeks to help all learners 'to ethically and responsibly utilise' Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Furthermore, it should also serve to prepare all learners to use English across the curriculum and offer opportunities for lifelong learning. All these references have a bearing on the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors investigated in the present project.

5.1.3. Rationale

The Curriculum development and Technical Services (2015) document provides different perspectives of the rationale of ESL teaching in Zimbabwe. The dual roles of ESL as the medium of instruction and a tool for international use are affirmed. It assists in the teaching and learning of other areas across the curriculum and as a global language. It also offers all learners opportunities to communicate in a wider spectrum.

These propositions build on to the rationale of the former syllabus, Code 1122, whose rationale was to streamlining the language syllabus so that it reflected and was consistent with the educational objectives, in the quest to provide learners with functional communicative skills needed in the working situation. The document suggests a sociological view of language; a view that considers how social factors influence the structure and use of language. This is done through proposing aims that relate to the development of everyday social skills. Among others the following skills are mentioned:

- Problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Decision making
- Conflict resolution
- Leadership
- Self-management
- Communication
- Technology and innovation
- Enterprise
- Team work



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These skills are all drawn from the context language teaching. How they are taught will be explored to show the view of language teaching as an interaction with sociolinguistic factors.

5.1.4. Assumptions

Section 1.4 of the syllabus document outlines the basic assumptions underlying the ESL syllabus. The syllabus drafters assume first that learners are already literate in English Language. Furthermore, they assume that the learners possess both the motivation and the capacity to learn the target language. Lastly, the learners are assumed to be computer literate (Curriculum Development and Technical Services 2015).

These are the basic sociolinguistic factors that make up the background SL teachers always work with. Omowa (2012) supports that the sociolinguistic background influences the learners' understanding and speaking of the target language in the classroom and school environment. This has implications for the nature of the interaction that facilitate SL acquisition which is the subject of the present research.

5.1.5. Cross-cutting Themes

The syllabus document, next provides what it terms 'the cross cutting themes' that ESL teachers are to work with (Curriculum Development and Technical Services 2015:5). These are essentially topical issues in the Zimbabwean context. Their adoption, therefore, recreates a sociolinguistic oriented classroom environment in which the target language is acquired. Shifting contexts created in the classroom refer language to the society where it is used. This affirms Onovughe's (2012) observation that social explanations for structures that are used can only be extracted from the society, hence the need to allow the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in language teaching.

Below is a list of the crosscutting themes suggested by the syllabus document to bring in sociolinguistic factors in SL teaching:

- ICT
- Gender
- Children's Rights and Responsibilities
- Disaster Risk Management
- Sexuality, HIV and AIDS Education
- Child Protection
- Heritage Studies
- Human Rights
- Collaboration
- Environmental Issues

- Financial literacy
- Communication

(Curriculum Development and Specialist Services, 2015: 5)

When teachers design projects, assignments and classroom activities based on these themes, second language acquisition/teaching, as recommended, transforms to the inter-play between second language teaching theory and sociolinguistic factors.

5.1.6. Aims

The syllabus aims in Curriculum Development and Special Services (2015) build onto the ZIMSEC (2013) aims which focus on the usefulness of the English Language as a medium for national and international communication as well as personal development. The aims alluded to earlier under the rationale, are expanded under **Section 3.0**, citing seven aims of ESL teaching. These are stated as to:

- Promote in learners an awareness of the usefulness of the English Language as a medium of national and international communication, as well as the value of effective language command and use for personal and national development.
- Develop in learners a lifelong reading habit for enjoyment and acquisition of knowledge.
- Extend the learners' skills of listening for different purposes.
- Help learners communicate effectively in spoken English/Sign Language in different situations.
- expand learners' interactive skills using Information Communication Technology

These aims all relate to the use of language in society, thus extending the utility theme of language also stated in the preamble, and the functional aspects, proposed by the SFL perspective of language. Drawing aims from the context of language teaching affirms the importance attached to the sociolinguistic factors in second language

teaching. This has implications for the implementation of a curriculum that allows sociolinguistic to interact with SL teaching as investigated in this project.

5.1.7. Syllabus objectives

The document states ten syllabus objectives as follows under **Section 4.0**:

By the end of Form 4, learners should be able to:

- construct correct English sentences orally and in writing/braille
- use appropriate language (registers) in different situations
- read a variety of texts for knowledge and recreation
- make appropriate use of cyberspace (social networks)
- evaluate information given orally or in writing/signing
- listen to and understand texts or any form of communication in English
- use writing conventions correctly
- express themselves using appropriate non-verbal communication skills
- write meaningfully on a variety of topics
- use skills acquired for creative writing or career identification

These objectives link up with the sociolinguistic oriented aims as earlier indicated. Worth noting is that all the objectives focus on language use rather than language structure. They develop the view of the language classroom conceptualised as an interaction space for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors and SL learning theory.

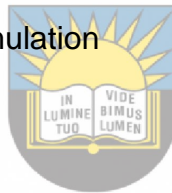
5.1.8. Methodology

Under the methodology Section (**Section 5.0**) the syllabus recommends what is termed ‘the communicative-functional approaches,’ alternatively referred to as ‘the functional-communicative, multi-sensory’ approach, as the best method. According to ZIMSEC (2015:6) this approach recognises the use of the English Language as ‘a tool for

inclusivity' which encourages learners 'to cherish diversity and acknowledge differences.' Furthermore, the approach is based on theories that apply 'principles of individualisation, concreteness, totality and wholeness' in language teaching.

The document explains that the learner-centred and interactive activities are designed to enable all learners to develop and understand linguistic concepts and their use in everyday life. Language forms and structures are therefore to be learnt through using them in appropriate contexts rather than as isolated forms. The following context-based strategies for the language lesson are proposed:

- Debate and discussion
- Individual and group presentation
- Drama
- Role play/ Imitation and simulation
- Poetry, song and dance
- Educational tours
- E-Learning
- Research/Case studies
- Puppetry
- Diorama
- Quiz
- Models/Resource persons



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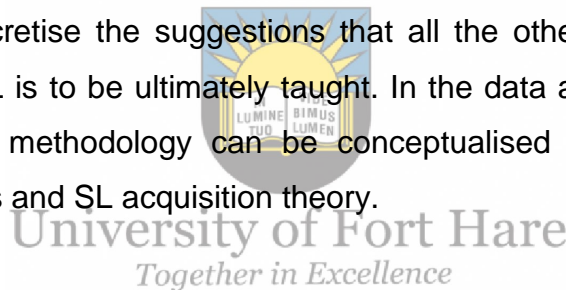
(Curriculum Development and Technical Services 2015:6)

Further guidelines on methodology with regards to listening, speaking, reading and writing skills are given in the syllabus document under Language Skills Scope and Sequence (**Section 7.0**) and the Competency Matrix Sections (**Section 8.0**). To develop oral skills, for example, exercises like oral instructions, complex directions, announcements and messages are suggested. The syllabus document also recommends the use of conversation dialogues and interviews to improve listening skills.

In developing conversational skills, pronunciation intonation, stress patterns, tone and mood are mentioned as some of the essential skills to be acquired. These are expressed through the use of registers. These include the degree of formality, and informality, expressing opinion, complaints condolences, and interviews, discussing topical issues, persuasion and announcements.

From these observations it appears that the syllabus document attempts to cover all conceivable experiences in everyday life. The document implies that these social contexts are to be re-enacted in the ESL classroom to facilitate acquisition of the target language; an assumption that language acquisition results from such an interaction.

The methodological recommendations and proposed activities for ESL teaching made in the syllabus all concretise the suggestions that all the other sections of the syllabus build up to; how ESL is to be ultimately taught. In the data analysis section I will show how the suggested methodology can be conceptualised as the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and SL acquisition theory.



5.2. The assessment scheme

In this section, I focus only on the current assessment scheme as presented in Curriculum Development and Technical Services (2015:38-39). The syllabus stipulates that assessment will be two-fold; Paper 1 and Paper 2 where the former focuses on language and comprehension work while the latter focuses on guided and free composition. These will be assessed through public examination given at the end of a four year secondary education course. In my data presentation, I focus only on extracts from different sections of the syllabus that have a sociolinguistic orientation and therefore suggest teaching approaches that allow for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors and SLA theory. The order of the data presented follows the syllabus structure.

5.2.1. Writing Skills

The syllabus document, (Curriculum Development and Technical Services 2015: 39-40) suggests different writing skills to be attained by the end of the course. The skills are all based on the utility of the language in the community and they include being able to write continuous narratives, detailed descriptions, persuasive/ argumentative, informative and expository compositions. Furthermore, it is proposed that learners must be able to write formal and informal letters, speeches, reports, articles, memos, based on: notes, diagrams, statistical data, graphs and pictures. They must also be able to write in a style and register appropriate to the subject matter and use wide range of vocabulary and idioms appropriate to the subject matter. These objectives suggest an attitude to SLA learning as closely related to the societal communication needs.

5.2.2. Reading comprehension

Candidates should be able to:

- answer recall questions
- follow the sequence of events in a narrative or descriptive text
- follow the development of an argument or discussion
- recognize how language is used in a text to indicate relationships of ideas
- distinguish main propositions from exemplifying or qualifying details
- infer information that is indirectly stated
- work out the contextual meanings of words and phrases
- paraphrase ideas from a text
- identify the tone and mood of a text
- identify the writer's attitude(s) towards his/her subject
- summarise specific aspects of a text



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5.2.3. Speaking

Candidates should be able to:

- communicate ideas clearly, accurately, and fluently on a variety of topics
- discuss and debate confidently on topical and cross-cutting issues

- use appropriate tone, intonation and gestures to emphasise a point
- use appropriate register depending on social situation, audience, subject matter or area being discussed

(English Language Syllabus Forms 1 – 4)

5.2.4. Listening

The syllabus document also highlights the following objectives in terms of listening skills:

Candidates should be able to:

- listen with concentration
- answer recall, interpretive and evaluative questions based on what they have listened to
- react appropriately to different oral text types
- summarise oral texts



Like the rest of the aspects of SL teaching already discussed, the assessment scheme appears to be specifically designed for assessing SL acquisition in the Zimbabwean context, where language is a tool for specific social functions. In the data analysis section, I will analyse how the assessment scheme influences the overall teaching and the extent to which it aligns with the concept of SL teaching as the interaction between sociolinguistic factors and SL theory in the target language classroom.

5.3. Data from the school level documents

In this section, I present data drawn from 20 teachers' scheme books focusing on the period from January to August 2017. Teachers' plans are drawn for four-week blocks. The time allocated for ESL is on average, 6 lessons per week to cover Composition, Comprehension, Language Structures and Oral work. Each lesson plan gives the following details:

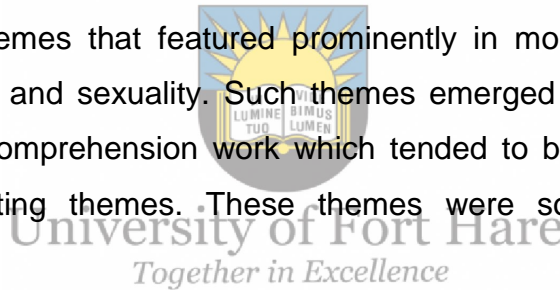
- Topic

- Aims and Objectives
- Methods
- Classroom activities
- Sources

5.3.1. Topics

Documents analysed show that topics were generally drawn from the cross-cutting themes suggested in the national syllabus document and therefore relevant to the learners', contexts. As already noted, suggested themes in the syllabus are drawn from the context in which the language is taught and therefore bring in sociolinguistic factors in the language lesson, be it comprehension, composition, oral or language work.

The cross-cutting themes that featured prominently in most documents are gender, children's rights, sex and sexuality. Such themes emerged mostly in debate and oral work. Composition comprehension work which tended to be thematically related also drew from crosscutting themes. These themes were sourced from a variety of documents.



5.3.2 Sources used

The analysed document showed that teachers used a limited variety of sources for teaching materials. A sample of twenty scheme books was analysed. Table 5.1 below summarises the sources used:

Table 5.3.2.3 The sources used in ESL teaching.

Topic	Past exams	Teacher designed	Textbooks	Other
Composition	16	2	2	0
Comprehension	14	0	4	2
Language	12	2	4	2
Oral work	10	2	4	4
Tests	16	2	2	0
Total	68	8	16	8

The table shows a consistent pattern in the preference for using past examinations, amounting to a 68% of the teachers using this resource. At 16%, the textbooks are the next preference while the use of other materials and self-designed materials are at 8%. This emerging pattern has implications for the teachers' views of SL teaching; in particular the role of the social context as both the source of teaching materials and the sociological orientations of the adopted methodology. This view will be explored further under data analysis.

5.3.4. Aims and objectives

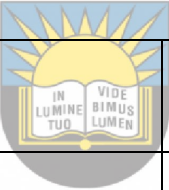
Documents analysed show that SL teachers draw their aims and objectives from the national syllabus document. The objectives were generally focused on the skills and tasks to be developed by each lesson. For example, answering specific comprehension questions, writing a composition or using specified registers. The analysis section will

focus on the extent to which the aims and objectives relate to the sociolinguistic factors in the teaching context.

5.3.5. Methods

The analysis was restricted to the last two terms (January to August, 2017). A tally was made in the appropriate box each time an element of the methodologies listed the column labelled 'Teaching styles' in the table below appeared. The teaching styles classification is adopted from (Cook, 2016).

Table 5.3.5.4 Prevalence of teaching traits



	Teaching style	Prevalence of traits
A	Academic	12
B	Audiolingual	2
C	Social communicative	18
D	Information communicative	4
E	Mainstream EFL	3

The Social Communicative Approach appears to be most favoured, scoring 18 points while the least scoring approach was The Audiolingual approach at 2 points. Data on teaching methods was triangulated by an analysis of the prevalence of teaching activities inclined towards sociolinguistics. The analysis is presented in the table below.

5.3.6. Teaching activities

In this section, I focus on the teaching activities planned for in the teachers' scheme books. The table is based on ten records (schemes for the last 2 terms, January to August 2017). The second column shows the number of teachers who used a particular activity at one point or another.

Table 5.3.6.5 Teaching activities

Activity	No. of Trs.
Debate and discussion	6
Individual and group presentation	5
Drama/role play/ Imitation and simulation	4
Poetry, song and dance	1
Educational tours	0
E-Learning	0
Research/Case studies	0
Puppetry	0
Quiz	0
Models/Resource persons	0

The table shows that drama and debate were the most commonly used teaching activities in the ESL lesson. The patterns of use of different teaching activities will be discussed later to show how they promote a sociolinguistic approach to language teaching.

The syllabus document suggests the language functions that could be taught/learnt through these different activities. In the teachers' records the following themes emerged:

- formal and informal introductions
 - speaking freely but courteously
 - Having a telephone conversation
 - Describing people and scenes
 - Describing and explaining simple processes events and activities
 - Give message
 - Giving directions and instructions
 - Make announcements
 - respond to and making requests
 - accepting and refusing invitations politely
 - Making and accepting excuses
 - making and accept apologies
 - expressing appreciation, dislike and disapproval
- (ZIMSEC, 2013:9)



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The table below shows eight skills specifically cited in the syllabus document in column 1. Columns 2 and 3 have been added to show the frequency of these skills in the teacher documents and the observed lessons.

Table 5.3.6.6 Language Skills

Skills Cited in Syllabus	Frequency in Teachers Schemes
Problem solving	30
Critical thinking	20
Decision making	12
Conflict resolution	25
Leadership	26
Self-management	27
Communication	39
Technology and innovation	15
Enterprise	18
Team work	28

The syllabus suggest that these skills should be presented in different contexts and recommends the different activities guided by the principle that language learning should incorporate Zimbabwean and similar social, economic, political, scientific and technological experiences and reflect national needs in these areas. To that end, suggestions are made on the activities to be incorporated in the language lessons:

5.3.7. Conclusion

In the above section two sets of data were presented. The first set of data was based on the syllabus documents for SL teaching in Zimbabwe while the second set was extracted from school level documents: the teachers' plan and scheme books. The two sets of data complement each other in that the school level documents are an

interpretation of the national document into practice. This marks the first level of language planning which Bayyurt (2012) labels the status planning stage in a model for the evaluation of SL teaching. The model provides a theoretical framework adopted for the present study where the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and SL teaching will be evaluated at three levels: the status planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning levels in the data analysis section (Part 3) of this chapter. The thrust is to show how the planning stages at both the policy and the school level acknowledge this assumed relationship between SL theory and sociolinguistic factors in teaching English at O' level in Zimbabwe.

Data Presentation and Analysis Part 2

5.4. Data collected through the questionnaire, interviews, observations and focus group discussions



This section presents and analyses the data collected from a sample of 50 respondents drawn from secondary schools in the Midlands Province in Zimbabwe. Data was collected through the questionnaire, interviews, observations, focused group discussions and focused on the teachers' perceptions of sociolinguistic factors and practices in the language classroom. It was assumed that such data would give insights into the interplay of these factors and second language acquisition theory.

5.4.1 Data analysis

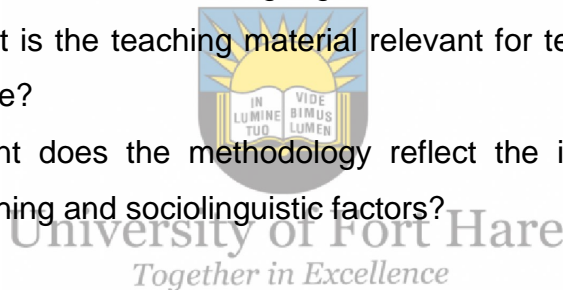
In line with the recommendations of the Mixed Methods (MM) research design, vast amounts of data was collected and analysed so that conclusions drawn can be reasonably generalised (Creswell, 2014). The data analysis procedures flowed through data collection stages and were so designed that the data at each level built onto the data collected in the former stages and influenced the data to be collected in the subsequent stages. This is in line with Creswell's (2014) recommendations of triangulation to maximise the benefits of the MM research design extensively discussed in Chapter 4.

The study focused on the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and ESL teaching and was specifically guided by the research questions:

- *How is the interplay between socio-linguistic factors and second language teaching manifested in the teaching of English at O' level in Zimbabwe?*

To answer this question the following questions had be addressed:

- To what extent does second language teaching in Zimbabwe consider the sociolinguistic setting?
- What are the teachers' views about integrating language and sociolinguistics in teaching English as a second language?
- To what extent is the teaching material relevant for teaching the 'culture' of the target language?
- To what extent does the methodology reflect the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors?



The questions sought to establish the inclination of ESL teaching in Zimbabwe towards methodological practices that incorporate or are influenced by the sociolinguistic factors in the environment in which the language is taught. The researcher assumed that any inclination towards particular teaching approaches would give insights into the role of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching as investigated in the present study. Data presented and analysed below comprises of both qualitative as well as quantitative data focused on the teachers' biographic data; perceptions and actual practices. The data presentation is structured under the following subheadings:


1. Biographical data on the respondents
2. Data based on the teaching style questionnaire
3. Data from the Questionnaire
4. Interview

5. Focused Group Discussion
6. Observation

5.4.2. Biographical data of the respondents

Biographical data was considered relevant in that they would provide insights into the theoretical grounding, experience and expertise of the respondents in ESL teaching. This would render the results reliable and credible for generalisations on the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors investigated in the present research.

Table.5.4.2.7: Analysis of the Sample Composition (Gender, Age and total number of participants as well as percentages)



VARIABLE	FREQUENCY(Number)	PERCENT
GENDER		
Female	30	60
Male	20	40
Total	50	100
AGE		
20-29	12	24
30-39	22	44
40-49	14	28
50-59	2	4
60 and above	0	0
Total	50	100
QUALIFICATION		
On Training	5	10
Diploma/Certificate	22	44
Degree	10	20

Degreed with Education	13	26
Total	50	100

Table 5.7 above summarises the sample composition in terms of Gender, Age, Qualifications, years of teaching and Position in the subject. Fifty (50) ESL teachers responded to the questionnaire.

5.4.2.1 Gender of participants

The sample included 30 female teachers and 20 male teachers. The participant sample (N=50) therefore comprises 60% females and 40% males.

5.4.2.2 Age of the participants

The data indicates that the highest percentage of the respondents (44%) fall under the 30 to 39 while the 50 to 59 years age-group has the lowest representation at 4%.

5.4.2.3 Qualifications and training

A strong theoretical base in SLA theory, training and application and experience in SL teaching were considered to be reasonable indicators of the credibility of the respondents as sources of data to base conclusions and generalisations.

The data indicates that 90% of the participants have or are undergoing some form of training in teaching of ESL. Of these, 10 % are teachers under training; either as university under-graduate interns or teacher training-college students on teaching practice and the rest have either an Honour's or Bachelor's Education degree specialising in English Language teaching or a teaching diploma. Of the qualified, teachers in the sample, 26% are degree holders with Education qualifications while 44% have either a teaching diploma or certificate.

5.4.3. Measurement of the teachers' teaching styles

This section presents data that were collected using Cook's (2016) instrument, a later version of the 1999 scheme, (*Appendix 2*) to measure the respondents' inclinations towards different language teaching styles. The scheme comprises of four items that each required the respondents to choose one response from the six alternatives provided. The total responses are then entered in a table which suggests the methodological preferences of the respondents based on the choice-mixes made.

Tables (2 to 5) below summarise the responses obtained from the 50 respondents to each of the four items (1-4) in the assessment scheme.

5.4.3.1. Item 1



The question read: *What is the chief goal of language teaching?*

This item was considered relevant because it was assumed that the objectives would give insights into the content and methods in language teaching which have implications for the role of sociolinguistic factors in language teaching.

Table 5.8. Evaluation of Language Teaching Goals

Question: What is the chief goal of language teaching		Total	%
a.	The students should know the rules of the language	5	10
b.	The students should be able to behave in ordinary situations	9	18
c.	The students should be able to communicate with other students	7	14
d.	Students should be able to understand and transmit information	13	26
e.	The students should both know the rules and be able to communicate	12	24
f.	The students should become better people emotionally and socially	4	8

In Table 5.8 above the 'Total' column shows the total number of respondents who selected the adjacent option. The right-most column shows the percentage of the respondents who chose each of the 6 options A-F as the chief goal of language teaching in response to item 1 above. The table shows that the lowest rated teaching goal is option (F) that students 'should be better people emotionally and socially,' with 8%, while the highest ranked teaching goal, is option (D), that 'students should be able to understand and transmit information' with 26%. The second highly rated teaching goal is option (E) that 'students should both know the rules and be able to communicate' at 24%.

Data reveals that there is no consensus on what should be the major teaching goal so that different teachers hold different views. This could imply differences in what happens in the language classroom and therefore variations in the output; the language skills that the school leavers possess.



Figure 5.4.3.4 : Rating of Language Teaching Goals

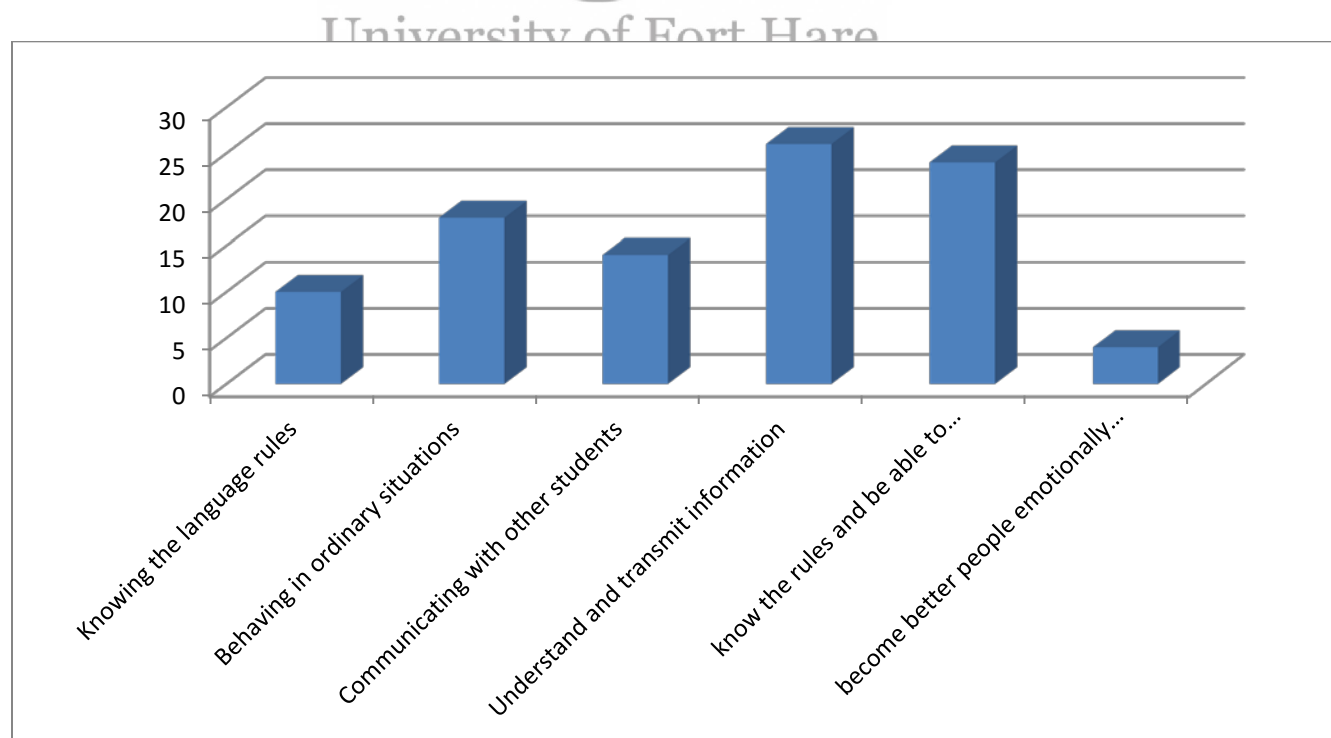


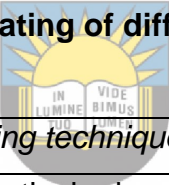
Figure 5 highlights the variation in the respondent's rating of the importance of different language teaching goals based on the data presented in Table 5.8, above.

5.4.3.2 Item 2

The question read: *Which of these teaching techniques do you value most?*

The item solicited for the teachers' views on what teaching techniques they valued most. This item was considered relevant as an indicator of the teaching methodologies. It was assumed that the methodologies would give insights into the extent to which the respondents included or were affected by social factors in their teaching.

Table 5.4.3.2.9: Summary of the rating of different teaching techniques

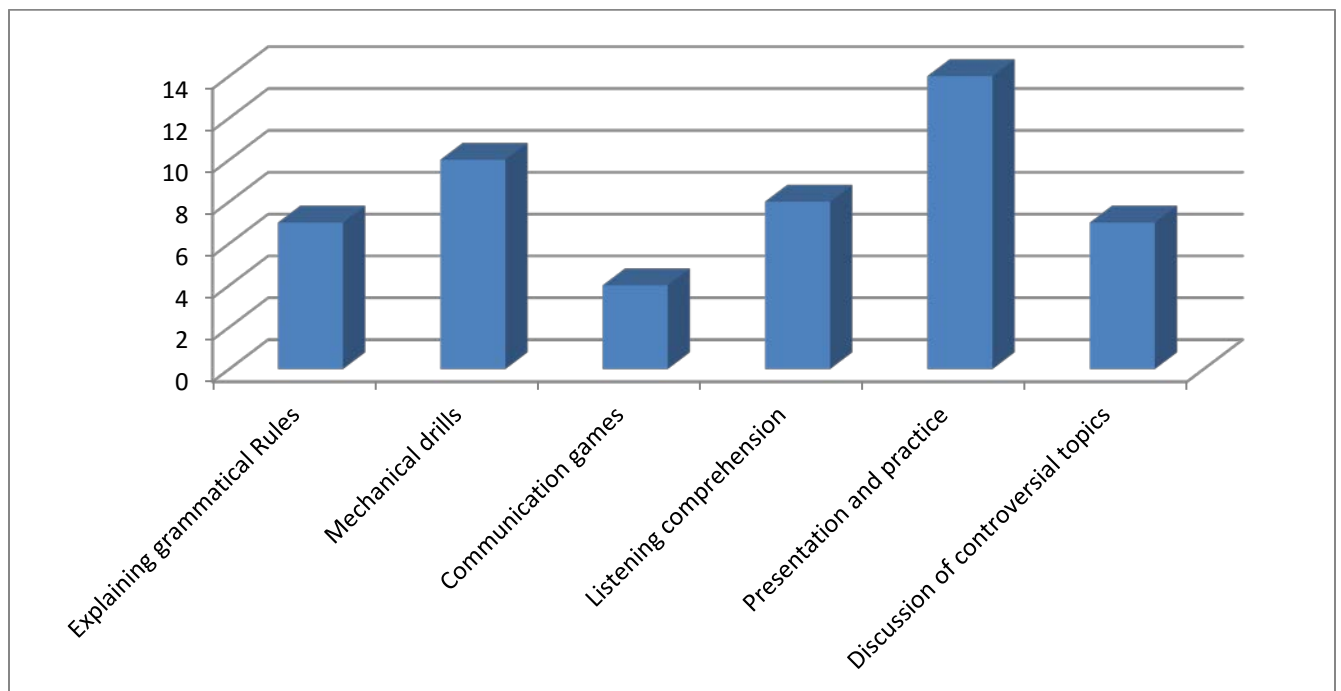


	<i>Which of these teaching techniques do you value most?</i>	Total	%
a.	Explaining the grammatical rules	7	14
b,	Mechanical drills	10	20
c.	Communication games	4	8
d.	Listening comprehension	8	16
e.	Presentation and practice of function	14	28
f.	Discussion of controversial topics	7	14

Table 5.4.3.2.9 shows that 28% of the respondents value 'the presentation and practice of language functions' most. This indicates that it is the most preferred technique in ESL teaching, while the least preferred technique is the use of communicative games which was selected by only 8% of the respondents.

Figure 5.4.3.5: Preferred Methods

The figure below summarises the responses to item 2 above, in the form a bar graph. The figure consists of 6 bars, where each bar shows the total number of respondents who chose each of the options to describe the learning processes which happen in their ESL lessons.



5.4.3.3 Item 3

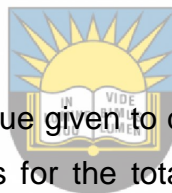
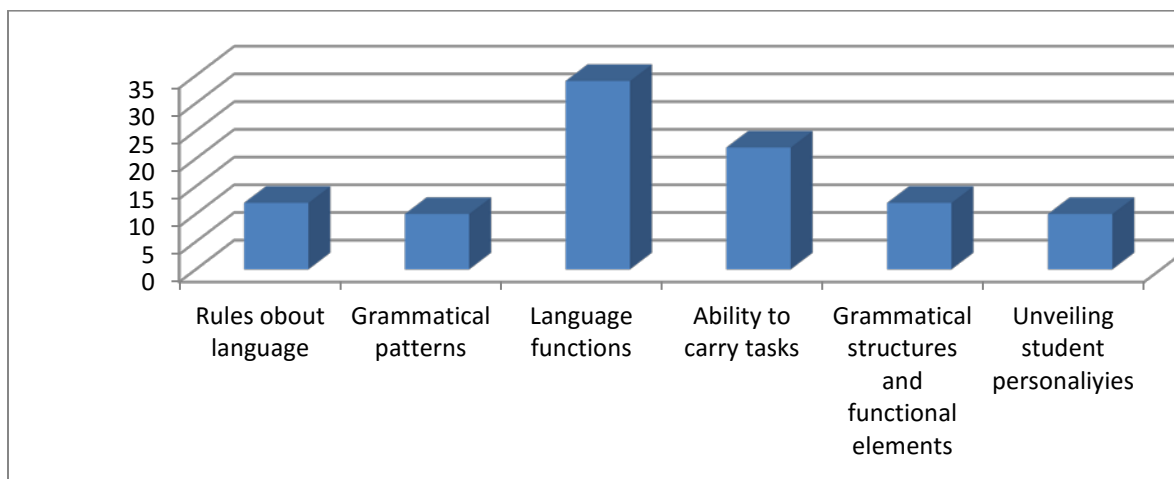
The question read: *How would you describe the language you are teaching the students in your classroom?*

Table 5.4.3.2.10: Self-assessment of language taught

How would you describe the language you are teaching?		Total	%
A	Rules about language	6	12
B	Grammatical patterns	5	10
C	Language functions and communication	17	34
D	Ability to carry out tasks	11	22
E	Grammatical structures and functional elements	6	12
F	A way of unveiling student personalities	5	10

The above table shows that the highest percentage (35%) view their teaching as 'language function and communication' oriented followed by those that describe their teaching as the ability to carry out tasks (22%). The least valued options are that of language teaching as focus on 'Grammatical patterns' and A way of unveiling student personalities' each of which had 10%. This implies that the teachers view language teaching differently and that they are, therefore, influenced differently by the sociolinguistic factors in their environment. The way views the language taught points to the influence or otherwise of socio-linguistic factors.

Figure 7: Self-assessment of the language taught



The above figure illustrates the value given to different aspects of language teaching by the respondents. Each bar stands for the total number of respondents indicated that they valued a particular aspect of language teaching.

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5.4.3.4 Item

The item solicited for data to rate students' learning styles in the respondents' ESL classroom.

The question read: *Do you think the students are learning language chiefly by:*

This was considered important because the learning style partly determines the teachers approaches and `or inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching. The data collected in this respect are presented in Table 5 below which summarises the respondents' self-assessment of the learning processes that prevail in their ESL classrooms.

Table 5.11: Assessment of the learning process in the ESL classroom

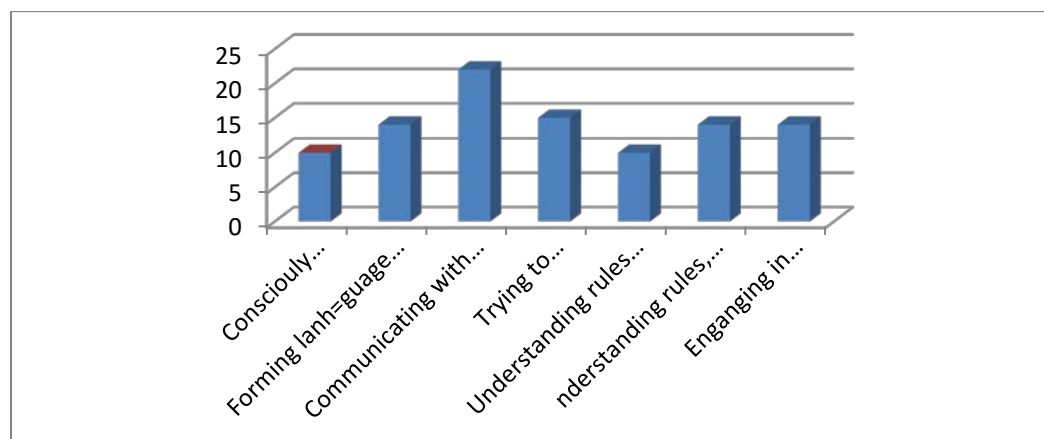
Do you think the students are learning language chiefly by:		Total	
A	Consciously understanding the language rules	5	10%
B	Forming habits of using the language	7	14%
C	Communicating with each other in the classroom	11	22%
D	Trying to understand what is said to them	15	15%
E	Understanding rules, forming habits and communicating	5	10%
F	Engaging in activities that are personally meaningful to them	7	14%

The above table shows that 22% of the respondents view communicating with each other in the classroom as the most process through which the language is learnt. The least rated ways of language learning are; 'understanding rules, forming habits and communicating' and 'consciously understanding the language rules' each of which is chosen by only 10% of the respondents.


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The distribution of the respondents' views of how the language is learnt is highlighted in the Figure below.

Figure 8: Assessment of the learning processes in the ESL classroom



The figure above highlights how the different teachers assess the learning processes that occur in their classrooms. Data implies that there is no uniformity on how the language is learnt. In turn this has different implications on the role of sociolinguistic factors in the learning/teaching process. For example, consciously understanding language rules may be achieved without any regard for the sociolinguistic factors whereas forming habits has to be tolerated to the context of language use. In other words, each of the different processes of language learning captured above values the role of sociolinguistic factors differently.

5.5. Assessment of preferred teaching styles

Table 5.12 below summarises the responses to items 1-4. The total numbers of respondents who chose each option are placed in the table adopted from Cook (2016) which then determines the respondents' methodological inclinations towards particular teaching styles. The right-most column in Table 5.12 suggests the methodological inclinations of the respondents.

Table 5.12: Summary of the Teaching styles

Answer	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	%	Teaching style
A	5	5	6	5	21	10.5	Academic
B	9	12	5	7	33	16.5%	Audiolingual
C	7	4	17	11	39	19.5%	Communicative
D	13	13	11	15	52	26%	Task-based
E	12	9	6	5	32	16%	Mainstream EFL
F	4	7	5	7	23	11.5%	Other

There were 50 respondents for the questionnaire therefore the totals presented in column 6 are out of a possible 200 if all the respondents had chosen the same option for each of the questions (1-4). The percentages are shown in the adjacent column and the right-most column gives the related methodological inclinations based on Cook's (1991) measurement scheme.

According to Data in Table 5.12 above, 26% of the teachers are inclined towards the task-based teaching styles. This constitutes the highest percentage distribution of the respondents, which seems to imply that the task-based approaches the most preferred among the respondents, followed by the Audiolingual approaches at 16.5%. The Academic styles preferred by 10.5% of the respondents, are the least popular. The overall picture painted is that all the approaches have are used in ESL teaching in Zimbabwe. Figure 7 below illustrates the distribution of the teaching styles among the respondents.

These data have implications for the role of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching since each of the methodologies suggested values the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching differently.

Figure 9: Summary of the respondents' methodological preferences

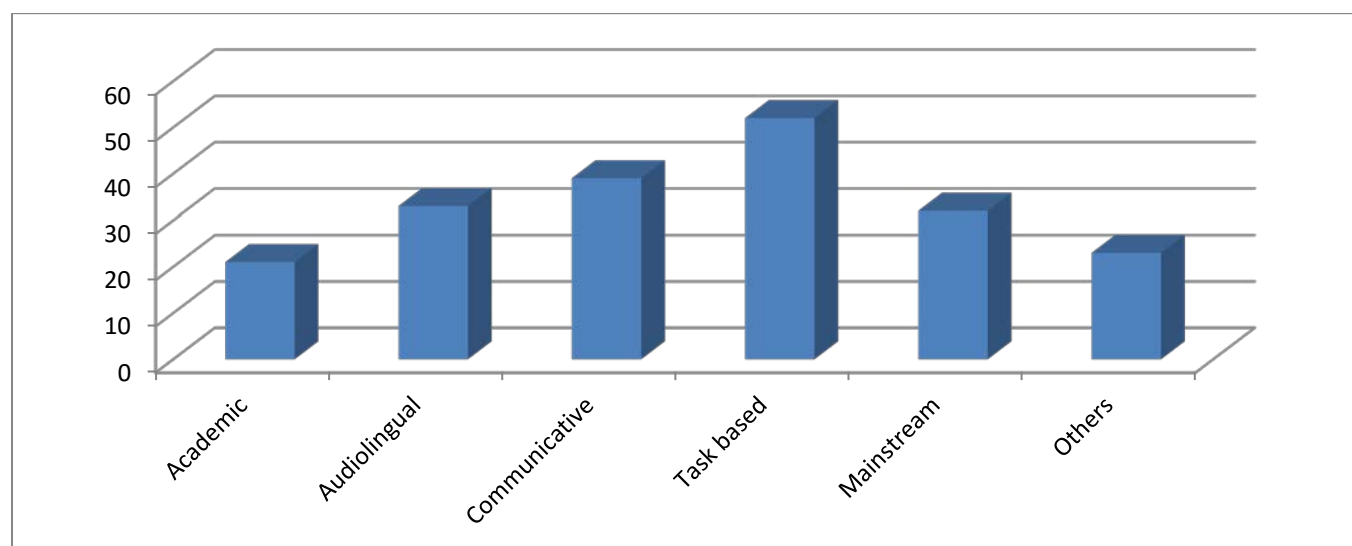


Figure 9 above summarises the responses given in Table 5.12. Data shows that the task based approaches are the most popular approaches. While the prevalence of task based approaches in ESL teaching among the teachers is highlighted, the data also shows that all the teaching methods are relatively popular.

5.6 Data collected through the questionnaire, interviews, observation and focused group discussion.

In this section, I present data collected through different instruments; the questionnaire schedule, the interview schedule, the observation and the focus group discussion separately. The research used various data collection instruments that were so structured that the data collected through one instrument were, triangulated in the subsequent procedures. This was achieved by ensuring that the three data collection instruments were similarly structured so that the themes focused in the first instrument

were replicated in the subsequent instruments for further clarifications and confirmations. Data presented in this section were collected from a sample of sample of 10 schools which will be coded A-X for the sake of anonymity.

5.6.1. Questionnaire data

The questionnaire consisted of 20 items and was administered 50 respondents. For items 1 to 15, the respondents were to respond “Yes” or “No” to each response and then comment or explain in the spaces provided under each item. The 15 items were considered relevant for eliciting vast amounts of data on ESL teaching, ranging from the attitudes, beliefs, values, the theoretical orientation of the ESL teachers and their actual classroom practices. This Data was considered pertinent for evaluating ESL teaching against the research question, which focused on the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and ESL teaching theory.



Table 5.13 below summarises the respondents’ responses to item 1 to 15.

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Table 5.13: Respondents' evaluation of different aspects of language teaching

Question	Yes	No	NS
1. My teaching is influenced by the learners' needs to communicate	38	12	0
2 My teaching includes communication games and dialogues.	33	17	0
3 My teaching can be described as mostly language function oriented	22	13	15
4 Is my teaching influenced by the learners' needs to communicate with each other?	18	10	22
5. Is there a relationship between what and how you teach and the local environment?	19	14	17
6. Should the language teaching (content/materials & methodology) be different in different contexts?	20	28	2
7. Do you include cultural/sociolinguistic information in your language teaching?	24	22	4
8. Should individual teachers decide on how and what sociolinguistic factors to incorporate in their teaching?	28	16	6
9 Is the English culture important in teaching English as second language?	34	12	4
11. Is the local culture important in teaching English as a second language?	31	19	0
12. Should culture be part of L2 teaching	41	9	0
13 Do the activities in your teaching reflect the sociolinguistic environment of your school?	17	10	23
14 Do you take the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the local language of the learners?	22	18	10
15 Do you take the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the local culture of the learners?	14	15	21
Total	361	212	177
Percentage	48.1	28.3	23.3%

	%	%	
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In Table 5.13 above, the left hand column gives the statement to which the respondents were to respond “Yes” or “No.” The three columns on the right hand show the total number of the responses for the “Yes, No and Neutral” options, respectively. The total possible score for each of these options is 750 and the percentages are given in the bottom row.

The Table shows that out of the 50 respondents, the total percentage were, for “Yes” responses, 48.1%, for “No” responses, 28.3% and for neutral responses, 23.6%. This shows that while a significant percentage (48.1%) of the respondents value the inclusion of the different sociolinguistic factors stated as options 1 to 15 in the questionnaire, 51.9% comprising of the “No” and “Neutral” responses do not value the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in their teaching.



5.6.2. Respondents’ comments

Apart from the “Yes /No” responses to items 1-15, the teachers were asked to comment on their options. In this section I present the data based on the comments that were elicited from the respondents for each of the items 1-15 presented in Table 5.13 above.

5.6.2.1: Item 1

The item read: *My teaching is influenced by the learners’ needs to communicate effectively in their communities?*

This item was considered relevant since it focused on the role of the learners’ needs which were assumed to be a sociolinguistic factor that influences both the teaching practices and the teaching content in the ESL classroom. It was assumed that the respondents’ comments would give insights into the interplay between ESL teaching and sociolinguistic factors.

The main issues that emerged concerned the balancing of the examination requirements and teaching of language as a communicative tool. The comments raised on this item suggest three views held by the respondents. On the one extreme, some respondents believe that all teaching should be based on the learners' needs and on the other some respondents believe that ESL teaching should only focus on the examination requirements. The rest believe that there should be a balance between the learners' needs and the examination.

The written excerpt below from teacher J of School X captures the view in support of basing all teaching on the learners' needs:

I am influenced to a great extent by the learners needs. The language is not a content subject and I must focus on the functions and skills relevant to the learners' needs. These cannot be prescribed because the language is taught in different contexts and lest you end up teaching about the language rather than the language.



Respondents who adopted the moderate view that language teaching should realistically balance the needs of the learner, the examination requirements and other considerations argued that language teaching had to be practical in view of the nature of the assessment scheme at O' level which determines the success of all teaching. The arguments raised are summarised in the excerpt below from teacher E, a respondent from Secondary School Y who wrote:

I work within a given framework where I have to balance issues. I have to be practical and accept that my students have to sit for an examination. They have to pass at the end of the day, but they also have to be able to communicate in the second language. Tricky situation! But yes, while I ideally have to consider the students' communicative needs I can't ignore this reality. The examination affects my choices of the content; the different language features, the registers the comprehension and composition topics. I end up using different materials not just the textbooks and the question papers but also other sources based on the students' needs.

Another view that came up was that the learners' needs to communicate in their communities were not a serious issue since there were no native English speakers in the community. Communication, both within and outside the school, was generally characterised with code mixing with the first language except in extremely formal contexts like interviews. The excerpt from teacher J of school C summarises this view:

I attempt to extract contexts from the learners' communities so that my teaching is related to the real life situations within the learners' experiences, but then this becomes a challenge because learners in some communities rarely have situations where they are challenged to use English. At the post office, the bank even in the school, they get along with their mother tongue- or rather code mixing because they do not even strictly speak their mother tongues.

5.6.2.2: Item 2



The item read: *My teaching includes communication games and dialogues.*

Data collected through this item was considered relevant since it focused on the extent to which social activities are engaged in the language lesson. I assumed that such activities reflect the influence of societal factors in ESL teaching thus exploring the interplay of sociolinguistic factors and ESL teaching.

Of the respondents 48% said they used language games and dialogues in their teaching of ESL while 30% said they did not use such methods. The rest did not respond to the question. The overall picture obtained was that the use of communication games was minimal even for those teachers who gave apposite response. This was because the ESL teachers were constrained by the limited teaching time they had. This position is summarised in the excerpt below from respondent D of school D who said:

I do include language games here and here- not often really. At O level I focus on the examination requirements. There is no time to dramatize and play games. I do more of coaching my students for the examinations.

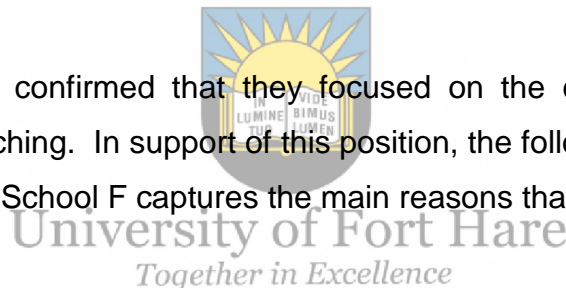
5.6.2.3 Item 3

For this item the respondents were to give their reactions to the statement:

3. My teaching can be described as mostly language function oriented

This item was considered relevant in that it focuses on language functions. Since language functions are context based, it was assumed that their place in ESL teaching was indicative of sociolinguistic factors at play in ESL teaching.

Respondents mostly confirmed that they focused on the communicative function of language in their teaching. In support of this position, the following excerpt from teacher C a respondent from School F captures the main reasons that emerged:



... My teaching is communicative oriented. I teach communication, like polite everyday registers like offering help, greetings. This is covered in paper 2 in the section on registers.

Another respondent, teacher E from school F added:

The language functions that I teach include how to respond to questions through comprehension and registers to handle different situations. I also teach language for career in drama and language for life in registers and interviews. So yes, my language teaching is mostly functional oriented and focuses on different language functions in different situations like ordering food in restaurants, greetings, making introductions and so forth.

The other functions noted by the respondents include giving directions, expressing gratitude and giving instructions, making polite requests, apologies and introductions. However, 60% also said the teaching was more examination oriented than functional oriented. They said that the communicative functions taught were restricted to the

situations extracted from past examination questions on registers. The excerpt from teacher B, a respondent from School D captures some of the views expressed:

We are guided by the examinations. We extract the functions to teach from past exam papers. These cover a wide range of language functions. That way we never go wrong.

From these, they drew tests, without any alterations; tested the students and then revised the tests before moving on to the next test, as such the ‘test-teach-and-retest rituals,’ as one respondent aptly labelled it, went on from form three to form four. This view is aptly captured in the submission from teacher B of school G who said:

Honestly it is a test-teach-and reteach process at this level. I know what the examinations require and have no time for any fancy approaches.

5.6.2.4 Item 4



The item read: *Is My teaching influenced by the learners’ needs to communicate with each other?*

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The focus on the need to communicate with peers as a sociolinguistic factor in ESL teaching addresses the research question. I assumed that if the need to communicate with each other was an issue, this would confirm the influence of this societal need as a motivation factor in language learning.

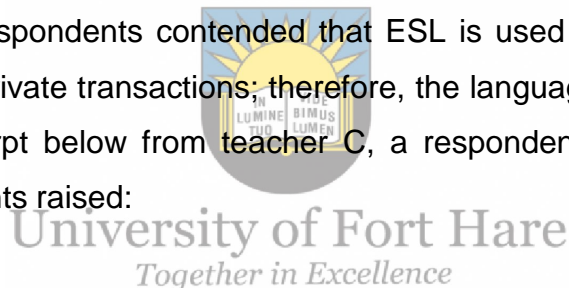
With 80% of respondents responding positively, the influence of learners’ needs to communicate was acknowledged. This view is captured in the excerpt below from teacher B a respondent from school D who said:

My teaching does considers the needs of the learners to communicate with each other, but only to a limited extent. The problem is that the learners communicate in their first language and code mixing is very common. Still, I have to construct the appropriate registers they would use if they were to communicate in English. So in that way I can say my teaching is influenced by the leaners’ need to communicate with each other.

5.6.2.5 Item 5

The item read: *Is there a relationship between what and how you teach and the local environment?*

The item was designed to shed essential data on the local environment as a sociolinguistic factor in ESL teaching. It was assumed that relating what one teaches in the ESL classroom to the local environment reflects ESL teaching as the inter-play between sociolinguistic factors and ESL theory. In the written responses, the 75% of the respondents acknowledged the relationship between ESL teaching and the *local* environment. The respondents contended that ESL is used outside the classroom for both business and private transactions; therefore, the language that we teach had to be relevant. The excerpt below from teacher C, a respondent from School F captures some of the arguments raised:



English is part of our culture, mixed unconsciously with local languages, so much that most utterances, regardless of the level of education of the speaker, are liberally laced with English words. We extract the learners' needs from their environmental experiences.

The relationship of the environment and how they taught the language was however, not so clear in the initial written responses. The question was clarified through probing and rephrasing in the interview and focus group discussion sessions. It emerged that teachers made adjustments in their instructional practices to suit the learner's needs. The excerpt below from teacher G, a respondent from School A sums up some of the views expressed:

What we teach has to be adjusted to the level of the learners. You can't teach students who use the language at home the same way you would teach those that do not use the language at home. Also language learning has to adjust to technology; we live in the computer era.

The interview excerpt between the researcher and teacher G presented below summarises the clarifications on how current technological developments influence how and what is taught in the ESL lesson. Asked to clarify how technology influenced teaching the respondent said:

We now are in the computer age. Think of the telephone. In the eighties when I started teaching making a telephone call was something else! I could have several lessons on making a telephone call: the trunk call the collect call, the reverse call and so forth and there would be different vocabulary to teach! Today most of this is now irrelevant. Also the computer too-we now use different gadgets and there is lots of new vocabulary that comes with it. So yes, technology is a great influence.



5.6.2.6 Item 6

The item read: *Should the language teaching (content/materials & methodology) be different in different contexts?*

Teachers appreciated the existence of individual differences and therefore the need to model contents and methodology and materials to suit different contexts. They pointed out that language learners use different learning styles. Further, they use their senses differently in learning. Teachers, therefore, need to individualise language teaching to cater for these individual needs and capacities. Some learners need more time on tasks, more practice and more written work.


Responses in support of this view are summed up in the excerpt below from teacher D, a respondent from school C who said:

Yes, teaching must be different to satisfy all life's needs which are different for different learners in different contexts. Pupils cannot be treated the same because they come from

different areas and have very diverse backgrounds and cultural capital hence materials and methodology has to differ.

However, some felt that uniformity was essential since the final assessment was the same for all students. The summative assessment was in the form of 2 standard papers (Paper 1 and Paper 2) (ZIMSEC 2014).

The respondents felt that a teacher, who 'localised' his/her teaching too much, could disadvantage the students for examination purposes. Teachers therefore agreed in principle but the reality was that teaching tended to be uniform and exam centred. It emerged that past exam materials were mostly adopted as the sources for all teaching at O' level so that teaching was reduced to the 'teach-test-teach-and-re-test' 'rituals,' as one respondent put it. The excerpt below from teacher F a respondent from School B summarises this view:



You can't afford the luxury of teaching outside the syllabus and so teaching cannot be different for different contexts. You just have to focus on the examination and so in many ways teaching the language at O level is generally the same teachers use the past examinations to test and teach and retest in preparation for the examinations.

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5.6.2.7. Item 7

The item read: *Do you include cultural/sociolinguistic information in your language teaching?*

This item was designed to further explore the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and ESL teaching, which is the focus of the present research. Culture was viewed as integral component of this construct therefore its inclusion or otherwise would build onto the theme of sociolinguistic factors in language teaching.

All the respondents agreed that they included culture in their teaching. They gave various reasons for the inclusion of cultural information. The excerpt from teacher C, respondent from school A sums up the reasons for the inclusion of cultural information in ESL teaching:

Yes, I often find it necessary to include cultural and sociolinguistic information in my teaching. This is particularly so in the teaching of registers. Such knowledge ensures that students can avoid offending others. This could easily happen when cultural taboos are not known.

The case of taboos was well illustrated by teacher F school D who said.

We have to teach certain cultural issues like gender connotations and cultural specific meanings that may be associated with certain words. This is the main objective in the teaching of registers where the same utterance under different circumstances, assumes different meanings. We come across typical examples that offer opportunities for introducing culture and other sociolinguistic information in literature textbooks.

The respondents also noted that such knowledge helps to clarify context-specific meanings. It was also used to recreate appropriate contexts for the presentation of new vocabulary and language structures. One respondent, teacher B from School N made reference to Achebe's (1958) *Things Fall Apart*, specifically the use of 'localised' language or literal translations to portray certain context-specific meanings and connotations of language. The respondent wrote,

Certain gender connotations are attached to being a woman in different cultures. If someone calls you a woman in Shona culture for example, a host of meanings are implied. In Chinua, Achebe's 'Things Fall Apart,' for example, Okonkwo is deeply insulted when an elder relates to an incident when Okonkwo's is reminded of an incident when his father was told that the meeting he was attending was for "men" In a context where being a man was a status had to be earned. Even in Zimbabwe, simply calling somebody a woman is an insult.

Respondents further pointed out that cultural issues mostly surfaced when explaining appropriate registers for different situations. What constituted politeness, in one culture could be impolite in another context. In support, the following statements also emerged:

The registers taught need to be appropriate for the cultural and social context. This is because we teach language for communication in our contexts hence it is imperative to use

cultural information. Cultural information also comes in when we engage different text for comprehension and literature purposes.

Though 38 respondents claimed that they included cultural issues in their teaching, this was done only to the extent to which past examination questions touched on such issues. Further probing, however, proved that cultural explanations were rarely given when teaching. Instead, the teachers only furnished learners with appropriate responses without the background explanations.

This view is summarised in the excerpt below from respondent Y of school D who said:

At times the registers contexts are far-fetched and out of context. When that is the case, the marking scheme guides us. Explaining the background may actually confuse the learners.

5.6.2.8 Item 8



The item read: *Should individual teachers decide on how and what sociolinguistic factors to incorporate in their teaching?*

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Through the focus on the latitude teachers should have in the incorporation of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching, I assumed that teachers who advocated for the freedom to decide on the sociolinguistic factors were guided by the paradigm that views language as the interplay between ESL theory and sociolinguistic factors.

The respondents generally felt that individual teachers should be left to decide on what sociolinguistic factors to include in their teaching. Of the 50 respondents, 60% of the respondents (30) supported the view while 20% (10) said that it was not possible to come up with a comprehensive list of all the sociolinguistic factors to be included in ESL teaching and, therefore, teachers needed guidelines and the other 20 % did not want to commit themselves.

Those in support giving teachers the latitude to decide what to teach argued that the teaching contexts differed from school to school, thus, teaching could only be relevant if teachers adjusted accordingly. These views are captured in the excerpt from respondent A from school F who said:

The sociolinguistic factors in language teaching are diverse. They differ from one setting to another. There cannot be one fit-all prescription of these factors. For example the factors that apply to a learner in an urban setting are completely different from those that apply to a learner rural setting. The access to Television the internet and mass media are some of the sociolinguistic factors that impact on language learning and obviously they interplay with ESL teaching.

The respondents who supported that teaching should be uniform argued that the O' level assessment is uniform and that the learners needed to be taught the same things. The arguments presented for this position are captured in the excerpt below from respondent G from school B who said:



Leaving the decision to decide on what sociolinguistic factors to incorporate is problematic. It would be difficult to set a national exam. The examination is national and has to meet certain standards regardless of the setting of different schools. There has to be a consensus on what aspects of culture are to be taught in all schools.

Though the consensus was apparently that teachers should decide what to teach, the discussion revealed that this freedom was restricted to the requirements of the exams. Teachers, therefore, would not venture to teach any cultural concepts outside the themes they derived from the past examination scripts.

5.6.2.9 Item 9

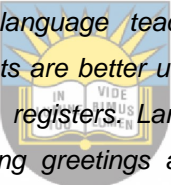
For this item the respondents were asked to respond to the statement:

Is the English culture important in teaching English as second language?

The importance of this item is in its focus on the SL culture as a sociolinguistic factor in ESL teaching. It was assumed that teachers who valued this construct would incorporate aspects of culture in their teaching thus illustrating the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching.

Respondents expressed mixed feelings on the extent of the infusion of English culture in ESL teaching. It was generally agreed that issues relating to culture were unavoidable because the language cannot be divorced from its culture. Respondents also noted that in many cases word meanings were context based and that if not considered, culture could impair/distort meaning therefore knowing some aspects of English culture helps/ aids understanding. The supporting views are summed up in the excerpt below from teacher D from School T:

English culture is important in language teaching because language and culture are inseparable. Some language aspects are better understood if one has the cultural background information. That is why we teach registers. Language registers focus on issues like polite forms, making requests, exchanging greetings and so forth. All these are culture--related, therefore one has to know the English culture to determine the appropriateness of different utterances.



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Respondents also cited the concept of relationships in different cultures. Thirty respondents (60%) noted the linguistic deviations based on vocabulary relating to relationships, as one way in which culture and language are an important linguistic factor in ESL teaching. The views expressed are captured in the excerpt below from teacher C of school F who said:

The language carries culture hence the need to include culture in its teaching. When teaching vocabulary words relating to relationships for example, Shona mother tongue learners may not have the same concept of relationships like cousins, aunts and uncles as the native English speaker. The local culture groups these as mothers and fathers and only a clarification of the different cultures would help make sense in a situation where a student gives the excuse that he had to attend his father's funeral on two different occasions.

However, these sentiments were mostly academic; based on the ‘best’ practices the teachers were aware of, but not necessarily what they practised. In the classroom teachers were worried only about exam success.

5.6.2.10 Item 10

For this item respondents were asked to respond to the question:

10. Is the local culture important in teaching English as a second language?

The importance of this item stems from its focus on the respondents’ rating of the SL culture as a sociolinguistic factor in ESL teaching. It was assumed that the respondents who rated it as important would be accordingly influenced in their teaching so that their teaching would reflect the extent of the “interplay” investigated in the present study.

Respondents cited taboos in local culture and how they could cause breakdown in communication. Attention was also drawn to the fact that some communicative barriers in the form of negative attitudes or hostility could result from cultural issues, like the use of taboo language. Register-related problems in different contexts were cited. In that respect, some respondents explained, that culture provides the context of communication events, and the words used. Some peculiar meanings could be lost if the language users disregard the cultural context.

The following excerpt from teacher F, a respondent from School E captures some of the points raised:

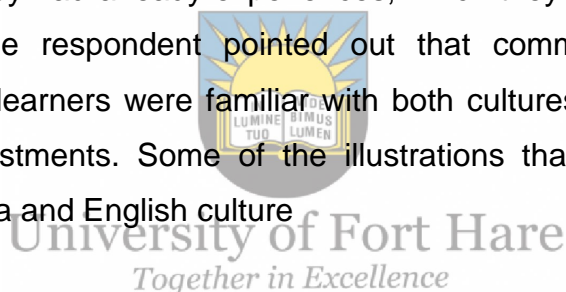
*Yes. I believe the local culture is very important in language teaching. There is a *relationship between culture and language in that some ideas from the local culture which are not tailor-made to fit the English language. Some confusion and misunderstanding can result from the difference in the cultural background. Therefore culture is important.**

Respondents explained that at times learners came up with strange and apparently meaningless constructions, to an interlocutor who does not share the same cultural background. They contended that such a breakdown, often explained away as a lack of communicative competence highlighted the importance of culture in SL teaching.

Another respondent explained the importance of culture as follows,

It helps in grasping English as a life skill. Culture draws attention to issues that differ or are similar to that second language...it helps the learners understand some of the contexts included in the passages they learn. At times culture helps learners to fuse in with the 'learner's already experience' in the new language

The reference to 'already experience' was explained to mean the learners' cultural background, what they had already experienced, which they now had to express in the target language. The respondent pointed out that communication could only be achieved where the learners were familiar with both cultures so that they could make the appropriate adjustments. Some of the illustrations that came up related to the relationships in Shona and English culture



5.6.2.11 Item 11

For this item respondents were asked to respond to the statement

11. Should culture be part of L2 teaching?

By focusing on the inclusion of culture in L2 teaching, the theme captured in the preceding question is developed. The responses to these items would confirm whether culture was one of the sociolinguistic factors that influence ESL teaching, thus, exploring the research theme of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching.

Respondents expressed the idea that effective communication is culture based in different ways. This was mostly illustrated with examples. Most of the respondents

advocated for the inclusion of local culture arguing that the meaning of words in different contexts is culture based. They gave different examples of Shona words and expressions that could not be accurately captured in the target language.

In support of this position one respondent said,

In the Shona culture for example a “No” answer need not be taken on its face value. In courtship for instance the decent woman never says “yes” on the first date. The suitor understands and has to show his seriousness by persisting. The same applies to a food offer- the first offer may be a polite gesture and not a genuine offer. These are some of the register contexts that learners must understand.

5.6.2.12 Item 12

For this item the respondents were asked to respond to the following question:

12. Do the activities in your teaching reflect the sociolinguistic environment of your school?



The item further develops the theme of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching by interrogating language teaching activities. It was assumed that activities drawn from the learners' environment reflect the role of the sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching.

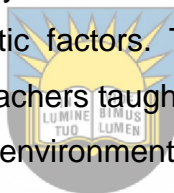
Out of the 50 respondents, 30 respondents (60%) acknowledged the importance of the school context and 15 (30%) said the school environment was irrelevant while 5 (10%) did not commit themselves.

Those that supported the view argued that learning theories support the ideal of starting from known and moving on to the unknown. However, they cautioned on the ultimate need for all students to meet the requirements of the assessment scheme at the end of the course. They pointed out that variety based on the learners' immediate environment

was desirable in language arguing that the learners' language would also be enriched through exposure to abstract and foreign contexts. This would also widen the learners' perspectives. They noted that even the examination scripts were not limited to local contexts. The following excerpt below from teacher E a respondent from School D captures some of the points raised in support:

The sociolinguistic factors are reflected in drama and role plays. In the language lesson learners engage in meaningful activities drawn from their experiences. These include activities such as compositions and comprehension passages that reflect the culture. Sometimes we use foreign and even abstract passages. What matters is whether the given tasks nurture the appropriate exam skill.

Those that disagreed argued that examination success was paramount and therefore what was taught did not necessarily reflect the school setting. They saw no reasons for considering the local sociolinguistic factors. The discussion based on this question proved that this view prevailed. Teachers taught for the examination, therefore, teaching rarely took cognisance of the local environment.



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5.6.2.13 Item 13

For this item respondents were to respond to the question:

13. Do you take the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the local language of the learners? Explain.

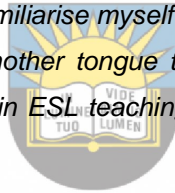
The relevance of this item lays in its focus of the local language which I considered to be an important sociolinguistic factor in second language acquisition. By establishing whether familiarisation with the local language was considered essential in teaching ESL teaching insights can be drawn into the role of role of the first language and culture which is embedded in the language. I assumed that ESL teachers who value the role of

culture as a sociolinguistic factor in language teaching would need to be familiar with the local languages. Such data would contribute to the under investigation.

In response 96% of the respondents noted that familiarisation with the local language was not an issue since they shared the same language with learners. There were only 2 respondents who were Shona speaking stationed in an environment where the Ndebele language was dominant and 2 Ndebele teachers were stationed in Shona dominated environments. Two of these however were fluent in both Shona and Ndebele.

The following excerpt from one respondent, teacher A from school C, summarises some of the views expressed:

No, I don't have to familiarise myself with the language. If I wasn't a native speaker I would definitely take the opportunity to familiarise myself with the local language. Many times in the language lesson I resort to the mother tongue to explain some concepts. The learners' mother tongue cannot be ignored in ESL teaching since many language deviations can be traced from the mother tongue.



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Through the interview probing and the focused group discussion, it was established that the respondents considered familiarisation with the local language essential since it gave insights into linguistic variations, often regarded as errors by some second language teachers who disregard or underplay the role of the mother tongue

The following are excerpt from teacher A, a respondent from School F captures some of the points raised in support of familiarising with the local language:

Being familiar with the local language gives me insight into some language deviations common among learners. I understand better some literal translations from the mother tongue, which could be confusing for someone without the same linguistic background. Also most students can't carry out conversations in English for long. Code switching and code mixing is common.

5.6.2.14 Item 14

For this item the respondents were asked to respond to the question:

14. Do you take the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the local culture of the learners?

The focus on culture as a sociolinguistic factor in ESL teaching is relevant in developing the research theme. It was assumed that respondents who valued culture as a sociolinguistic factor would need to familiarise themselves with the local culture.

For most teachers, this was not an issue since the respondents shared the same mother tongue (Shona/ Ndebele) with the students. 90% of the respondents confirmed that it was important to know the local culture. Some of the reasons forwarded included that culture helps us understand culture-based non-verbal messages. Interpretation of different non-verbal behaviours in different cultures was cited to illustrate how meaning could be lost as a result of the lack of cultural knowledge. The excerpt below from teacher C from school D who said;

I cannot say that I take my time to familiarise myself with the local culture because I'm familiar with the culture. I speak Shona just like my students so we share the same culture.

Other respondents added that cultural knowledge clarified inconsistencies, vagueness and ambiguities in language use. This is captured in then excerpt below from teacher F from School C who said:

It creates a better understanding on the needs of the learner it helps them to appreciate diversity similarities and differences have to understand their behaviour patterns and so that I can understand their (learners) needs and address them effectively in my teaching.

In short, the need to be familiar with the learners' culture was generally confirmed.

5.7 Definitional Issues

In this section the respondents were asked to respond to 5 items which sought to clarify definitional issues and the respondents' understanding of the construct under investigation. This was considered important since it redirected the respondents to the research question and prepared them for the Interview and Focused group discussion sessions which would expand and further clarify the respondents' contributions in the exploration of the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and ESL teaching.

In presenting the data, excerpts from the respondents' written submission are first presented, followed by relevant scripts from the interview and the focused discussion sessions.



5.7.1. Item 15

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For this item the respondents were asked the question;

15: How can you define the general concept of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching?

The item helps to delimit the construct under investigation and this would insure relevant and informed contributions to develop the research theme, "sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching." I assumed that respondents had to be clear on the definition of this construct as this would help them refocus on the issues involved.

Very sketchy definitions of the concept of sociolinguistic factors emerged from the respondents' written submissions. However, respondents generally agreed that sociolinguistics focused on the society and that language; how the language influenced the society and how the society was influenced by the language.

These factors which emerged are captured in the definition excerpt from teacher E of school Y who said:

Sociolinguistic factors refer to all the aspects of the home, family and societal environment that impact on the language. They include the local languages, religion, attitudes to the language, the socioeconomic status of the student and many more.

5.7.2. Item 16

The respondents were asked:

16. What is the place of (sociolinguistics) culture in the teaching of English as a second language teaching?



The item was intended to refocus the respondents' attention to the construct under investigation. It was assumed that this would make their self-evaluations of how they conducted their teaching of the second language (ESL) clearer.

All the 50 respondents considered culture important in the teaching of a second language. Several reasons were given for this. However, this was said to be only from a theoretical perspective which would not necessarily be reflected in the actual practices. The following excerpt from teacher C, a respondent from School E captures this view:

Culture is important. It provides the learners with the background in which the language is presented. Through cultural knowledge the learners identify with the context of language use. So I can say, yes culture has a major role in language teaching.

The place of sociolinguistics was generally confirmed. However, teachers focused on the practical issues; only those aspects of culture relevant to the different language tasks at hand. Such tasks did not necessarily relate to the students' immediate

communication needs but were contrived situations to illustrate the use of particular registers.

5.7.3. Item 17

For this item the respondents were asked:

17: What sociolinguistic/cultural knowledge/ information may be used in English language classrooms?

This item sought to expand the research theme by eliciting the sociolinguistic factors that emerge in the ESL lesson. I assumed that in focusing on this aspect of language learning, insights could be drawn into the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching. In response to this item respondents pointed out various types of sociolinguistic knowledge relevant to language learning. The data that emerged included the following:



Religion, culture and traditions are very important in language teaching and appropriate language scripts like polite requests, invitations, greetings and condolences.

5.7.4. Item 18

For this item the respondents were asked the question:

18. What are your reasons for including or omitting cultural information in your teaching?

The above item further explores the research theme through its focus on culture as a sociolinguistic factor in ESL teaching. It was assumed that respondents who valued the inclusion of culture had an appreciation of language as the interplay of theory and sociolinguistic factors.

Divergent views were expressed with some respondents seeing no reason for the inclusion of culture since it added little value to the pass-rate. On the other hand, some respondents noted that cultural information made it easier to understand some language issues. There was contention on the extent to which teachers could resort to the mother tongue for explanations in second language teaching. The excerpt below from teach H, a respondent from school A captures some of the views expressed:

I have no reason at all to include foreign culture- at least not as a separate objective in language teaching. Learners are already overburdened with aspects of their own culture and grammatical aspects of the second language. Why burden them with aspects of a second language like culture. You only explain what the question wants.

Teacher E, a respondent from school E summarised the arguments for the inclusion of culture in the following excerpt:



Language is for communication and it is an everyday event imbedded in culture, English culture. Some contexts we get in the exam and even in comprehension passages depict foreign cultures so yes, culture should be included. Cultural information is essential to understand what is going on in given contexts and around them in a second language. It will make the students understand concepts better.

Respondents went on to explain that cultural information could also explain some linguistic deviations and give relevant insights to guide the language teacher. There was, however, no consensus on inclusion in principle and the extent of the inclusion. The excerpt below from respondent D a teacher from School C, captures some examples of language deviations that could emerge in the learners' vocabulary relating to relationships.

We have for example the label 'baba' for father. In Shona it refers to refer to the whole range of uncles. So a learner could confuse the person from a different cultural background when for example a learner asks for permission to attend a funeral for his "father" when it is known that the father passed on years earlier.

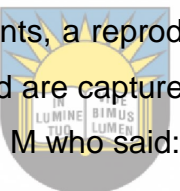
5.7.5. Item: 19

For this item the respondents were asked:

19. How do you incorporate sociolinguistic factors in your lesson?

The item was considered relevant since it was designed to capture the actual practices in the classroom for analysis against the research question. The teachers methodologies would give insight into the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching as investigated in the research.

In the written submissions the 28 respondents (56%) said they included dialogues, dramatization and insinuations which the learners could identify with when teaching registers. Between these respondents, a reproduction of the syllabus expectations was reconstructed. The views expressed are captured in the excerpt below from teacher J, a respondent from Secondary School M who said:



I use lots of activities in my language lessons. At times I use drama and role play. The language lesson has to be active with the learners using the language in different situations. We do not teach the language in isolation. This is what the syllabus requires.

The above view was also expressed by 60% of the respondents. However, 30% expressed an opposing view while 10% were silent on the issue. Those that argued that sociolinguistic factors were not important did not fully understand the concept and had never consciously thought of it. This view is captured in the excerpt below from respondent F of school J who said:

I can't say I incorporate sociolinguistic factors. In fact I never think of language teaching in that way. In fact, I am not sure what the sociolinguistic factors are. I just teach and my students pass. As for the sociolinguistic factors, I honestly don't know.

5.8. Data from the interview

Ten respondents randomly selected from the sample of fifty used for the research were interviewed. The interview-guide questions were informed by the responses to the questionnaire items discussed as items 1 to 20 from which the themes for the interview were extracted and adopted as the subheadings for organising the data presentation. The interview data presented in this section is intended to clarify and elaborate issues raised in the prior sections. I assumed that some respondents may not have been very clear about the construct under investigation and that written submissions had limitations, like not being taken seriously or being given enough time. Further, so a face-to-face interface would establish confidence and a personal touch to the investigation.

5.8.1 Theme1: The impact of sociolinguistic factors on teaching methods/activities in the ESL classroom

Part of the interview focused on the impact of sociolinguistic factors on ESL teaching. The respondents generally concurred with the view that sociolinguistic factors should influence the planning, content and the methodology of the language lesson. They said that they used methods that gave allowances for the learners' active participation and use of the language. They pointed out that such methods were modelled against activities drawn from the learners' environment, thus acknowledging the role of sociolinguistic influences. The excerpt below from a session between the researcher and a respondent, teacher (H) from school D, summarises what a significant number of the respondents claimed to happen in the ESL classroom.

I use classroom activities that the learners are familiar with. These are usually activities that they engage in every day and are therefore related to their society. Such activities include drama and role plays and situational dialogues to illustrate the use of registers, for example. All these have to be drawn from contexts that the learners are familiar with.

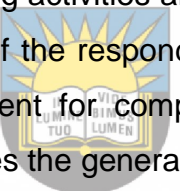
A significant number of the respondents acknowledged the use of drama and role play many also confirmed the use of situational dialogues in the teaching of registers. From the initial responses it appeared as if a variety of methods was

prevalent in the ESL teaching. Teachers appeared to be very flexible in their choices of methodologies in different circumstances.

The majority of the respondents also seemed to be very clear on what registers entail. The excerpt below from teacher D of school H summarises the respondents' conceptualisation of registers.

To me registers mean the correct or appropriate use on language in different situations or contexts. How to make a polite request-accept an apology or request- I mean polite forms. All these differ in different cultures and different languages. As a teacher I must be aware of the deviations that could result in the learners' usage of language.

The above excerpts suggest that teaching relies a lot on the learners' immediate environment from which the learning activities and content are extracted. This was further confirmed initially by 58% of the respondents when asked where and how they sourced other teaching content for composition, comprehension and oral lessons. The excerpt below captures the general views that emerged.



I do not rely so much on textbooks. I do use Structures and Skills and English for Zimbabwe at times but only as personal resources. Otherwise in the classroom it's hands on. The teaching has to be relevant to the learners. After all the learners need to communicate and there is an examination to write at the end of the day

Through further probing on examinations and communication needs, the respondents appeared to backtrack on the value attached to other sources of teaching materials other than past examination questions. The emerging indications were that the major influence of what happens in the ESL classroom was the examination. The last words of respondent G from school A aptly summarises this view:

When all has been said and done, we cannot run away from the reality. Ours is an examination centred curriculum and successful teaching/learning is accordingly determined. Teachers must develop the survival skill to beat that system and survive. They have to come

up with a working formula: a formula that puts their schools on the map and we all know the good school in the province.

This, coming from a respondent noted by the researcher as one of the 'good' schools based on PED Midlands (2016) was considered a reasonable assessment of what motivates teachers and drives their approaches to ESL teaching.

5.8.2 Theme 2: What sociolinguistic factors do you include in ESL teaching?

In this section, I will present the data elicited through the interview in response to the item that wanted the respondents to explain the sociolinguistic factors that they included in their teaching.

5.8.2.1 The learners' needs in ESL teaching

The interview sessions also clarified some issues relating to learners' needs as a sociolinguistic factor. Through probing and refocusing questions the respondents explained how teaching was affected by the learners' needs in terms of what to teach and how to teach. Respondents conceded that the influence of the learners' needs as defined by the societal role of language was rather limited. The teachers defined passing the examination as the major goal which tended to supersede other needs. Below are excerpts from an interview session between the researcher (R) and the interviewees, teacher H and G respectively, from school E to illustrate the opposing views that came up with regards to the influence of the learners' needs and the needs of the examination:

Excerpt 1

Indeed, the learners' needs influence what I teach; the content and the context. I mean the composition, language and comprehension topics. These have to be related to the learners' environment.

Excerpt 2

No not at exactly. Other considerations come into play I mean at the end of the day the students must pass. Therefore I look also at the examination structure the past examination papers. This is where I draw the registers for example, even the composition and comprehensions questions.

At this point, respondents seemed divided on what factor was more important as an influence of what transpires in the language lesson.

5.8.2.2. Culture in language teaching

Part of the interview focused on culture as a sociolinguistic factor in second language teaching. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of both the local culture and the culture of the second language. Respondents were also asked to give their views on who should determine the content and nature of inclusion of this factor in language teaching. I considered data obtained to be pertinent in exploring sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching.

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The following excerpts capture some of the views raised:

Culture helps in drawing meaning from some utterances that may be viewed as errors. Learners often express themselves using literal translation which could easily result in a breakdown in communication if the teacher does not have the same background knowledge.

In the same vein, a respondent from school D gave the examples of how cultural factors can influence the meaning of an utterance in the following excerpt:

Off hand, I can think of the interpretations of messages conveyed through non-verbal cues. A student who avoids eye contact when talking to an adult could be considered as dishonest in some cultures but in my culture, Shona culture, that's the norm. You don't look adults in the face. The native English speaker may not understand that – to him avoiding eye contact could indicate that one is not telling the truth.

Respondent A from school D contributed to this view as follows:

I can also think of relationships, I had a case where an expatriate teacher failed to understand how a student could attend his father's funeral twice. In Shona the vocabulary for different relationships is confusing for those that do not have the same culture.

5.8.2.3 Theme 4: Who should decide on the sociolinguistic factors?

In the interview discussions the last question discussed was, “Who should decide on the sociolinguistic factors to be incorporated in ESL teaching?”

A strong case for letting individuals decide on what to teach was supported by the majority of the respondents. The major points raised in support are summarised in the excerpt below from teacher B, a respondent from School C who said:

There is no way that opportunities to introduce culture could be planned for in closed contexts. Learners in the rural areas are not exposed to texts from different cultures. Think of the ZTV programmes that some of the learners see daily, in the urban areas on the one hand, and the context of a rural learner with no access to the TV. The good teacher has to decide on his own on what sociolinguistic factors to focus on. This means we teach in different contexts hence there cannot be a one-size-fit-all prescription of the sociolinguistic factors to include in ESL teaching for all learners.

The interview excerpt below, between the Researcher R and respondent F, a teacher from school G captures the opposing views on whether individuals can decide on what sociolinguistic factors to incorporate in language teaching.

Yes, I believe leaving the individual teachers to make decisions on what to teach is problematic. The students write the same examination so how can that be reconciled if the students are taught different things at the teachers' whim? The syllabus should specify the sociolinguistic factors to be taught.

Twenty respondents (40%) respondents fronted this view and 10 respondents

I am not sure but still I believe teachers need some guidelines. In any case not all of them can be competent enough to decide on their own what to teach and what not to teach.

From the above data, it appears that there is no consensus on who should decide on the factors to be included.

5.9. Data from the focused group discussions

This section focuses on data collected through focus group discussion sessions. Ten sessions, each attended by ten participants and lasting up to two hours were held. The researcher moderated the sessions and was guided by a loose schedule designed to redirect all contributions to the relevance of sociolinguistic factors in all aspects of second language teaching. The discussion focused on the respondents' views of how sociolinguistic factors permeated different aspects of second language teaching at different levels; the status planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning stages.



Data was structured under relevant themes that shed light on the view of ESL teaching as the interplay between second language teaching theory and sociolinguistic factors. The following subheadings are adopted for the organisation of the data:

- Exploring the concept of sociolinguistics
- Teaching content
- Methodology
- Sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching.

5.9.1 Exploring the concept of sociolinguistic factors

In the focus group discussions, participants were asked to define the concept of sociolinguistics. This was considered relevant because a clear understanding of the construct under investigation would ensure relevant responses. The concept of sociolinguistic factors was defined mostly through examples and illustrations.

Participants related sociolinguistics to language and the society; how the two influenced each other and how this relationship affected language teaching in terms of status, corpus and acquisition planning. In other words, data from focus group discussions was considered relevant for reconstructing the concept of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching and how these factors interplay with second language teaching theories the Zimbabwean context.

Excerpt 1

The excerpt from respondents C and D respectively, below from a session at school J, attended by 10 respondents (A-J) and moderated by the researcher captures the explanations offered on what constitutes sociolinguistic factors.

I'm not sure but to me I think it refers to aspects of the society that impact on the language. The society being the learners' homes the general environment including the home and the school.

To me how I understand sociolinguistic- I mean what I googled is that language is affected by the society and that the society is affected by the language so sociolinguistic factors must be the factors in the society that are affected and in turn affect the language. It refers to the things to do with the society: those features in the learners' environment that affect the language and language use.

The list that emerged from the contributions included the school, religion, culture, the mother tongue, motivation, the family background and the home language. In other words, the sociolinguistic factors were conceptualised as everything in the environment relevant to language and language teaching.

5.9.2 Teaching methodology

Part of the focused group discussion explored how the second language is taught. This was intended to further develop the research theme by giving insights into the extent to which sociolinguistic factors influenced second language teaching.

In the discussion, it emerged that the teachers were well-informed about second language teaching. They valued the use of child centred communicative approaches but did not necessarily adopt such approaches for practical reasons like time and the examination structure. In all the sessions, the general pattern was that respondents would make claims that indicated inclusion of sociolinguistic and their consideration in planning what and how to teach. However, further probing indicated that teachers mostly focused on past examination question scripts for both the content and approaches in their teaching. In other words, teaching was generally a ritual of testing, revision and retesting using past examination scripts.

The excerpts below from a Focused Group Discussion at school H, moderated by the researcher (R) and attended by ten respondents from various schools coded A-J, summarises the major points captured on the content in ESL teaching; mainly that the focus in teaching registers was on right responses to different situations extracted from past examination scripts. As respondent D said in response to whether the learners' needs and other pedagogical considerations mattered in ESL teaching:

“Inini” (Personally) I beg to differ. When I teach, I teach for my learners to pass. I mean where do you get the time to focus on different communication contexts, culture and the like? I have no time for extended explanations and drama or role plays.

This was also supported by respondents E and D who respectively added:

True I think we are just talking of what we learnt at college. The schools that get the good results have no time for drama and stuff. They just work with the past examinations and the making schemes. In my district we organise workshops through BSPZ. We invite experienced examiners and we share past examination papers and marking schemes. In fact we share resources and build inventories of past examinations which we then use to give out students as practice tests. Give them tests - as many as you can and you can never go wrong. To tell the truth I rarely have the time for that. We have so many demands with this new curriculum.

From the above and the other data that emerged, it was evident that the use of drama and role play was mostly theorised. The respondents generally resorted to teaching and testing that was all focused on the examination.

5.9.3 The mother tongue in language teaching

Part of the focused group discussion session focused on the mother tongue as a sociolinguistic factor in second language teaching. All the respondents seemed to concur that the mother tongue also referred to as the L1 or first language, influenced second language teaching.

The respondents linked the mother tongue to language deviations that influenced second language teaching in many ways. Not only did the teachers have to correct language deviations when they occurred but also to anticipate them. The following excerpt makes clarifications on the theme of the mother tongue as a sociolinguistic factor in language teaching are captured in the focused discussion excerpt below from a session at school E, attended by 10 participants coded A-J and moderated by the researcher (R).

*I think we can define deviations as errors. Special errors that are caused by the influence of the home language, that is. For example, when learners make literal translations from Shona and come up with funny words or expressions. I can call it 'Shonglish.'*¹

Respondent B gave further examples of this phenomenon in his contribution below;

A learner can say for example,, "I want a tree," in requesting for medication The confusion stems from the fact that in Shona the word for medication and the word for tree is the same "muti").² Likewise a student can say, 'I am hearing a head/pain. Again the confusion stems

¹ An expression for a combination of Shona and English

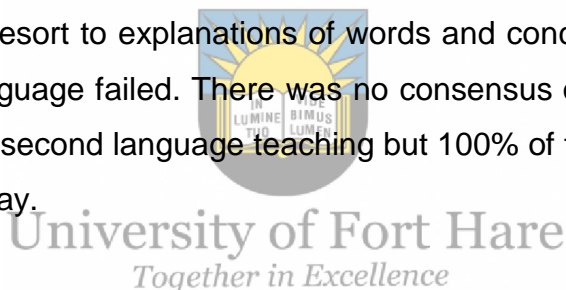
² Literal translations result in communication breakdown since many Shona words have different meanings

from the deviation that in Shona the feeling pain and hearing are expressed with the same word, ('kunuzwa")³ There are many such words.

The other dimensions of deviations are captured in the excerpt below from respondent C who noted that there was much more than vocabulary inconsistencies to language deviations. He said:

I agree there are many such words. However deviations are not all about vocabulary. We also have deviations in registers as well as the nonverbal cues that accompany them. An utterance can be deemed as rude in one setting yet the same utterance can be acceptable based on the context and the cues that are used.

All in all it appeared that the respondents agreed that knowledge of the local language was essential for understanding where code switching and code mixing occurred. The teachers could also resort to explanations of words and concepts in the mother tongue when the second language failed. There was no consensus on the extent of the role of the local language in second language teaching but 100% of the respondents concurred that it had a role to play.



5.10 Data from observation

This section focuses on data based on the observation of teachers in the ESL classroom. The same sample of ten subjects used for the interview was observed in sessions in which they were teaching either comprehension, composition, registers or oral work.

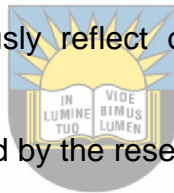
The data in this section are particularly relevant since the entire research focus is situated in the classroom interactions. The classroom is the site where the language learning experiences therein will be interrogated to establish whether the view of language teaching/acquisition as an interplay between sociolinguistic factors and acquisition theory applies.

³ This is another example of note 2 above

I believed that data observed would confirm or refute the subjects' responses to the different questionnaire items.

An observation guide focusing on the interaction between teachers and learners was designed to capture any influences of the sociolinguistic factors with regards to the lesson planning, the content of the lesson and how the lesson unfolded. The observation schedule was guided by the considerations:

- What activities are adopted from the learners' environment?
- What opportunities emerged for the introduction of sociolinguistic aspects of language?
- Did the teacher take advantages of such opportunities?
- Did the teachers consciously reflect on sociolinguistic issues and draw the learners' attention to them?
- Reflections: What was noted by the researcher? (Researcher's thoughts)



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For each of the lessons observed topics I first present a summary of the lesson followed by a step by step analysis of how the lesson unfolded.

5.10.1. Lesson 1: Comprehension lesson

One comprehension lesson was observed at school A. The lesson was based on a passage drawn from the ZIMSEC (2014) past examination questions question. The story-line was a case study of a teenage girl with maladjustment problems who falls pregnant and is expelled from school. The observation is summed up in the excerpt below:

The lesson observed unfolded through the following steps:

Step 1: Introduction

The teacher introduced the lesson by asking learners to give examples of delinquency problems among teenagers that they have witnessed and the support systems available to such students. After explaining that they were going to read a passage addressing the same theme, the teacher then drew the students' focus to the new vocabulary and expressions that they would meet in the passage.

Examples given by the students included truancy, bullying, stealing, alcohol and substance abuse, truancy and clubbing, amongst others. The learners were evidently familiar with the theme as applied to them in their different contexts.

Step 2: Reading the passage

After instructing learners to listen carefully, the teacher read the passage to the class and this was followed by further discussion and answering the questions on the passage orally. In the discussion, learners were asked to comment on the girl's wayward behaviour notably;

- Truancy
- Promiscuity
- Rudeness
- Social distance from peers etc.

Learners were then asked to give explanations for all these behaviours and they explained that it could be a result of several factors including the following;

- Poor parenting
- Peer pressure
- Influence of mass media
- Adolescence
- Wanting attention

Step 3

Learners then answered the comprehension questions in their books.

Comments and reflections on the lesson

The lesson was structured around a familiar theme and setting which the learners could easily identify with or relate to their own sociolinguistic environment. In the introductory discussion, learners did not struggle with what to say, as they gave examples of truant behaviours like absenteeism, drug and substance abuse, violence and abusive behaviours. My impressions were that lesson recreated the sociolinguistic environment in which learners existed.

The comprehension passage also recreated learners' environment using the language being taught (ESL). Thus, acquisition was facilitated through a comprehensible input. The researcher noted that the choice of such a passage was a major factor in rendering that input comprehensible.



5.10.2. Lesson 2: Composition lesson

Two composition lessons were observed. Both lessons were based on topics drawn from past O' level examinations. In the lessons, the teacher and learners discussed the importance of good essay planning after which students were to choose one of the following topics and write. The topics given are shown in Table 5.14 below. The table also shows the number and percentage of the students who chose each topic in a class of 40 students. Below are the excerpts that details what transpired in the lesson.

Teacher: *I want us to focus on what constitutes a good composition. Can you give me some of those qualities?*

Student: *A good structure.*

Teacher: *Can you explain what you mean?*

Several additions were made as the question was redirected to different students until student wound it all up.

Student A: *The composition must be well thought and well planned with a good introduction, body and conclusion*

Teacher: *Good. Now let us look at the following composition questions and choose one to write on*

Table 5.14: Students' Choice of composition questions in observed lesson

Topic	Takers	%
1. Describe your dream house	3	7.5
2. A story based on statement: As memories of him flashed in her mind, she trembled with fear	12	30
3. Nobody had ever expected such bravery.	15	37.5
4. The raid	10	25
5. What would you consider to be the good attributes of a shopkeeper	0	0

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Observations made

There were no takers for the last question and only 3 (7.5%) takers for question 1. The highest percentage, 37.5% took up question 3 while question 2 and 4 had 30% and 25% respectively. These options seem to imply a deliberate inclination towards narrative questions that situate learners in contexts that they are familiar with or that their imagination can reconstruct.

My reflections

The composition lesson observed was influenced by the contextual/environmental setting, in particular the learners' past experiences. I noted that the quality of all the

short story narratives, requested by the given questions depends on the learners' imaginations and experiences based on which, they can then create the story lines for the composition. In the process, language is acquired through usage of the language in contexts familiar to the students. The narrative questions all demand reconstruction of experiences, real or imaginary; all situated in the learners' environment and, therefore, interrogated in terms of language and sociolinguistic factors as investigated in the present study.

5.10.3. Excerpt 3: Teaching registers

The data for this section was partly drawn from the teachers' lesson plans and what was observed in the language lesson. It was evident that the registers taught were drawn from past examinations questions and the excerpt of below, based on a session by teacher B from school D, captures what generally happened in the typical lesson on registers. The lesson unfolded as follows



Teacher: Today we want to look at registers. We have already talked of different registers, but can somebody refresh us on what we mean by this term, 'registers'?

Learner 1: By registers we mean correct forms of language and expressions

Teacher: Yes, but, what else? Correct forms could mean grammatical

Learner: I think registers mean more than grammatical. They refer to what is right in a given context.

Teacher: Good. When we talk of registers we referring to what is right in a social context.

Registers capture the culture and the context in that what is said in one given setting which may not be accepted in another. Can we give examples to illustrate this?

Several examples were elicited from the learners. Learners cite the following contexts:

1. Greetings

It may be acceptable to say Hello or High to a colleague or friend but it is not appropriate to a superior or business acquaintance.

2. Admonishing a colleague or an adult is different from admonishing a child.

3. Reactions to different situations in different cultural contexts.

After discussing these examples the teacher instructed the learners to answer section C (Registers) of a past examination script. Registers presented in the lessons observed are discussed below:

a. Your mother has recently bought a new cell phone and she comes home one day to find you playing with it. She says:

1. 'What is this? Oh I see. You have bought yourself a new phone.'
2. You are playing with my cell phone? I will skin you alive!

In each of these statements, what strategy is your mother using to show disapproval?

b. When your brother gets home after a long hard day he says:

- i. to your sister, "Jane give me food now!"
- ii. to your mother, "Mum, may I please have my food, I am starving."

Consider separately (a) the sister

(b) the mother

How would they react to the manner he asked for food? Number your answers separately.

C. Your friend is excluded in the choir which is going for a regional competition. In response he says the following to the choir master:

- i. "I know that I have not been attending the practice sessions, but still I think I should be given a chance."
- ii. "I wonder how the frogs that make up your choice are expected to win a regional competition."

In each case, how does your friend take the choir master's decision to exclude him?

d. Your classmate skids down a freshly polished floor and falls down heavily. You react by closing your mouth tightly with both hands. What two different meanings could your reaction have? Number your answers separately.

e. From a school report the teachers comments given in A are meant to achieve certain purposes stated in B. Write down the only of each of each of the comments and against that number write out the appropriate purpose.

Comments

- i. A good mark, but pay more attention Maths
- ii. If she doesn't pull up her socks she will be demoted.
- iii. Out of seven subjects, she has passed four with average marks.
- iv. Well done. Keep it up

Purposes

To praise

To inform

To flatter

To caution

To shame



Learners were asked to write the exercise in their books. After that, a revision session in which the learners were given the right answers followed. Worth noting is that all the above excerpts focused on every-day events/situations in the home or the school which all students should be familiar with. The other lessons observed also featured similar contexts. The same approaches of having the students write and then give them the right answers were also followed.

These observations are significant in that they are the language lesson learning experiences which are to be interrogated as the contexts in which language teacher facilitates the interplay between various factors that result in language acquisition.

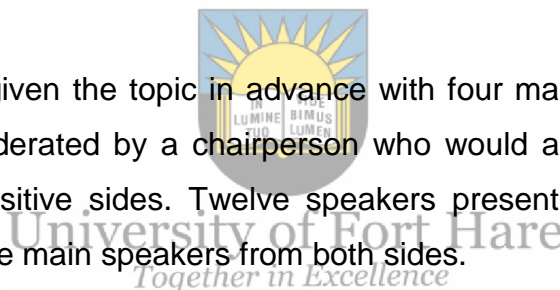
5.10.4. Excerpt 4: Oral work lesson

The lesson was a debate on the motion,

“This house believes in women’s liberation.”

The observation of such a lesson was essential in that the lesson was strictly learner centred. The context was, therefore, ideal for observing the interaction between the learners, the content (what the students had to say) and the second language. It was assumed that all that the students had to say was derived from their experiences, motivation and convictions which could be viewed as the sociolinguistic factors that spur them in language learning and therefore in line with the thrust of the present research.

Learners had been given the topic in advance with four main speakers on either side. The debate was moderated by a chairperson who would alternate speakers from the negative and the positive sides. Twelve speakers presented after which summaries were presented by the main speakers from both sides.



Observations

The speakers on either side drew arguments from their own experiences and convictions on the place of women in society. The discussions reflected a cross-culturally affected context in which the learners draw from both the western culture and the local culture in their arguments. In the process of presenting their arguments the learners had to contend with arguments better understood and presented in their mother tongue.

For example, some learners captured aspects of Indigenous knowledge systems as expressed in different following proverbs. They also drew arguments from religious scripts and contemporary thinking informed by their social environments and the mass media. In the excerpts below, I present some notable contributions in the debate for

analysis in terms of the sociolinguistic influences over this lesson. The excerpts presented are quotes which I found most expressive and which show how societal/ contextual setting control thoughts and their expression in a way that depicts the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. Zimbabwe is a largely a Christian state but culture still has strong roots so that expressing viewpoints on issues reflects the cross-cultural influences at play.

Learner 1

Ladies and gentlemen, men and women can never be equal. Even the bible says so. God first created a man from the soil of the earth and only days later did he create a woman. Not from the earth but from the crooked rib extracted from Adam in his sleep. The first woman, Eve, was to be a helper, not an equal.

The above excerpt illustrates how learners roped in religion to develop points. Religious scripts expose learners to language and views, often expressed vividly and effectively in both, the vernacular or the second language by competent others in the learners' environment.



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Learner 2

Ladies and gentleman this is the twenty first century and not the Biblical days. It is barbaric, retrogressive and insane to use Cation as the justification to deny women their rights as my learned friend is doing. This house believes in women's rights and I will base my argument on scientific modern-day principles of right and wrong.

The excerpt illustrates the exposure to diverse information sources which is a major factor in language learning.

Learner 3

Women play important roles at both family societal and national level. Roles that would break even the best on men; roles that not only sustain but determine the very existence of society as it is. Think of it.

Number 1 Child birth!

A solid nine-month community service sentence of carrying a bulky bulging baggage that you cannot place on the side road if you want to rest!

Learner 2

Child nurturing!

An extended sentence to sleepless night vigils and twenty-four hour surveillance!

Number 3

Husband care!

A hard labour life sentence in prison home!

The list is endless ladies and gentlemen.



The above excerpt further illustrates other sociolinguistic factors that permeate the ESL classroom. The learner brings in imagery and diction related to the judiciary system, which are evidence of the societal-factors' influences on the language acquired. In other presentations the learners drew support for their positions from indigenous knowledge systems in capsuled in proverbs below are some of the proverbs that were brought.

- Behind every successful man, there is a woman.

This was said by student C in support of women's position as friends and not subordinates to men.

- A man's best friend is his wife.

The proverb was again from learner C whose point was that women deserved any other position other than that of a servant. The Shona proverbs below also came up in the various presentations in defence of different positions. These were presented in both the original/vernacular forms as well as their literal translation forms.

- *Mukwasha muonde haaperi kudyiwa. (A son-in-law is like a fig tree. You never run shot of figs)*
- *Musha mukadzi. (The woman makes the home)*
- *Wazvara ndume wazvara hadzi. (Giving birth to a girl child is like giving birth to a boy child.)*

The three proverbs above depict how gender differences are perceived in Shona society. Presenting related arguments in an ESL lesson is an aspect of the interplay under investigation.

My reflections on all the observation

The observation scripts generally reflected what happened in the classroom context. Throughout all the observation sessions my focus was on anything that related to the students' immediate environment; the school the home and the society, anything that could fall under the concept of sociolinguistic factors, as defined earlier in this chapter. My evaluation of all the emerging scripts was two-fold: how they could have been influenced by these sociolinguistic factors and how they reflected the same factors.

The first point noted is that the scripts from all the observed lessons depict how teachers present language learning experiences in settings familiar to the learners; settings that the learners can identify with. In the table below I show how the observation scripts relate to the theme under investigation.

Table 5.15: Summary of the lessons observed

Type of lesson	Lesson Theme	Sociolinguistic relationship
Comprehension	Adolescence	Reading for different purposes
Composition	Adventure	Story telling
Oral lesson	Human rights issues	Presentations: arguing persuading
Language	Communicative competence	Co-existence

In the above table the extreme left column indicates the type of lesson observed. The second column gives the lesson theme while the third column relates the lesson to the events or societal activities that the lesson is relevant for. This is considered important since it reflects the relationship between language, language teaching and the society. The assumption made is that language lessons are designed against societal events so that useful language skills are acquired.

5.11. Conclusion

In this chapter, data collected through document analysis, the questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion and observation methods was presented. I assumed that such comprehensive data would be relevant in exploring the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors in teaching ESL. The diversity would give credible data to explain this interplay at different levels in the ESL curriculum implementation process. The research sought to explore the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching, therefore, insights into the teaching practices, the underlying attitudes and beliefs that drive the ESL teachers and policy perspectives were considered essential.

In chapter 6 all the findings from the data analysis are interrogated against the research question. The research sought to explore the interplay between sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwean schools. Therefore, the impending chapter will focus on the policy planning stage through to the implementation stages, with a view to show how sociolinguistic factors and theory interact both in the policy formulation and the curriculum implementation process.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.0 Introduction

This study explored the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching in the teaching of English at O' level in Zimbabwe. In chapter 5, data collected to address this question was presented and analyzed. In this chapter, I interrogate the findings of the study. Using the knowledge gained from the objectives, the research questions, literature review and the theoretical framework of the study the chapter discusses how data collected through the five instruments (the questionnaire, the interview, the focused group discussion and observation) compare and jointly address the research questions. Results show an intimate understanding of the concept of sociolinguistics-related factors and their conceptualized role in ESL teaching at different levels in the ESL curriculum planning and implementation process in Zimbabwe. The study conceptualized ESL teaching as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors and language acquisition theory.

While results indicate a congruent appreciation of this conceptualization of ESL teaching, by the implementers at school level, actual ESL practices reveal deficiencies in the actual practices in the ESL classroom. ESL teachers focus mostly on the examination rather than use of the language in everyday contexts. This further confirms earlier research findings in sociolinguistic studies which generally confirmed shortfalls in ESL teaching that cause the deficiencies observed earlier in the introduction as having spurred the

present research; deficiencies associated with the lack of sociolinguistic competence as will be discussed in the ensuing script.

6.1. Structure of the discussion

The chapter is structured in two parts: first a separate discussion of each set of data collected through document analysis, the questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussion and observations is done. Then, a discussion of how data from the different instruments compare and collectively address the research question, “Exploring the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching?” is done. This part of the discussion is structured under the sub-question themes that guided the study:

- *To what extent does Second language teaching in Zimbabwe consider sociolinguistic factors?*
- *What views are held about integrating language and sociolinguistics in second language teaching?*
- *To what extent are the teaching materials relevant for teaching the ‘culture’ of the target language?*
- *To what extent does the methodology reflect the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors?*



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Under each of these themes, I assess views about ESL teaching emerging from the various strands of data at different levels of the curriculum implementation process with a view to explore the “interplay” averred in the research question. In the last section of the chapter I then focus on individual types of lessons, oral work, comprehension, composition and language work/registers to explore ESL teaching so that the comprehensive script on the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching in Zimbabwe at secondary school level is explored.

6.2. Discussion of the findings from the document analysis data

In this section, I focus on data extracted from the national and school level documents. These are policy documents, which spell out the language policy guided by macro level decisions. The discussion explores at length the extent to which the policy reflects the research theme which conceptualises ESL classroom practices as the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and ESL teaching. The syllabus documents; the teachers' schemes, the assessment schemes as well as the textbooks, are the source documents analysed. In the extensive discussion, I note the distinct presence of sociolinguistic elements. Explicitly stated or overtly implied, sociolinguistic factors emerge as the influence behind policy decisions, a major content of the language curriculum and a guide to the preferred communicative slant in language teaching recommended by the O' level syllabus. This discussion sets the platform for the interrogation of the gaps between policy planning and implementation which emerge in the analysis of the contradictions, collaborations and illustrations that emerge from the data subsequently collected through the other four instruments adopted for the research (the questionnaire, interview, focused group discussion and observation).



Analysis shows that the ESL syllabus documents set out a policy planning position which defines the status of the target language, what is to be taught and how it should be taught. This framework is in line with Bayyurt's (2013) theorisation, adopted from Cooper (1989) that language curriculum planning and implementation can be reviewed at the 'Status, Corpus and Acquisition Planning stages,' respectively. These stages are extensively discussed in the literature review in chapter 2 and in the present chapter, I interrogate what each stage reveals against the conceptualisation of ESL teaching in Zimbabwe as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. In other words, I interrogate how the ideals expressed at planning level are translated to the reality of language teaching.

Data collected confirm significant parallels with Bayyurt's (2013) theorisation of language planning framework. The notion 'Why to teach?' corresponds to the policy position, spelt out at the status planning level while "What to teach?" reflects the corpus planning level. Lastly, 'How to teach?' corresponds with the methodologies recommended for ESL teaching, spelt out at the 'acquisition level'. In the ensuing discussion, I interrogate the implications of policy decisions in ESL teaching in Zimbabwe in the context of the thrust

to explore the interplay of sociolinguistic factors at the different stages in ESL teaching. The discussion confirms a pervading presence of the influence of sociolinguistic factors throughout all the documents analysed; the syllabus documents and the teachers' schemes and records, all confirming that ESL teaching is conceptualised mostly as the interplay assumed in the research question.

6.2.1 Sociolinguistic factors in the syllabus document

Analysis of the documents seems to point to a progressive curriculum design in line with Mede and Dikilitas' (2015) observation of the progress in ESL teaching to date. They say that EESL teaching is characterised by a departure from learning English as part of the curriculum mainly for passing the tests to the need to learn another language so as to actively use it in the face of the increasing needs. The same development is also noted by Zhang and Wang (2016) who label it as a clear departure from the pure linguistics tradition focused on the study language rules and grammar, to the contemporary focus on the relationship between language and the society.

Zhang and Wang (2016) embrace this new approach in ESL teaching and recommend that syllabus designers should empower teachers to be the change agents who must integrate the sociolinguistic aspects of language in teaching. This is the approach that I conceptualised as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe. This view of language teaching is first implied in the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) Ordinary Level English Language Syllabus (2013:2) recommendation that language teaching should adopt approaches:

...intended to provide pupils with the communication skills necessary for the different roles and situations in which they are likely to find themselves after leaving school...to make the learning of the English language more functional and purposeful...

The roles and situations referred to correspond with the context which O'Donnell (2016) called the 'context of situation' the SFL theory as espoused by Hymes (1972) and Halliday (1995). In the ensuing discussion I interrogate the relevance of all the explicit and subtle references to cultural and sociolinguistic factors made throughout the O' level syllabus document to the context of situation. I focus on the preamble, rationale, aims and objectives, methodology and the assessment schemes. My concern is on how teachers' documents translate these to working plans for the ESL classroom and in the process, I also establish the extent to which it can be said that the production, interpretation and application of the ESL syllabus documents reflect the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe at O' level.

6.2.2 Sociolinguistic factors and the rationale, aims and objectives of language teaching

The rationale, aims and objectives of language teaching seem to echo the sociolinguistic factors of the environment in which the language SL is taught. Firstly, the Curriculum Development and Technical Services (2015:6) curriculum document prescribes that ESL teaching should aim 'to promote *'Unhu/Ubuntu/Vumunhu'*.⁴ As already noted, in chapter 5, *'Unhu'* (literally meaning being a worthy person) is synonymous with culture and suggests the inclusion of different sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching to attain this goal. This aim confirms observations concerning the inclusion of culture in ESL teaching; a theme which has been progressively developed by research from the 90s to date.

Early researchers in that area, notably Loveday (1981) and Adaskou et al. (1990) as reviewed in chapter 1, acknowledged the close link between language and culture which justifies why its inclusion is an important aim of ESL teaching. Later and contemporary researchers, like Yu (2006), Mizne (1997), Wang, (2008), Kramsch (2014) and Mede and Dikilitas (2015) confirmed and elaborated on the importance of the inclusion of culture and sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching thus giving new insights into the focus on

⁴ Literally translated this means being a person/human as defined by the cultural perspective

sociolinguistic factors in the present research through their major findings and conclusions. For example, Wang (2008) went as far as equating language teaching to the teaching of culture from which language teachers are labeled teachers of culture; a claim he illustrated by citing the many situations in which it is difficult to simply translate one language into another language.

This happens especially when either of the languages lacks the words or expressions in their own cultures as is the case in vocabulary relating to kinship terms cited in chapter 1. Kramsch (2014) also acknowledges complexities of teaching how to use language in various classroom settings. He noted that ESL teaching required the language be approached in its holistic form which demands not just the mastery of structural, discourse and strategic rules; that learners internalize sociolinguistic rules; an approach which implies the free play of sociolinguistic factors in teaching environment. According to Yu (2008) this is what enables the learner to make right choices of language and communication rules that apply to different contexts.

The Curriculum Development (2015:6) says syllabus document further suggests that ESL teaching should produce 'learners who are not only linguistically competent, but also patriotic, ethical and can function in different roles and situations that they are likely to encounter after leaving school.'

Again, this is evidence of the influence of culture and sociolinguistic factors in determining the aims of ESL teaching and the importance attached to it at the status planning level. The aim to equip language learners with skills to function in different roles and situations is also captured by Mizne's (1997). He contends that a speaker is considered fluent if he or she is able to use the language in a range of situational contexts such as talking in a formal meeting, or making telephone calls and therefore that language teaching should be accordingly guided.

Another aim stated is that of communicative competence and being able to function in different roles, rather than linguistic competence. This aim also features in the teachers' records such that it can be said that there is congruency between the syllabus

prescriptions and the teachers' interpretation of how to include sociolinguistic factors in language teaching. It appears teachers plan for the inclusion of culture and sociolinguistics; a position that suggests the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in language teaching. This view is well supported by Farnia and Raja (2009) who contend that language carries culture and that the two are so enmeshed that one could not think of one excluding the other. As Brown (2005:189) puts it, the two; language and culture, are so 'inside each other' that they cannot be separated without losing the significance of either. Extolling this aim in the syllabus, underscores the importance of sociolinguistic factors as explored in the present research in the context of ESL teaching in Zimbabwe.

The syllabus aims also affirms Bushan's (2011) contention that the aim of ESL teaching is to equip learners with what he views as an indispensable everyday tool (language) used to tell others about our ideas, wishes, needs and experiences and to share our feelings, to understand the people. This is the interplay of sociolinguistic factors which provides the context for language acquisition and which ESL teachers can adopt in the recreation of what Rappel (2011:2) terms 'comprehensible contextual situations' in the classroom. The notion of comprehensible contexts is derived from Krashen's hypothesis which defines the ideal conditions for language acquisition which includes what he terms 'the comprehensible input hypothesis' (Krashen, 1995:129). Rappel (2011) says that provision of comprehensible contextual situations enables the learners to acquire the language in a simulated natural context so that what is learnt is easily transferrable to everyday language use.

6.2.3. Sociolinguistic content in the syllabus documents

As already noted in the syllabus documents, the Curriculum Development and Technical Services Department (2015) and ZIMSEC (2013), proffer insights into what sociolinguistic factors are without giving explicit definitions or using the term 'sociolinguistic factors'. References are made throughout the documents to language, culture, the society and societal activities in which language is engaged so that language influences society as it is also influenced by the society. The aspersions made are

closely linked to the definition of sociolinguistics and the components that it encompasses as discussed in Chapter 2.

The illustrations echo Zhang and Wang's (2016:830) definition of sociolinguistics which is that it is 'the study of language in relation to society'; a field that studies the relations between language usage and the social structure of the society. The Zimbabwean syllabus similarly makes reference to the society and context of language teaching which is defined by the beliefs and values that prevail (culture, politics etc. as cited above). This is in line with Tomalin and Hurn (2013) who define these aspects as 'commonly held traditions, values, and ways of behaving in a specific community' as well as other things considered important like family, hospitality, fairness and everything to do with cultural values.

In the final analysis, the syllabus appears to be a product of the societal influence; how the language is viewed and used in the Zimbabwean society. In turn, proposals for teaching the language also reflect the natural language acquisition processes which are largely an interplay of sociolinguistic factors as aptly theorized by Krashen (1989) who differentiated between acquisition and learning arguing that acquisition is facilitated when the learners are exposed to comprehensible input. In the ensuing discussion, the concept of Comprehensible Input (CI) will feature prominently as the description of the processes in the ESL classroom. My contention is that the interplay of sociolinguistic factors is integral in creating this vital component of the ESL classroom activities. In that light, the discussion evaluates the language lesson in terms of the interplay of sociolinguistic factors.

6.2.4. Sociolinguistic factors and the methodological recommendations

The O' level syllabus makes recommendations for methodological practices inclined towards communicative teaching approaches. In suggesting activities like debates and discussions, simulations and drama, for example, the protocols and special vocabulary

and formalities re-create a classroom experience akin to the context of situation proposed by Halliday (1995) and Hassan's (2016) SFL theory. Such activities are also in line with Zhang's (2016) suggestion that approaches in language teaching should extend language teaching from the concrete use of language in the school (classroom) contexts to the influence of the social and cultural factors in the environment of language teaching at large.

All in all, the suggested methods require an intimate understanding of the relationship between the status of the target language and its societal functions. Bayyurt (2013) contends that this is what predetermines the learners' attitudes towards the target language and suggests the desired relationship and the kind of interaction between the local environment and language teaching. Tomalin and Hurn (2013:196) argue that these societal factors should be incorporated into the ESL classroom activities as a way of constructing comprehensible contexts. They contend that ESL methodology should reflect 'intercultural sensitivity and awareness' and to me this implies allowing for the interplay of sociolinguistic aspects in the ESL classroom.

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6.2.5. Sociolinguistic factors and the O' level assessment schemes

Data analyzed reveals that a two-tier assessment scheme; Paper 1 and Paper 2 is used for the assessment of ESL at O' level in Zimbabwe. Paper 1 comprises a compulsory guided/controlled composition where the candidates are given a framework for the composition and a free composition based on a wide range of topics from which the candidates choose one. Paper 2 on the other hand, comprises a comprehension passage, related questions including a summary and Part 2 focuses on Registers. (ZIMSEC, 2013-2016)

The assessment schemes are localized in several ways and the very concept of it is in a way a reflection of the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the item writing process. This is in line with the fact that Zimbabwe localized the examination system after

independence. The subsequent training of local examiners stretches back to 1984 (Ministry of Education Sports and Culture Secretary's Report (1986)). Localization is reflected in that the composition scripts in Paper 1 are extracted from or related to familiar local context. The free compositions in Paper 1 can be descriptive, narrative or a combination. They can also be argumentative or expository discourse-scripts where the learners are given a wide range of such choices to choose from.

Likewise, the comprehension scripts are extracted from familiar contexts or based on theme relevant to the learner's contexts. The analysis showed that the setting of such passages could be local or cross-cultural. In all cases, the passages invariably presented language in specific social contexts so that its testing would, in a way, reflect the learners' understanding of the sociolinguistic milieu that give meaning to the language in different contexts.

Lastly, the registers tested apparently require sociolinguistic competence skills to determine whether the utterances were right in the particular contexts depicted by the register questions. In the past examination question papers analyzed (ZIMSEC, 2000-2017) a pattern emerges in how the register items are constructed. Learners are asked how they would react in given situations or to match appropriate responses for different situations. Ideally, such tasks present opportunities for communicative approaches like situational dialogues and dramatization; methodologies that reflect the sociolinguistic aspects of language.

However, the generally restricted focus of the questions, encourage exam-centric approaches in language teaching. This flaw in the construction of register items is noted by Mareva and Nyota (2014) teaching, who argue that merely asking learners to match situations with appropriate responses does not constitute real communication and authentic language use. Furthermore, researchers contend, asking pupils as is the case with most items, to define manner, character, attitude and reaction or coming up with words to describe someone's manner, character, attitude; reaction to given situations are dry and lifeless activities associated with the Structural Approach.

6.2.6 A theoretical perspective of the sociolinguistic aspects in the document analysis

From a theoretical perspective, an inclination towards SFL perspectives discussed earlier in chapter 3 is evident throughout the syllabus documents, from the rational, aims and objectives, the content, methodology and assessment scheme. In fact, the recommended ESL teaching practices in Zimbabwe appear to fall in the traditions of SFL theory as espoused by Halliday (2007) and Eggins (2004) as well as Hymes' Communicative Language Teaching Theory, Labov's Sociolinguistic Theory of Variant and related approaches extensively discussed under the theoretical framework in Chapter 3.

This is in line with Banks's (2016) observation noted earlier, that SFL is an interesting, useful and powerful tool for text analysis. The items singled out in the curriculum are apparently selected using an SFL approach following the trend observed by O'Donnell's (2011); that SFL is now used world-wide in language education and text analysis. Further, evidence of the SFL slant lays in the focus of the syllabus and other documents analysed on the teaching of language's systems and functions in different contexts.

In line with this view, the Zimbabwean syllabus attempts to isolate areas of cross-linguistic interface between the first and second language (English). This area is viewed as the source of the communicative challenges, extensively discussed in the introduction and acknowledged as the justification of the present research. Salient propositions are made in the documents, to recreate the same interface areas and bring them in the language lesson in ways that are conceptualised and investigated as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the present research.

The sociolinguistic factors can be viewed as the language norms that apply to a given context or setting. Insights into what these norms comprise can be derived from Kachru's (1985) propositions on the spread English in the different nations in his cyclic model as discussed extensively in chapters 2 and 3. The syllabus guidelines support

what happens in what Kachru(1985) as cited by Bayyurt (2013:16) calls ‘the outer circle nations.’ Herein, ESL is adopted as the official language for all business transactions and as the medium of instruction in schools. Citing Kachru (1985), Bayyurt (2013) explains the latitude for both ‘norm developing’ and ‘norm adopting’ in the outer circle to include the fusion of both the local and foreign culture. This is what I conceptualised as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the present study.

In the face of Kachru’s (1985) proposition as cited by Bayyurt (2013:69) that ‘no country and no culture can claim sole ownership of the English language,’ the syllabus document, seems to comply with this view by constantly referring to culture as already noted. Consequently, the recommendations for the teaching various language skills areas including; registers, comprehension and composition all seem to support the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in line with the ideal of CLT approaches. This theme will be further developed in the last section of his chapter, but for now I explore how the subsequent data from the questionnaire, interview, focused group discussion and observation modify and build onto the theme of the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching.



6.3 Data from the questionnaire

The questionnaire data is the first strand of data building onto the document analysis data. The data serves three primary purposes; first to establish the teachers’ credibility as sources of data for a project of this nature which is grounded in second language acquisition theory, then to measure their inclinations towards different methodological slants and lastly to elicit self-evaluations and general views of what happens in the ESL classroom. The research aimed at evaluating the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching therefore the questionnaire data was meant to give insights into the perceptions and definition of sociolinguistics factors in the context of what is planned for against what actually prevails in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe.

Notably the data revealed a fairly well informed conception of sociolinguistics and the role of related factors in ESL teaching. In the ensuing discussion, I explore how data from

the questionnaire contribute to the research theme. It is argued that the interplay of sociolinguistic factors is theoretically acknowledged as the ideal but the teachers do not necessarily practice what they believe. The subsequent data strands will mostly help to clarify, substantiate and elaborate on data from the questionnaire. Revelations of data in this section should not be taken in its entirety since the contradictions later elicited modify the reality of what happens in the ESL classroom.

6.3.1 Respondents' credibility and perceptions

The respondents' credibility is essential for a project of this nature where judgements are to be made based on their beliefs, perceptions, self-evaluations and practices in ESL. The respondents' views contribute vital and generalizable insights in the exploration of the conceptualisation of ESL teaching as largely the interaction sociolinguistic factors in the classroom setting. Biographical data from the subjects shows that respondents are either qualified or still in training as ESL teachers. This is a result of the intensive teacher training programmes introduced in Zimbabwe after independence (Zvobgo, 1986) and modified over the years to make up for initial sacrifice of quality for quantity. This implies that teachers are well qualified and it can be assumed that they have a strong theoretical foundation against which they would give responses grounded on a sound ESL teaching theory and practices and aligned to current trends in ESL teaching.

Data from the questionnaire exhibit a reasonable understanding of the constructs under investigation; sociolinguistic factors, culture and their roles in ESL teaching. The insights into the teachers' perception on sociolinguistic factors were mostly elicited through item 6 in Appendix 3 which reads:

- How can you define the concept of sociolinguistics in SLT?

A wide range of examples were given by respondents to illustrate sociolinguistic factors. This shows that they are generally clear on what sociolinguistic factors are. They also unanimously agreed that language teaching benefits from the interplay of these in the

classroom, citing various culture-based correct registers as examples of how the sociolinguistic setting affects language use. Among others, examples that emerged were, polite forms, making or responding to requests, acknowledging and giving complements, extending invitations and receiving or accepting complements. Aspects of gender religion culture, tradition, politics, the economy as well as the educational and economic background of parents, siblings and the community also emerged as some of the sociolinguistic factors.

These views support the role of sociolinguistic factors, theoretically backed by Zhang and Wang (2016) who perceive the language as a social phenomenon; a tool for communication an embodiment of culture. They conceptualise language as a mirror which reflects a nation's culture and reveals its cultural content. Furthermore, the researchers contend that language teaching not only focuses on language knowledge, such as vocabulary and grammar, but also on the introduction of the cultural background and communicative principles that determine what to say in what situations. This implies that the classroom activities should allow for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors since language is a social phenomenon.



The view of language as a social phenomenon is supported by Serigul and Ashton's (2005) who go on to identify the social factors and the dimensions relevant in accounting for language variety used in different contexts. The researchers note that some of these factors relate to the language users (participants), while others relate to the uses (the social setting and function of the interaction) which all interplay in the language lesson. Serigul and Ashton (2005) also suggest that different contexts could be contrived for language acquisition in the ESL classroom. They contend that in reconstructing contexts in line with the conceptualisation of language as the interplay of sociolinguistic, critical considerations should be made.

The writers suggest that language learners need to consider the participants in a communicative event as well as the social context. As an example, they suggest that the participants could be partners in marriage, where a close relationship defines the roles or they could be people in a business relationship like a customer and a

shopkeeper. These aspects are all part of the context of situation already defined. They can also be conceptualised from Halliday's (2007) perspective of the meta-functions of language; in particular the personal functions discussed in under the theoretical framework.

The aim or purpose of the communicative event must also be considered. It could be informative, social or so defined that it is perceived as the everyday interaction that typifies the comprehensible language input for acquisition, as defined by Krashen (1995). These considerations imply the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the ESL lesson in various forms, best achieved through CLT approaches as discussed earlier.

6.4 The interviews data

The interview data offers no new insights. However, data reveals that the initial claims in the written submissions which painted the picture of all pervasive influence of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL are not a true reflection of what prevails on the ground. The findings confirm Mede and Dikilitas's (2015) conclusions that changes in ESL teaching practices are more dependent on not so much on scientific research but on the teachers themselves; their individual intuition as well as their training and contextual factors. The findings show that in the Zimbabwean context ESL are mostly influenced and motivated by the competition between schools to achieve a high percentage pass-rate.

This comes out through probing the initial claims made to the effect that all teaching is sociolinguistic oriented. It emerges that though the interplay of sociolinguistic factors is valued as a policy framework, what happens on the ground does not reflect this interplay adequately. The teaching models used do not provide for the interplay in most ESL lessons. Overall, the respondents were able to recreate what constituted the sociolinguistic milieu of their teaching environments and separate the theorization of ESL teaching as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors and the practical reality noted by Kramsch (2014) as noted in the introduction to this research that teachers are always challenged to bring students to particular levels of proficiency by the imposition of macro

level decisions. Data reveal that in Zimbabwe the imposition of an examination based ESL curriculum is the reality that controls all teaching rather than the assumption that sociolinguistic factors play that role.

This observation, unfortunately, confirms the situation that the syllabus designers, as noted in ZIMSEC (2013:7) want to run away from. The document observed that teaching English at O level often has more testing than teaching; an approach well aligned to the assessment scheme in vogue. The teaching is characterized by repetitive routines whereby:

...teachers assign a complete comprehension passage or composition exercise, mark the answers wrong or right, then assign a similar exercise threatening the pupils that they must do better or else!

These observations are congruent with Mede and Dikilitas' (2014) conclusions that students are strictly confined to classroom learning environment best described as 'a test based system' where they are exposed to what I earlier termed the 'the test-teach and test rituals.' Mede and Dikilitas (2014) further echo the Zimbabwean school experiences in their contention that the effort to cope with the books and examination requirements kills all the energy that would be required to allow for the social interaction. Such interactions with the language would render the language lesson the characteristic of being the interplay of sociolinguistic factors as investigated in the ongoing project.

6.5. Focused Group Discussion

No new information emerged from the focused discussions. However, the data obtained from the focused group discussions clarified definitional issues of the construct under investigation, sociolinguistic factors. Data revealed some pertinent insights into the respondents' perceptions and adoption of the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching. Notably, the respondents do not seem to have a clear and uniform definition of sociolinguistic factors. Data collected seem to support that it is a construct that the

respondents do not consciously consider in their planning and execution of the language lesson. Furthermore, the various components were only elicited through probing and refocusing questions, otherwise the teachers did not have clear-cut definitions of this construct at their figure tips. Consequently, inclusion and coverage of sociolinguistic factors in the ESL lessons is neither uniform nor guaranteed in all the lessons.

The challenges in the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching are captured by earlier research findings, notably, Kramsch (2014) earlier cited to have confirmed the inconsistencies between language teaching and the specific needs for language use in the real world. He contends that the world has so changed in the last decade, that language teachers are no longer sure of what they are supposed to teach or what the real world situations they are supposed to prepare their students for. This dilemma accounts for the inconsistencies noted in the present study.

The focused group discussion also revealed contradictions in the teachers' initial claims in the written submissions where most of the respondents had asserted the overwhelming influence of sociolinguistic factors in their teaching. They had claimed that their teaching materials and methodologies were all tailored for specific teaching contexts. Most of the respondents claimed that their methodologies were communicative oriented and focused on equipping the learners with the communicative skills that they needed in the school, the home and the work. These views were in sync with the recommendations of the O' level syllabus (ZIMSEC, 2013:2) which advocates for communicative language teaching through its reference to 'functional communicative skills,' the roles and situations that the learners encounter and the need to relate such roles and situations to the classroom learning experience.

It is worth noting, however, that these views are contradicted by Mareva and Nyota's (2013) conclusions on what actually happens in the Zimbabwean ESL classroom. The researchers concluded that contrary to the syllabus recommendations the structural approaches to language teaching dominate. They attribute this partly to the teachers' ignorance on communicative teaching practices.

It is worth noting that a similar trend merges in the present research. Through probing and refocusing, the respondents in the current research seemed to retract on their earlier commitment to communicative teaching and subservience to sociolinguistic factors. In what seemed to be a complete turnaround by most of the respondents and a cautioned concession by 3 respondents, they indicated that their teaching was more examination oriented rather than communicative. This contradiction reflects earlier findings on the realities of the ESL classroom, notably Bayyurt (2012) who noted that the communicative teaching approaches do not always prevail in the face of the realities of the ESL classroom. He concluded that the ESL teachers often found the use of communicative approaches so unimaginative and uninspiring that teachers resorted to other approaches like mini grammar lesson and other unconventional approaches to meet the more realistic practical goal of passing the examination. In the case at hand, the respondents confessed that they resorted to drilling and predicting the correct answers; approaches that had little to do with the actual mastery of communicative competency skills.



6.6. Observation data

The discussion in this section is based on the data collected from ten lessons observed as presented in the preceding chapter. The observed lesson focused on composition, comprehension, language and oral work, all apparently drawn from past examination questions. This observation supports research findings by Mareva and Nyota (2014) who noted the exam-centric nature of ESL teaching in Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, the collected from all the lessons confirm the influence and heavy presence of sociolinguistic factors in the language lesson to proportions that reflect a sociolinguistic view of the classroom language acquisition process. The presence and influence of the sociolinguistic factors is, however, more by coincidence than the result of conscious and deliberate effort driven by sound second language acquisition theory on the side of the teachers. These factors only feature in the language classroom simply because they happened to have been in the examination questions from which the lesson themes were adopted.

6.7. How findings compare and relate to the literature review in the context of the research question.

In the preceding sections, I discuss the findings from the five sets of data; the document analysis, questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion and observation with a view to show how the data relate to the literature reviewed and other current studies on the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching. The major thrust of the discussion is to show how the five strands of data compare and jointly contribute to answering the research question. In the discussion, I contextualize the present research within the fold of related contemporary studies, focusing on the major findings; the common grounds, contradictions and emerging trends. The discussion ultimately contributes new insights into the conceptualization language teaching (ESL) as the interplay of SL acquisition theory and sociolinguistic factors and makes suggestion for future research.

6.7.1. Structure of the discussion



The discussion is structured against the four research questions which are adopted as the major subheadings. Under each subheading, I consolidate the insights drawn from the different strands of data discussed in the previous section; document analysis, questionnaire, interview, focused group discussion and observation to explore how the combined can be generalized against the assumed conception of ESL teaching in Zimbabwe at O' level as the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and second language teaching. In short, the discussion capitalizes on the already stated, advantage of the Mixed Methods (MM) research design specifically, triangulation, which is achieved through the use of various data collection methods (Creswell, 2014).

In ensuing discussion, parallels are drawn between the present research and unfolding research-work into the sociolinguistic phenomena in ESL in both foreign and local settings. Notably, I draw parallels with Bushan (2011), Bayyurt (2014), Mareva and Nyota (2012, 2013, 2014), Mede and Dikilitas, (2015), Taber (2006, 2014) and Kramsch (2014).

The overall thrust shows views that emerge at each of the three language curriculum planning stages; the status, corpus and acquisition stages as defined by Bayyurt (2014). These stages depict the conceptualized policy framework ideals, the materials and content as well as the teaching methodologies, respectively. The discussion explores both the conceptualized and recommended ideals against the reality of ESL teaching and folds up with an overview of what happens in the different language lessons; registers, composition, comprehension and oral work, to unpack the view of language teaching as the interlay of sociolinguistic factors and ESL teaching as conceptualized in the present research.

Before going into the discussion, it is worth noting that though only one of these studies (Mareva & Nyota, 2014) is contextualized locally, they share several features that make them comparable with the present endeavor. For example, Mede and Dikilitas' (2015) study is contextualised in Turkey but focuses on a theme related to the present study 'Teaching and Learning Sociolinguistic Competence.' Likewise, the rest of the studies, though foreign based, focus on sociolinguistic themes in the pursuit to attain sociolinguistic competence, defined by Hedge (2001:45) as the ability not just to know a language, but also to utilise that knowledge in communicating with people in a variety of settings and situations, alternatively manifested as 'linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence and fluency.'

Furthermore, all the research-work reviewed, like the present endeavour, collected data from non-native teachers so that insights obtained are in many ways comparable and relevant to the Zimbabwean experience. The present research assumed that the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching was synonymous with CLT and that it facilitates the communicative competence goal.

6.7.2. To what extent does Second language teaching in Zimbabwe consider the sociolinguistic setting?

In this section, I focus on the overall picture of how ESL teaching in Zimbabwe considers the sociolinguistic setting basing my arguments on the five strands of data.

The discussion notes that the sociolinguistic setting is a major consideration in ESL teaching in Zimbabwe featuring. It is the force behind the language policy and other major curriculum decisions, like the integration of sociolinguistic factors. Furthermore, the setting is an integral component and source of the ESL curriculum content; the authentic texts, the communication events to be simulated and all the sociolinguistic milieu that come into the language lesson. Lastly, it is the resource against which teaching methodologies are contrived in such a way that teaching can be ultimately viewed as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors and SL acquisition theory.

In other words, I explore how data supports all aspects of the ESL curriculum; the guidelines (policy position), substance (syllabus content), and practices (methodology) reveal some aspects of the sociolinguistic setting or are influenced by it. My focus stretches from the status, corpus and acquisition levels of language teaching as defined by Bayyurt (2014). It is, however, pertinent that I establish whether respondents were clear on the definition of the construct, sociolinguistic factors, under investigation.

6.7.2.1 Definitional clarity and scope of sociolinguistic factors at the status and corpus planning stages in ESL teaching

The definitional awareness of the key construct (sociolinguistic factors), and setting the parameters of what factors to include in ESL teaching is central to the preceding discussion. I note first the apparent lack of clarity on what sociolinguistic factors entail and ambiguity on the specific sociolinguistic aspects to include in ESL teaching if teaching is to be conceptualized as the interplay of these factors in the language lesson. These discrepancies are evident across all the data strands; the document analysis data, the questionnaire, the interview, focused group discussion and observation.

The document analysis sheds light on the hazy, definitional conceptualization of sociolinguistic factors in the crafting of the policy document. Bayyurt (2014) conceptualized the policy planning stage as the status planning stage. Review of data analysis as presented in chapter 5 revealed that ESL in Zimbabwe is accorded the official language status at this stage. The official language status presumably, extols the

target language; its culture and norms above the local languages. This assumption is supported by Kachru's (1985) theorisation of the adoption of the English language in what he defines as 'the outer circle' where the adoption of English is characterised as norm developing and norm adopting so that the resulting norms are conceptualized as defining the sociolinguistic factors in the context of the present research. Such norms would include the milieu that impact ESL teaching and include the cultures of both the target and first languages.

Data supports a sociolinguistic perspective of language teaching. This is implied in many subtle ways like the reference to promoting '*Unhu/Ubuntu/Vumunhu*' among learners and the suggestions of appropriate learning materials made in the Curriculum development and Special Services (2015) curriculum document. '*Ubuntu*', in my view, includes the sociolinguistic aspects of language captured. Mede and Dikilitas (2015) also support this view through their reference to the sociolinguistic milieu, aimed at achieving sociolinguistic competence in ESL teaching.

Researchers further contend that such milieu include the society's daily lifestyle, artistic works, language, religion, and traditions as sociolinguistic factors. They argue that these factors vary according to the communication style, social values, norms, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. Similar aspects of the sociolinguistic milieu are apparently glossed over in the acknowledgement of ESL as important for personal and national development and therefore, whose teaching should incorporate 'social, political, scientific and technological experiences' in the syllabus document (Curriculum Development and Special Services, 2015:5).

The interactive role of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching is central to the present research which explores the interplay of sociolinguistic factors and ESL teaching, yet the only clarification on what they entail is through inconclusive examples. Teachers are, therefore, not so well guided in defining the sociolinguistic factors and the ways to incorporate them in their teaching, yet this is essential if teaching is to be uniform in all schools.

In interrogating the definitional clarity of sociolinguistic factors in the syllabus documents, my overall impression is that the sociolinguistic factors are closely linked to the culture and the society in which the school is situated. Without a clear definition from the Curriculum Development and Technical Services (2015:5) document, the various subtle implications and pointers of what they include and what language teaching should aim at suffice. For example, language is defined as a ‘...vehicle for communication and a tool for cultural, political, religious, social and economic development.’ The document further says that the aim of ESL teaching is to produce learners who are, ‘not only linguistically competent, but also patriotic, ethical and able to in different roles and situations.’ All these are sociolinguistic factors and their being mentioned suggests the related aspects to be involved.

All in all, I find these subtle definitions proffered at the status planning stage inconclusive and shallow as guides for the non-native teachers of ESL who are the subjects of the present study. The slack definitions also fail to fully integrate sociolinguistic norms in the language curriculum, leaving too much to the discretion of the language teachers who may not be fully informed or motivated to incorporate sociolinguistics.

Furthermore, I note striking parallels with Mede and Dikilitas’ (2015) findings on the problems that non-native teachers of English confront in the teaching of sociolinguistic competence. Researchers acknowledge lack of knowledge relating to sociolinguistic competence among non-native teachers and attribute this deficit to the teachers’ beliefs and lack of exposure to the target culture as well as the lack of motivation to teach culture. They conclude that major challenges stem from the fact that the existing curriculum fails to define and integrate culture in teaching ESL. Furthermore, the excessive reliance on individual teachers’ definitions and perceptions of the role of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching compound the problem.

Bushan (2013), as discussed in chapter 2, confirms the problematic definition of the salient features that comprise culture and sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching. He contends that the problem stems from the various definitions of culture which also change from discipline to discipline. The definitional problem, in some ways, explains the different foci and lack of uniformity in the sociolinguistic aspects taught in the ESL lessons. In the current study, this lack of uniformity could be a result of the syllabus documents' (ZIMSEC, 2014; Curriculum Development and Technical Services 2015) failure to make the critical clarifications of the concept of 'sociolinguistic factors' to guide the teachers.

Data elicited from teachers show that the teachers rely on individual discretion to decide what aspects to include in their teaching. Unfortunately, that discretion is overridden by the examination requirements which overshadow the need to identify the sociolinguistic factors in sync with the syllabus thrust earlier discussed. Furthermore, the data shows that the teachers in Zimbabwe are themselves not clear on the definition of the relevant aspects of sociolinguistics and the pedagogical issues of how to include these factors in the actual teaching.



Data from the plan books analysed and the lessons observed on the teaching registers, composition comprehension and oral work where a variety of contexts are focused. The cited contexts include the home, the school, business transactions and some such socially relevant communication events are cited. In one communication event focused on a transaction between two siblings; a brother and sister, the brother says to the sister, 'I want my food. I am hungry!' is captured. In this excerpt, the students were to comment on the suitability of this statement. In other words they had to work out what could be polite or impolite as well as the social roles and place of the female and male child in the family. Such contextualized language learning experiences offer opportunities where the learning experience allows for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors so that sociolinguistic competence is enhanced.

6.7.3. What views are held about integrating language and sociolinguistics in second language teaching?

In this section, I interrogate the views that emerged at the status, corpus and acquisition planning stages of language teaching about the integration of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching. The discussion focuses on what is explicitly spelt out as well as what the data imply. The combined data indicates teachers hold divergent views on the integration of sociolinguistic factors. They do not agree on what aspects to integrate and how to integrate them in ESL teaching. Consequently, the extent and nature of the integration of sociolinguistic factors varies from teacher to teacher. However, the general view emerging at different levels in the implementation of the ESL curriculum is that sociolinguistic factors should be incorporated in second language teaching and that the ideal is for such factors to have free play in the second language acquisition process.



6.7.3.1 Views from the status, corpus and acquisition planning levels

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At this level references are made throughout the syllabus to the learners' needs, their environment; the home the school, their experiences and those experiences that they are likely to encounter. This suggests that ESL teaching in Zimbabwe is conceptualized from the Kachruvian perspective of the outer circle. The view held is apparently that it should be sociolinguistic oriented in line with the 'norm adopting and norm developing' aspect which defines the adoption of the English language in the outer circle as detailed in Chapter 3. Notably, the data at the status planning level portrays a typical case of ESL as one brand of what **Schneider (2007)** referred to as 'Postcolonial Englishes.' Such brands of the language were said to be undergoing the process of shedding their foreignness to become indigenous languages in the context in which they were taught. In the context of the present research, the process implied the inclusion of culture and sociolinguistic factors.

Planners' seem to focus on the communicative functions of language in society to determine the syllabus content, methodologies and assessment scheme at O' level. In other words value is attached to the language functions in the society rather than the grammar and structure of the language itself. This view of language is also congruent to Hymes's (1972) 'communicative competence' teaching models which centre on the analysis of the contexts where communicative interactions take place. The context comprises of the sociocultural phenomena that prevail and is depicted through the language registers, varieties, context, pragmatic universals and modes of interaction between people.


Since these elements are suggested in the language policy which depicts the status planning level, are evident in corpus planning level as depicted by the content of the ESL curriculum and the resources used the teachers and also fairly represented in the actual teaching, also defined as the acquisition level, it can be said strong positive views are held about the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe. This also fortifies the contention that ESL teaching in Zimbabwe is largely conceptualised as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in Zimbabwe, but this view has to be taken in the context of the contradictions noted at the implementation stages later discussed.

6.7.4. To what extent are the teaching materials relevant for teaching the 'culture' of the target language?

The research sought to explore the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and ESL teaching in the teaching of English at O' level in Zimbabwe. In this section, focus is on the extent to which the materials used in the language lesson are relevant for the teaching of the culture of the target language. In this discussion, a distinction has to be made between the recommended or conceptualized materials at planning levels and the materials that find their way into the language classroom. The teaching materials in

this regard will include textbooks and other materials like comprehension passages including authentic texts and recordings which are used either for comprehension purposes or as contexts for presenting language features or skills.

In assessing the suitability of the materials, I give a comprehensive overview of all the data collected to reflect what emerges at different stages in the ESL curriculum design and implementation process. This implies the full stretch from the 'status' level through the 'corpus' to the 'acquisition' stages, defined earlier in chapter 2, citing Bayyurt's (2014) propositions on evaluating ESL teaching. In other words, I interrogate the relevance of the teaching materials recommended in line with the language policy, the actual materials put in place, and lastly the materials that find their way into the ESL classroom in the context of teaching language work, registers, composition, comprehension and oral work.



Data from the five instruments indicate the guidelines provided for the curriculum implementers on what resources (materials) to use in the ESL classroom. However, no specific sources are recommended so that individuals are left to decide on what teaching materials to use in the ESL classroom. Even then, data collected indicates that teachers mostly rely on three generic sources of teaching materials; their individual resources or past examination papers. The examination papers used are mostly ZIMSEC or other tests designed along the same format. Textbook resources are used here and there but strictly in ways that reflect the examination requirements and the examination structure.

Based on the document analysis, the general impression obtained is that the teaching materials recommended at the status planning level are well loaded with the sociolinguistic milieu that defines English for Zimbabwe; a second language accorded the official language status. Of necessity, the teaching of such a language should balance the inclusion of the local culture and that of the target language. Thus, in terms of the overall culture content the evidence available show that the materials so comply in this respect that they may be conceptualised as the tools for striking the 'Kachruvian'

ideal of 'norm developing and norm adopting' ascribed to 'the outer circle' as already discussed in chapter 2 (Kachru, 1997).

This is first evident in the common textbooks used namely:

- Dawson, D. (2006) *Structures and Skills in English Book Four*. Harare: College Press
- Grant, N.J.H and Bimha, J.M. (2002) *English for Zimbabwe* Harare: Longman
- Chinodya, S. (1999) *Step Ahead Book 4*. Harare : National Printing and Packaging

These textbooks are all local publications and, therefore, they have in common a deliberate focus on the Zimbabwean context and experiences. Notably, they all attempt to present the language (ESL) in a local (Zimbabwean) context; a context where English is adopted as the official language taught alongside a number of local languages, chief amongst them Shona and Ndebele. Teachers draw their materials for teaching comprehension, composition, language and oral skills from these textbooks alongside other resources, like authentic texts adopted from newspapers or other sources.

The resources are all suitable for teaching a diverse range of cultures, incorporating both the target and local languages. This is evidenced in the wide range of texts adopted for comprehension work which present the language in cross cultural contexts. Language lessons drawn from such contexts would probably recreate scenes and communicative events so familiar to the learner that the acquisition process echoes the natural process where sociolinguistic factors have a role. For example, Grant and Bimha (2002) aptly labels his textbook 'English for Zimbabwe'; an appropriate caption for a resource book which so structures language teaching that the learners benefit from learning experiences that strip the English language of its foreignness by teaching those aspects that are relevant to the learners communication needs.

It is apparent that the cultural content in the text-books is designed to prepare learners mostly for communication with non-native speakers. This is in line with the syllabus' goal of communicative competence skills using the target language, rather than native speaker-like competence. Communicative competence is the goal of language teaching focused on by The Curriculum Development and Technical Services (2015). Given this perspective, the document suggests learning materials and tasks that not only enable the acquisition of the target language's culture, but also take cognizance of the local culture. This defining strength in ESL teaching is achieved when, according to Eggert (2008), a language sheds off its foreignness as a way of adapting for local use. This adjustment process, when it becomes the norm in the language classroom, is the interplay of sociolinguistic factors envisaged in the present study. In the data analysed, it was evident in the adaptations made in the composition, comprehension, registers and oral language lessons observed. There was a deliberate attempt to localise teaching by focusing on relevant themes and contexts within the learners' experiences.

For example, the controlled composition questions invariably require the learners to construct various guided scripts that the learners can readily identify with. These may be an application letter, a letter to the press or a letter of complaint. In some instances, learners may be asked to produce a familiar text; a report, description of a process or some such tasks rooted in contexts that are related to the sociolinguistic environment. Like-wise, the free narrative or descriptive topics are never far-fetched; an adventure story, a description or some other narratives in which the learners' imagine or re-create familiar scenes or experiences. In all cases, learners' renditions are greatly influenced by the sociolinguistic factors in their environments.

The texts used for language work and registers further reflect this phenomenon. The teachers' choice of teaching materials is based more on their relevance to the examination rather than the density of their cultural component. However, even with this lack of a deliberate effort by the teachers, the teaching materials for registers still rank highly in terms of their relevance in teaching the culture of the target language. Data shows that registers often focus on culturally embedded aspects of language like

polite forms, making requests accepting invitations and so forth; aspects that require an understanding of cultural norms (ZIMSEC, 2015).

Materials used for oral work also support this view. This is well evidenced in the document analysis data, the questionnaire, interview focus group discussion and observation data. For example, the syllabus document proposes use of debates and drama. Such activities bring the language lesson to life through the inclusion of sociolinguistic considerations of dialogue argumentation and relationships. Likewise, the interview data reflected that teachers conduct oral lessons that explore cultural themes relevant to their different environments, a point further illustrated by the lesson observation script, where the theme was women's rights.

Data from the document analysis give insights into the 'status' and 'corpus' planning stages. Recommendations are made for a curriculum for ESL as the official language adopted with a sociolinguistic slant to suit the Zimbabwean context which echoes the reference made to culture or '*Ubuntu*' as the main objective of ESL teaching in Zimbabwe (ZIMSEC, 2014). Based on these observations the teaching materials are to a great extent relevant for the teaching and balancing of the culture of the learners and that of the target language.

6.8. To what extent does the methodology reflect the interplay between second language teaching and sociolinguistic factors?

Focusing on the methodology was central to this research since the research sought to explore the practices in ESL teaching in Zimbabwe at O' level. The entire research was premised on the assumption that the ESL teaching practices are so influenced by sociolinguistic factors that the language acquisition process can be conceptualized as the interplay of these factors and acquisition theory. Furthermore, it was assumed that communicative approaches are aptly in sync with this view. Therefore, an investigation with this thrust would essentially weigh the dominance of CLT approaches in

Zimbabwean schools. In the ensuing discussion, I focus on the methodology at the status and corpus planning stages; how it is conceptualized in the policy document and the corresponding recommendations and then at the acquisition stage; the actual teaching level.

At the status planning, as evidenced through the document analysis, a pervading presence of sociolinguistic factors as the underpinning influence behind the methodological recommendations for the ESL curriculum is noted. Notably, the syllabus document (Curriculum Development and Special Service, 2015:6) calls for the incorporation of what the planners term 'the functional-communicative, multi-sensory approaches and principles of individualization, concreteness, totality and wholeness.' These descriptions of the preferred methods in the language curriculum echo Kramsch's (1990) conception of language in its total expressive and communicative thrust, best achieved through communicative methods.



Such recommendations imply the inclusion of approaches that include sociolinguistic factors where 'concreteness,' 'totality' and 'wholeness' all add up to language in its natural use; a communicative tool, labeled as 'communicative competence', by Hedge (2001:45) who further explains that such competency entails knowing the language and using that knowledge to communicate with people in a variety of settings and situations. As earlier discussed, Hedge (2001) argues that the five currently recognised manifestations of communicative competence are 'linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence and fluency.'

The comprehensive nature of the recommended approaches seems to suggest the adoption of communicative approaches and to me this is synonymous to allowing for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the language lesson. This view is further concretised by the list of twelve activities suggested as a guide to the learning activities to be used in the language lesson. The suggested activities include, drama, role play

simulations, song poetry and dance, as discussed earlier in the data presentation section. These are activities derived from and including sociolinguistic milieu in ways that qualify for the description of the language acquisition experience as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors.

The very nature of these activities suggests a departure from linguistic theoretical frameworks concerned with language as a mental process towards methodologies aligned to sociology. As extensively discussed in chapter 3, such methods are grounded in the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theoretical framework as espoused by Halliday (1995) and Eggins (2004). The theories explain how language is used in social contexts to achieve specific communicative roles goals.

From the foregoing discussion it appears the thrust of the Zimbabwean ESL syllabus is aligned to SFL theoretical perspective in its attempt to address communicative competence. O'Donnell (2011) defines communicative competence as an aspect of second language teaching neither fixed nor so easily defined, yet. This observation relates to the present research in many ways, in the attempt to unpack the interplay of sociolinguistic factors; a construct closely linked to sociolinguistic competence which O'Donnell (2011) contends is a component of communicative competence. Furthermore, this aspect is closely related to the interplay of sociolinguistic factors focused by the present research which have already been noted as pervading all the content and methodologies recommended in the Zimbabwean ESL syllabus; a syllabus, whose focus is again similarly focused on function rather than structure in line with the SFL perspectives as further elaborated by O'Donnell (2011).

6.8.1 Views from the acquisition level perspective

The above discussion apparently suggests a commitment to communicative approaches which would allow the free interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the language lesson. The assessment of the teachers' methodological inclinations indicates

that the teachers have the right predisposition for implementing such approaches. They are all well theoretically grounded in SL acquisition theory. Based on Cook's (1991) measurement instrument, a significant percentage of the teachers are inclined towards the Functional and Communicative approaches. However, all the other methods are represented so that it can be said that no one method is completely abandoned or exclusively dominant.

Based on these observations, the next section unpacks the extent to which classroom practices in Zimbabwe project the interplay of sociolinguistic factors the teaching of ESL.

6.9 Balancing the contradictions and unpacking the perceptions OF ESL teaching as the interplay between sociolinguistic factors and ESL teaching theory.

In the preceding discussion, I focused on how the various data collected contributed to the research sub-questions. The discussion highlighted the discrepancies and contradictions in the different strands of data collected, in line with the MM research paradigm. In this section, I now interrogate how all data contribute to the full picture of what happens in the ESL classroom against the assumption that ESL teaching is best achieved through the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the ESL classroom.

The discussion explores the many constraints that inhibit the classroom activities stirring them away from the ideal language acquisition experiences typical of the first language acquisition process. Notwithstanding these challenges, and noting the lost opportunities, the discussion explores the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in teaching ESL in Zimbabwe. Focus is on how they permeate every lesson, influencing the content, methodology and outputs as well as how giving more room for the interplay could stir language learning experience in the right direction. The discussion concludes that problems and shortcomings, particularly the lack of sociolinguistic/communicative competence, observed as weaknesses among school leavers and cited as the impetus for the present research, would be reduced if the language lesson were modified to facilitate even more of the interplay of sociolinguistic factors.

These observations give the initial impression that teaching ESL in the Zimbabwean secondary school can be conceptualized in its entirety, as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors; a view that is strongly backed by Kramersch's (2014) who advocates for a total communicative thrust which can be achieved through the total inclusion of culture and sociolinguistic factors in teaching. However, the subsequent data moderate this view. It emerges that what the teachers say at first, though it is supported by their methodological inclinations, is moderated by the realities of a summative-assessment-driven curriculum focused on a two-pronged examination scheme: English Paper 1 (Composition) and English Language Paper 2 (Comprehension and Language) (ZIMSEC, 2015).

Firstly, there is the broad curriculum which requires work outputs (written work) not commensurate with the time allocated for ESL teaching. Data shows that the students have to write a composition every fortnight, a comprehension exercise every week and two language exercises per week. At the same time the teachers compete to achieve the highest percentage pass-rate, for which they are rewarded. The result is the sacrifice of the ideals of the communicative language teaching that allows for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors to develop sociolinguistic competence, for the structural approaches that support the mastery of language structures in isolation. No effort is made towards ensuring that such structures are so acquired that they can be used in real life communication.

This is in line with similar observations made elsewhere by Kramersch (2014) in reference to examination based ESL curricula. He notes that ESL teaching fails to address pressing sociolinguistic aspects of language as a direct result of practices resulting from the impositions at macro level decisions. In the face of examinations adjustments to suit the local contexts are inhibited. In the final analysis, the syllabus has to be covered in the time frames set at both the school and national levels so that little room for deviations as demanded by contextual issues is left even when such opportunities crop up in the lessons; opportunities that would otherwise, render the language lesson more as the

interplay play of sociolinguistic factors. In the foregoing discussion, I will further explore this cautioned view of the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the different ESL lessons.

6.10. Exploring the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in individual ESL lessons

In this section I discuss the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in different language lesson. The structure of the discussion is guided by the data collected through document analysis which indicated that ESL lessons are given an average of six lessons a week in Zimbabwe. (ZIMSEC, 2015) For practical purposes, the time distribution proposed in the syllabus document is that two periods (40 minutes each on average) be allocated to Composition and Comprehension work respectively, while language and Oral work each gets one period per week. In the ensuing discussion, I explore the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in each of these categories of the ESL lessons.



Before going into the discussion, it is important to note the implications of some contradictions that emerged as I analysed the five strands of data collected for the research. Notably, a distinct pattern emerged with regards to how the content for each of the lesson categories was determined and to some extent, the actual teaching/learning experiences. There seems to be a general overreliance on past examination scripts and the examination format so much that the ESL teaching experience could be defined as exam-centric.

In other words, teachers simply lift examination excerpts without necessarily considering their sociolinguistic content or relevance. Very little room is given for the use teacher constructed scripts or authentic tests recommended by Bayyurt (2013). The materials are then used as tests in cyclic rituals of testing first, then teaching based on the test and further testing. To that extent, the interplay of sociolinguistic factors appears to be of no consequence in the compilation of teaching materials and actual teaching at the acquisition level.

However, the thrust of the impending discussion is to explore the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching, notwithstanding this initial impression. This is made possible by the fact that the examinations which emerge as the most influential factor in the ESL teaching practices are strictly for Zimbabwe. It was, therefore, reasonably assumed that the considerations for sociolinguistic factors influenced the policy planners; an assumption already explored with positive results in the preceding discussion based on the document analysis data.

6.10.1. Interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the oral work lesson

In the curriculum recommendations, the oral lessons are to be given at least one period per week (ZIMSEC, 2015). Data analyzed shows that this time is commonly used for debate and rarely other tasks like reports and oral presentations on given topics. Invariably, all such lessons are learner-centered and interactive, relying mostly on what the different learners bring into the language lesson contributing to the inputs from which language is acquired. In this section, I explore a view of all the resulting transactions as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the ESL composition lesson.

From the observation data and document analysis, classroom interaction, in some ways alternatively conceptualized as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors, is the common practice. Learners are given topics and main speakers are chosen in advance. The debate topics are suggested by the learners themselves while some come from the teachers. In a sessions chaired by a student, the minutes are read and passed then the debate unfolds with the four main speakers taking the floor first before the floor is opened to all. The teacher plays a background, mostly an observer coming in only when it is absolutely necessary.

In the present research it was noted that themes for the oral lessons generally topical and related to the learners sociocultural settings. For example, the debate session observed was on the topic 'This house believes in women's liberation.' Other themes

interrogated religion (Christianity/traditional religions), cultural practices (*lobola*), arranged marriages and early marriages) and topical events drawn from the newspapers or other events. These are the contexts against which the learners draft the presentations that make up the classroom language learning experiences, which can be conceptualized from the acquisition/learning hypotheses perspective as espoused by Krashen (1985).

From Krashen's (1985) perspective, language acquisition occurs when the learner is exposed to 'comprehensible' input, which refers to language slightly (+1) above the level of the learners. What the students present in the debate, is the product of various sociolinguistic factors, including their experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values, all molded by the society around them. As the students debate, their social, economic political, linguistic background, motivation and much more of the sociolinguistic milieu that defines their different context is revealed as much in the views they hold, as in the language they use-which language qualifies as the Krashen ideal of 'comprehensible input' for the others. In line with Krashen's (1985) propositions the input is a notch above the level of the rest of the students since the students had time to prepare.

In debating, the objectives among others include, creating meaning, arguing and convincing. Sarigül and Ashton (2005) argue that, meaning is constructed differently in different sociolinguistic settings. They contend that meaning is in fact, conveyed through the inclusion of sociolinguistic aspects unique to the context of communication. Furthermore, they argue that meaning is carried not only through the message, but also the tone of voice of the speaker, gestures and body movements. They note that these cues vary considerably in different cultures. The oral lessons, therefore, contrive contexts for all these factors to come into play so that it can be said that language learning therein results from the interplay of sociolinguistic factors.

Language acquisition is, therefore, effortless and even unconscious in such a lesson. As the learners interact freely and acquire language skills in the process, the role of sociolinguistic factors is so evident that the language lesson in its entirety, can be described as an interplay the sociolinguistic factors. However, some opportunities to

allow for more of the interplay are lost through the exam-centric influences that still find their way into the lessons. This happens here and there when debate themes chosen are derived from past examination scripts so that the real issues, authentic and central to the local setting are ignored. This was evidenced by the absence of any topics extracted from current newspapers or topical events.

6.10.2. The interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching comprehension

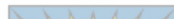
According to the curriculum document, comprehension-work is allocated two periods per week (ZIMSEC, 2015). Data examined shows that most comprehension work is drawn from past examinations and rarely from the textbooks or other sources. Passages and the accompanying questions are adopted in their original form and given as homework or tests in the 'test-teach-and-test cycle' earlier noted as the prevailing pattern in all ESL practices in Zimbabwe.

This pattern reflects a lack of imagination congruent with Taber's (2006:36) misgivings about the communicative approaches. Based on his research findings, he claims that teachers can find the communicative method so 'excessively superficial, uninspiring, and hopelessly without structure' that behind closed doors, they support their language teaching with, unconventional props. Such props include the use of practices based on intuition and expediency rather than being grounded in sound language acquisition theory. Data from the present research confirms similar trends in the Zimbabwean context where such props include various test-centric approaches.

Notably, texts are adopted mostly from past examinations and used mostly for testing. The selected texts are not screened for sociolinguistic relevance or chosen for any specific reasons serve that they are from past examinations. Rather than work out answers and negotiate meaning, drilling and rote learning focused on being aligned to the marking scheme, is the norm in the language lessons.

The lesson observed was based on a past examination passage (ZIMSEC, 2012). The lesson generally revealed. The lesson was mostly learner centred, starting off with a brief introduction of the passage and focusing on the new vocabulary that the learners would meet in the passage. Pupil to pupil interaction was therefore limited as the learners were simply given instructions to read the passage silently and answer the questions in their exercise books.

The interplay of sociolinguistic aspects of this lesson could only be evaluated in terms of the setting, subject and vocabulary content of the passage used. In terms of the lesson activities, very little could be said about the interplay of sociolinguistic factors except the assumption that in working out answers learners are definitely informed by their experiences with the language both inside and outside the classroom.



6.10.3. Interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of registers



As already noted, in the teaching of ESL at O' level in Zimbabwe, at least one period per week is dedicated to the teaching of language and registers (ZIMSEC, 2015). In this section I explore the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the registers lessons, focusing on the lesson objectives, the lesson content and the methodology. The first point noted is that the teaching of registers is predisposed for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. This is so because registers, by their very nature are socially determined. They are grounded in the context so that what applies in one situation may not apply to another.

In the ideal situation, therefore, as learners acquire registers, they draw insights from the social background to evaluate the suitability of the registers. The whole process can be conceptualised as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. The teacher ideally plays a background role, guiding the learners to recreate the contexts for the presentation, practice and production of the registers as recommended by Taber (2006) who envisages 'the three Ps' (presentation, practice and production) in CLT as the route to

second-language proficiency. The ensuing discussion shows how there are limitations at each of the three stages and relates all this to the interplay or lack of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching.

Data analysis, however, shows contradictions in what actually transpires in the ESL classroom and the ideal. In a way, the Jenkins (2006:158), as discussed in chapter 2 where the language (ESL) is taught and learnt in relation to the realities of its current spread, is not met. The current spread would entail the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. Instead, the learners are typically asked to write the entire test section on registers adopted from past O' level examinations. Results are then revised against a rigid marking scheme before yet another test is given. The structure of the items is invariably as follows:

1. Providing words to describe manner/character attitude

Learners may be given some statements and then asked to define the manner, character or attitudes depicted by different utterances or behaviours. Learners have to come up with the right word.

2. Matching

As an alternative, learners are given the statements or reactions and a list of the possible evaluations and they are asked to match the two sets.

3. Either or options

In some items, learners could be given 'either or' options where they have to tick, for example whether an utterance is polite or impolite. The activities in the language lessons were almost uniform. The lessons invariably started off with introductory remarks and brief discussions, followed by writing and then revision. Classroom interactions were generally so limited that, on the surface, the assumed interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching was not apparent. In other words, ESL teaching appeared to be a ritual test-teach-and-test cyclic process focused on the summative

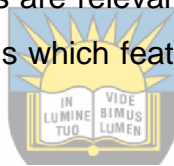
assessment scheme. This observation is supported by Mareva and Nyota (2011) as earlier explained and referenced.

When teaching and testing is the norm, the interplay of sociolinguistic factors is restricted. The interplay is only in the mental processes through which the test items are selected and how the right answers are arrived at. It is apparent that the lesson objectives mostly concern the identification and descriptions of language structures rather than how to construct or use them in communicative events in line with CLT principles. Mareva and Nyota (2011) noted the same prevalence of structural approaches rather than communicative approaches in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe.

The researchers further concluded that the common ESL teaching approaches in Zimbabwe to be lifeless and inclined towards the Structural Approaches, despite the fact that the ZIMSEC O' Level English Syllabus (1122) (2015) clearly recommends communicative approaches. The imagination and originality that would otherwise, breathe life into the ESL classroom is completely lacking in the routine of writing and revision that seems to be the norm.

In the face of these observations, the teaching of registers is reflective of the role of sociolinguistic factors only to the extent that the contexts of the register-items taught are extracted from the learners' experiences in and outside the school. However, the methods used generally fall short the description of the language acquisition experience as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors, as investigated. If anything, the practices tell a tale of missed chances to contrive real life situations for presenting the language in keeping with CLT ideals which, according to Raine (2009), links language to what happens beyond the school. In support of this, Richard and Rodgers' (2001) refer to the use of authentic and semi authentic texts, which the data analysis shows to be glaringly missing in the ESL teaching.

For example, learners never get to practise different utterances or constructing appropriate registers. They are apparently taught about the language registers rather than the registers themselves. In other words, they learn to identify or describe appropriate registers without any guarantee that they can actually use them in real life contexts. These emerging practices refute the initial data in the written questionnaire responses which gave the impression that respondents are committed to CLT approaches. As the respondents refocus and moderate their views in the interviews and focused group discussion, it emerges that examination, rather than the sociolinguistic factors, controls all teaching. These moderated views are further confirmed by the observation data which gives the apparent reality of the restricted nature of the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the ESL lesson. The interplay reigns only to the extent that the registers are relevant to the learners' context courtesy of the exaggerated focus on examinations which features prominently throughout the ongoing discussion.



6.10.4. Teaching composition

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In analysing the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the composition lesson, two angles have to be considered; the various factors that influenced the choice of a particular theme on the one hand, and their interplay in the classroom activities on the other side. The former depicts how sociolinguistic factors' interplay contributes to the content at the corpus planning stage whereas, the latter focuses on the interplay at the acquisition stage in the ESL classroom. Either way, themes that in some way, recreate the intricate realities around the students; a reality of relationships, events, feelings beliefs, values and all that makes up society and is re-created through language. The contexts in which the language is used in turn, affect the language.

The composition themes noted in the data collected reflected two distinct patterns. On one hand some topics depicted real-life experiences or situations, while others stretched the learners' imagination. For example, composition tasks included topics like,

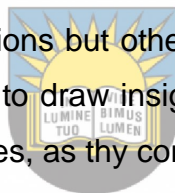
'If I were a dog,'

'Life in space,'

'A day in the life of a motor car'

and 'If I were a tree,' among others.

In the other category, topics like 'a story with an ending 'I had never realised that I was capable of such a brave feat'. These observations support the conclusions drawn by Mareva and Nyota (2014) that in the Zimbabwean ESL teaching context, composition topics mostly reflect real life situations but others do not. In all the cases, however, the learners are apparently, expected to draw insights from their different settings; insights relating to cultural beliefs and values, as they come up with appropriate narratives.



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Data analysed also revealed two distinct patterns in how the ESL composition lessons are conducted. Some lessons lesson objectives tended to be mostly structural, while others were test centric. In the former, the teachers played various like defining and explaining pertinent components of the composition like the topic sentence, the paragraph, introduction body and the conclusion. Mareva and Nyota's (2014) confirm the prevalence of such teaching practices in the Zimbabwean secondary schools, where they argue, composition work objectives lesson objective remain largely structural. The trend that dominated was the test-teach-and-test phenomenon, earlier defined as test-centric, where teachers relied mostly on past examination papers and the use of alternative materials was an exception.

From these observations, composition-work in the ESL classroom, gives the learners a chance to explore the language freely as they engage different topics. In their narrative

the learners bring in societal events; a wedding, a death in the family, perhaps-contexts in which particular genres and registers apply. This echoes the 'contexts of situation,' in the Halliday tradition and the related facets of SFL and sociolinguistic theory, notably the interrelationship between the language and the society. Angels (2005) equates this kind of interplay with the fundamentals of sociolinguistics; how the language affects the society and how the society affects. All this confirms the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the composition lesson. However, it has to be noted that a lot more could be done were it not for the exaggerated focus on examinations.

6.11. Conclusion

This chapter started off with a brief discussion of the findings based on each of the five research instruments adopted in the research namely: the document analysis, the questionnaire, interview, focused group discussion and observation. Data was first, separately analysed before comparing them to come up with a balanced view of how they addressed each of the five research question, thus unpacking the conceptualisation of ESL teaching as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors.

Data pointed to a persisted manifestation of the interplay of sociolinguistic factors throughout the ESL curriculum implementation stages. The discussion further supported that the view of ESL teaching as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors is the ideal, recommended by the school syllabus, valued by the teachers and generally in sync with the teachers' pedagogical pre-dispositions. However, the results showed that the actual content and practices in the ESL classroom were drawn from the past O' level examinations, making them (examinations) the single most powerful determiner of what happens in the ESL classroom. Therefore, the said sociolinguistic factors' interplay is cautioned so that the view of language teaching as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors cannot be taken in its entirety.

Consequently, the conclusion drawn is that was that all ESL teaching in Zimbabwe is exam-centric and a high pass rate is the major goal at any cost. Even then, the objectives, the content, classroom activities and assessment objectives seem to have been drawn from the learners' sociolinguistic environment so that language acquisition process is to some extent, still conceptualized as the interaction of such factors and second language acquisition theory. In chapter 7, I present the summary, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.



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Chapter 7: Summary, conclusions and recommendations

7.1. Introduction

The research explored the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL in the Zimbabwean secondary schools. Starting off with the research background, in chapter 1, I outlined the observed lack of sociolinguistic competence among O level graduates that prompted the present study. This served to contextualise the problem within the current discourse of research into the inclusion of sociolinguistics in ESL teaching. The discussion also clarified the constructs under investigation, defined the objectives of the study, its limitations and delimitations as well as its relevance and contribution to the body of knowledge.

Chapter 2 then focused on conceptually related local and foreign literature. The literature review shaped the methodology adopted for the study as discussed in chapter 3 and also outlined the theoretical framework within which the entire research was premised. This was extensively discussed in chapter 4, after which data collected was presented in chapter 5. Data was then discussed and analysed in chapter 6.

Discussion in chapter 6 compared the five strands of data collected through the document analysis, questionnaire, interview, and focused group discussion and observation procedures, respectively. Data was analysed against the four research sub-questions, noting the emerging contradictions and congruency in the different strands of data so that a case was developed on the nature and prevalence of the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the ESL lesson in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe at O' level.

Based on the findings, in the present chapter, I wind up the research with a summary, conclusion and recommendations. The chapter confirms that the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe can be conceptualized as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors, but only to a limited extent. I contend that more of the interplay would be the ideal for a language curriculum (ESL) that strives for the goal of communicative, rather than grammatical competence. Furthermore, I provide recommendations for future research to improve ESL teaching practices and propose a model that reconceptualises ESL and the inclusion of sociolinguistics.

7.2. Summary of the literature reviewed

The present research was grounded in sociolinguistics, focusing mainly on the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching in Zimbabwe. Literature reviewed focused on various research-work on the integration of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching, including Kachrus' (1985) founding theorisation of the spread of English on the globe as proposed in his cyclic model, Schneider's (2007) Dynamic model and various other research-work on the teaching of ESL. Chief among these were, Kramsch (2015), Bayyurt (2013), Mede and Dikilitas (2014); Mareva and Nyota (2011).

The literature review served to extract the pertinent definitions and delimit the construct under investigation (sociolinguistic factors). Furthermore, it explored what is currently known concerning the role and inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching. The literature review also exposed the grey areas and defined the thrust of the present future research. In this chapter, I summarise the literature review so that the place of the present research in the body of knowledge on the role of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL is asserted.

As a background to the study, the literature review focused on the contentions around teaching of the English language in relation to Kachru's (1985) theorization on the current spread of the English language across the globe (Kachru, 1985). In particular, parallels were drawn against the 'World Englishes paradigm' notably Jenkins' (2006) contributions to the 'World Englishes' debate to reach the conclusion that different 'Englishes' had emerged across the globe. In that context, 'Zimbabwe English' as investigated in my study, was pitted against other world 'Englishes.'

The review also noted the congruencies with the controversies made by Kachru (2005) on the global spread of English which informed my assumption that Zimbabwe was contextualised in the outer circle which according to Kachru (2005) ESL adoption allows for the adoption and development of norms. This background was relevant to my research which focused on the integration of sociolinguistic factors which I considered synonymous or inclusive of the norms referred to.

To lay the theoretical foundation, I then reviewed literature on SFL. Thereafter, the review focused on local and foreign based contemporary research-work thematically related to the conceptualization of ESL teaching as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. The research work reviewed included Taber (2006), Kramsch (2015), Mede and Dikilitas, (2014) Mareva and Nyota, (2014). These researchers all focused on the inclusion of sociolinguistics factors in SL teaching.

In the process, several points of convergence and divergence invaluable to the present and future research endeavours emerged. Notably, the researchers generally concurred that the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors was essential for the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence. Furthermore, they all identified the CLT approaches as the contemporary thrust in ESL teaching as the most suitable approaches for a language curriculum designed to meet the three distinct but related competencies defined by Canale (1986) as grammatical competence (correctness), sociolinguistic competence (appropriacy) and strategic competency (effectiveness).

The researchers, however, agreed that CLT was an elusive construct to define, suffice to say, it represented a way of thinking; a synergy of various language teaching methodologies also referred to as Natural Approaches, according to Taber (2006). Approaches were characterised by the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors, and their thrust to achieve communicative competence whose five recognised manifestations, according to Hedge (2001) were linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence and fluency.

The literature review also revealed that there were many contentions regarding the sociolinguistic factors to include in the teaching of ESL as well as the nature of the

inclusion of such factors. To that effect, two diverging views emerged, one arguing for the full inclusion and the other extreme arguing for non-inclusion. The former view was based on the conceptualisation of ESL as an adopted language; a full package inclusive of its native speakers' culture and norms. In that context, the native speaker was assumed to have full proprietary rights and ESL teaching aimed at native speaker-like competence where the native speaker is defined in terms of the Kachru (2005) Concentric Circles of English as outlined in chapter 2.

On the other hand, the latter position was backed by the world 'Englishes' paradigm where the foreign language was adapted for local use. This meant that the target language would lose its foreignness by adopting the local culture and norms. In that context the aim of teaching ESL was communicative competence. The reviewed research-work in support of this position, notably, Canagarajah (2006) viewed English as an international language for which no culture has exclusive rights. Furthermore, Canagarajah (ibid) noted that many related studies supported the development of new norms to facilitate communication in different contexts. However, these research endeavors failed to exhaust the discussion on the ways that local values and identities could be negotiated to promote communicative competence.

The present research was influenced by the focus on contemporary research on related controversies that emerge from the literature review around the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL. The research presents a case for developing paradigms based on heterogeneity in applied linguistics to accommodate diversity in communication. In doing so I conceptualised ESL teaching as the interplay of the entire milieu of sociolinguistic factors inclusive of the local and foreign culture and norms. This position was based on the criticisms by Sing et al. (1995) as supported by Seidlhofer (2012). The researchers noted that premising decisions on the inclusion of culture in Language teaching on the arbitrary distinction and categorisation of all nations on the globe as users of the English language in one way or another, as proposed by Kachru (2005), was problematic. As extensively discussed in chapter 2, the researchers argued that Standard English and norms was difficult to define since the precise

definitions of the terms 'native speaker' (NS) and 'non-native speaker' (NNS) still remain elusive.

In conclusion, the literature review asserted that the research came at a time when current studies showed the lack of uniformity in the teacher practices. Furthermore, teachers in practice showed inadequate knowledge of sociolinguistics, which was also loosely defined in the policy documents and which documents also gave no motivation for the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching by the teachers. It was also evident from the review that the present research would break fairly new ground and that it would give invaluable insights for ESL teachers and future research. In the section below, I summarise the findings of my research under different themes.

7.3. Summary of the findings of the present research

The present research was grounded in sociolinguistics, focusing mainly on the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching in Zimbabwe. Its thrust was to evaluate how sociolinguistics is integrated in the teaching of English language (ESL) in Zimbabwe. The aim of the study was to come up with recommendations for best practices in ESL teaching. This was considered necessary because of the shortfalls of the present ESL curriculum as observed by the researcher and also supported by some researchers as discussed extensively in the literature review.

Notably Mareva and Nyota (2014), as cited in chapter 2, observed the lack of sociolinguistic competence among the outputs of the present curriculum, the O' level students. In line with this, the present research had also observed that secondary school graduates, despite their good grades in English Language, still lacked the sociolinguistic competence that enables them to communicate effectively in the target language in different situations. There were also, cross-linguistic interferences which made effective communication in the target language difficult for most learners, an observation also confirmed by researchers like Mareva and Nyota (2014). Against this background, the findings summarised in the sections below, emerged.

7.3.1. The place of sociolinguistics

The research established that sociolinguistics has an invaluable role in ESL teaching. In fact, it was the ideal, based on which the conceptualisation of ESL teaching as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors was premised. The inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching was a rallying point for both the teachers and the policy designers. The teachers were predisposed for this through their training. The teachers' inclination towards communicative approaches was confirmed by the results of Cook's (2016) instrument presented in chapter 5. The results revealed that the communicative approaches and the structural approaches were the most preferred methods. Such a methodological inclination is in line with the language policy recommendations for the language curriculum to include sociolinguistic factors. The inclination of CLT approaches to accommodate sociolinguistic factors was extensively discussed in chapter 3. The research also showed that the syllabus provision also supported the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors through language learning objectives which extolled the promotion of cultural values, and recommended the use of communicative approaches in teaching of the target language. Furthermore, the syllabus suggested language activities whose execution amounted to the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. Thus, it can be said that the research affirmed the relevance of sociolinguistic factors many ways that justify the conception of ESL teaching as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. The research, however, also noted the limitations and controversies around this view of language teaching. Notably, there were disagreements on whether to include sociolinguistic factors on the one hand and what aspects of sociolinguistics to include in ESL teaching, if at all. This was extensively discusses in chapter 2, citing researchers like MacKay (2003 who argued that language and culture were inseparable. It was however noted that the exaggerated interference of the examinations and the impositions of the school curriculum mitigated against the inclusion of sociolinguistic factor as discussed in the preceding discussion.

7.3.2. Influence of the school curriculum and the examinations

Notwithstanding the concurrence on the role of sociolinguistic factors noted above, the research established that the interplay of sociolinguistic factors was not absolute in the classroom setting. The interplay was restricted first by the demands of an overloaded school curriculum then, by the exam-centric nature of the English syllabus. The time

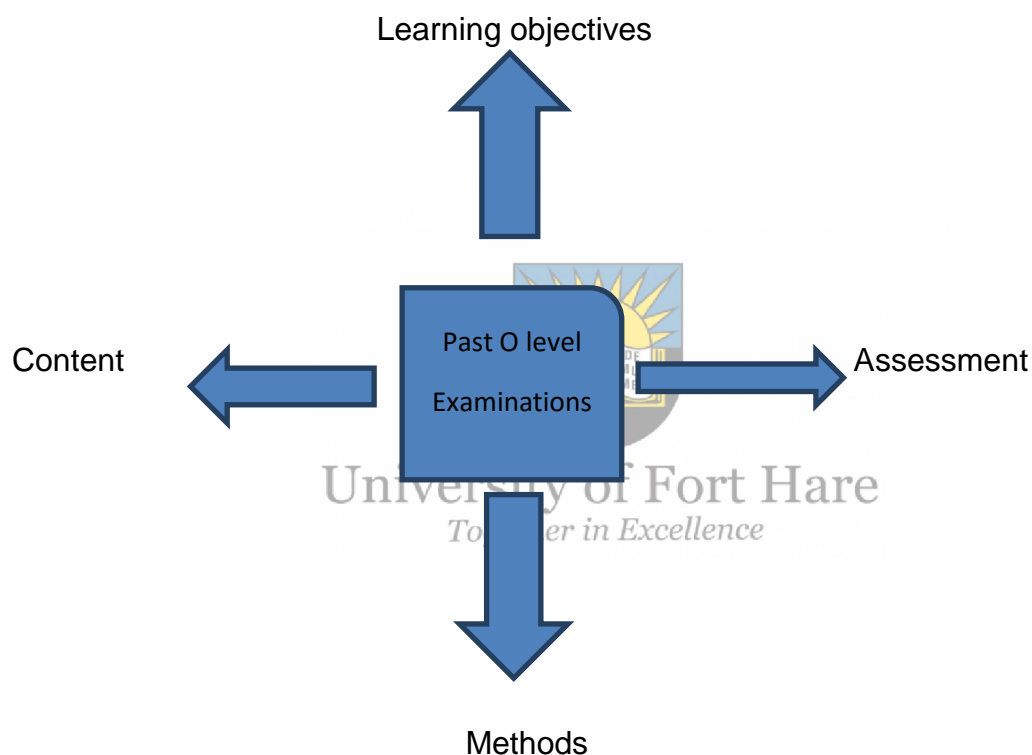
allocation for ESL was only six periods per week and output of written work expected demanded that activities be centred on written work, leaving very little room for activities associated with the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. Since the assessment scheme comprised of two papers with particular foci and structure, the teachers found it prudent to be guided by the examination requirements. As discussed in chapter 5, the teaching tended to be examination centred so that no effort was made to incorporate sociolinguistic factors. There were however spaced incident where teachers incidentally focused on cultural aspect of language but such incidents were spaced.-

The research established that teachers succumbed to the demands of the curriculum by trying to fit in as much written work as possible to meet the stipulated requirement so that little room was allowed for the free-play of sociolinguistic factors as the path-way to language acquisition. It was established that the school curriculum was derived from past O level examinations, so that all teaching was essentially exam-centric in the third and fourth years of secondary education. In other words the teachers adopted a test-teach-and-test cycle in their language lesson.

Teachers used past examination papers as their only source of teaching material. This approach restricted the student-to-student interaction, the interactive use of the language, the use of authentic texts as well as the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors outside those within the adopted tests. The influence of tests on ESL teaching was extensively discussed in chapter 2 citing Mareva and Nyota (2014) who concluded that ESL in Zimbabwe was becoming so test-centric that it was the dull and unimaginative.

Figure 5, below illustrates the exam-centric nature of teaching ESL in Zimbabwe that emerged from the research.

Figure x: The Influence of examinations on the school curriculum



In essence, the diagram shows that all teaching is centred on past O' level examinations. It was from the past examinations that the content, learning objectives and methods which made up the ESL teaching experiences were derived. All these factors would interact in a way that would ensure a high pass-rate; a situation already observed to allow for unconventional practices like mini-grammar lessons, earlier in this chapter. However, even within these restrictions of the syllabus demands and the tests, the research concluded that teaching still exhibited the interplay of sociolinguistic factors

in a way that shows many missed opportunities suggested that a lot more could be done to meet the ideal. From the above findings, I now present a summary of the conclusions that I drew in the section below.

7.4. Conclusions

In this section, I present invaluable conclusions that were drawn after exploring interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe at O' level. The conclusions were based on the data presented in chapter 5 and analyzed in chapter 6, as summarized in the section above. I categorised, conclusions under different subheadings and themes to facilitate easier access by the relevant stakeholders for whom recommendations were made in the last section of this chapter. This structure also helped to show the build-up to the final position arrived at in conceptualizing ESL teaching as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors.

7.4.1. Conclusions on the national O level school syllabus

As already noted in the data presentation and analysis, the O' level syllabus comes as a package covering the aims and objectives, suggestions for the content methodology and assessment schemes. In this section, I present the conclusions made against the syllabus provisions in the context of the research whose focus was to explore the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL. The conclusions are drawn against the different sections of the syllabus document.

7.4.1.1 Aims and objectives

The conclusion reached was that the syllabus provisions were generally influenced by sociolinguistic considerations, where the language was viewed as a communicative tool adopted to serve the needs of a society within a given culture and specific contexts. The aims and objectives focused on sociolinguistic competence in the context of culture, defined as '*Ubuntu*' so that the impression that language and culture were inseparable

came out so strongly that it can also be concluded that the interplay of sociolinguistic factors was the ideal in language teaching.

The sociolinguistic factors relevant to ESL teaching were defined and extensively discussed in chapter 2. The thrust of language teaching towards aims that focus on the local culture and setting enshrined in the notion of 'Ubuntu' were derived from the discussion. Notably, they were related to the culture and the norms implied in Kachru's (1985) model which conceptualised English language in the outer circle as norm developing and norm adopting. The inclusion of culture was also supported by Schneider's Dynamic Model, discussed extensively in the same chapter. The model proposed the notion of 'Post-Colonial Englishes' and the need to set appropriate language teaching objectives. (Schneider, 2007:251). As Schneider (ibid) contended the model illustrated how 'the foreign language, English, sheds off its foreignness to become an indigenous language' in the area in which it is taught.



In the present research, I however, concluded that the syllabus document fell short of coming up with the finer details that would guide teachers towards this goal and standardize the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in all schools. This was because the syllabus document was not explicit in spelling out the relevant sociolinguistic aspects to be included. As a result there was no balance between the roles of the local and foreign culture so that a lot was left to the individual teachers' discretion in deciding what exactly to aim for in the teaching of ESL.

7.4.1.2. The Syllabus' sociolinguistic content

The syllabus documents ZIMSEC (2015) and The Curriculum Development and Special Services (2015) were extensively analyzed in chapter 5. From the data that emerged, it was concluded that the syllabi made provisions for the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors. The attempt to furnish teachers on what aspects to include and how to include them, gave the impression of a culture-based language curriculum.

The suggested curriculum focused on promoting cultural values and identity through the inclusion of culture and sociolinguistics. Furthermore, it was concluded that the suggested interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe reflected to some extent, the norm adopting and norm developing liberties which, according to Kachru (1985), characterised the adoption of ESL in the outer circle, where Zimbabwe was considered to be situated.

The process of transforming a language curriculum so that it adopts the local culture and norms was paralleled to the 'world Englishes' paradigm where a foreign language loses its foreignness and is adapted to the local context. It can therefore be concluded that the Zimbabwean ESL syllabus asserts the position of ESL as an adopted communication tool along the lines of Concentric Circles of the adoption of the English language across the globe as proposed by Kuchru's (1985) The details of Kachru's (1985) model are discussed in chapter 2 and in the summary of the findings of the present research. It was concluded that the Zimbabwean curriculum is open for the inclusion of the local, foreign and other cultures that make up the context of language teaching in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, it was noted that all these factors contribute meaning in the various contexts in which the target language is used.

It was also concluded that the teaching of registers was designed to offer opportunities for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in constructing contexts in which meaning is construed. However, the opportunities for such interplay were sacrificed for the attainment of the goal to maximise the pass-rate, so that the conception of teaching ESL as entirely the interplay of sociolinguistic factors was cautioned.

7.4.1.3. Methodology

From the data collected it can be concluded that ESL teaching should strengthen the thrust towards CLT approaches. This position builds up from the syllabus document (ZIMSEC, 2015) which made recommendations for methodologies inclined towards CLT approaches. This was done through suggestions of classroom activities like debating, drama and role play that allow for interactive learning and maximum learner participation (ZIMSEC, 2015). These suggestions created the impression of language acquisition

processes where learners interacted with various sociolinguistic factors and in the process, acquire the language. Thus, it can be concluded that the syllabus conceptualized the teaching of ESL as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors as the ideal, best achieved through the CLT approaches recommended. The confirmation of CLT approaches as the way forward in the teaching of ESL is supported by several researchers stretching back to 1982, as extensively discussed in chapter 1 and 3.

Amongst the research-work reviewed, Loveday (1982) noted the restricted understanding of communicative/sociolinguistic competence and consequently called for further research in that area. Furthermore, Peirce (1995) interrogated the role of social identity, while Lantolf (2000) focused on sociocultural theory and Pennycook (2001) explored critical ideology studies. All these researchers advocated for the assimilation of the sociolinguistic dimensions of language embedded in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approaches. The thrust towards CLT was aptly summed up by Norton and Toohey (2011) who recommended that language teaching should encompass all the sociolinguistic phenomena in the communicative event.

From the literature review, however, it can also be concluded that a lot more still has to be done, in light of the contentions around the inclusion of culture and other sociolinguistic factors in CLT approaches. Kramsch (2014) supported this view in his suggestion that the tension with regards to what is taught and what is needed in the real world outside the classroom is at its highest today. I, therefore, further conclude that the ESL teacher is the change agent who will significantly contribute to the way forward in the teaching of ESL. This position is supported by the fact that the syllabus document left a lot for the teachers' individual discretion. In other words, the teachers ultimately, had to identify the sociolinguistic factors and how to incorporate them in their teaching, each according to her capacity, so that the practices varied from teacher to teacher.

7.4.1.4. The O' level assessment scheme

From the data collected it was concluded that the O' level examinations were the most powerful influence of all aspects of the teaching of ESL. The ESL aims and objectives, the content and methodology were all focused on making the grade in the examination and not the language use outside the classroom. It was further concluded that the exaggerated focus on the examination undermined all the other considerations that would otherwise render ESL teaching mostly the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. However, the influences of sociolinguistic factors on teaching ESL were still evident across all aspects of the implementation of the ESL curriculum, including the assessment schemes.

From the analysis of past examination scripts, it was concluded that the assessment schemes significantly reflected the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the construction of different items in both Paper 1 and Paper 2. For example, the themes and topics for composition and comprehension work were all, extracted from contexts relevant to the Zimbabwean learners' sociolinguistic environments. The register items also focused on communicative events that the learners were likely to encounter in the home the school, the home and other relevant social settings. It was concluded that effective responses to these different items would necessitate the interplay of sociolinguistic factors mentally, and that preparing the learners for the examination would equally demand an understanding of sociolinguistic aspects of language learning.

Such influences were however, only evident to the extent that the examinations, against which all the experiences were constructed, had taken cognizance of the sociolinguistic factors, in the first place. Furthermore, the syllabus document failed to craft an assessment scheme that would reinforce allowances for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the language lesson. In the final analysis it can be concluded that though the syllabus implicitly idealized the interplay of sociolinguistic, its exam-centric nature was self-defeating in that the examinations failed to reinforce the focus on communicative competence which was to be achieved through the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in teaching and the adoption of communicative approaches.

Finally, it can be concluded that teaching in Zimbabwe is mostly test-centric. The inclinations towards it being the interplay of sociolinguistic factors can only be assessed in terms of the content of the examinations: whether they include sociolinguistic factors. In other words, it all amounts to an evaluation of the extent to which the examinations are influenced by sociolinguistic factors in the first place. If anything, the assessment scheme turned out to be the major hindrance for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in teaching ESL.

Teachers tended to focus on the assessment scheme independently at the expense of everything else. As already noted, the past examinations informed all teaching; from the aims and objectives, content and methodology, so that the conception of teaching ESL could not be wholly described as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. Rather, I concluded that the reality of the ESL classroom reflected the imposition of an external examination board on an otherwise relevant curriculum in a way that reduced its potential to widen its sociolinguistic component.

Nevertheless, the test items in the assessment schemes were generally drawn from the learners' environment and experiences. It could be said that language teaching was appropriately contextualized for the Zimbabwean learner. Furthermore, arriving at the right responses in answering test items particularly for the registers was aided by the analysis of the sociolinguistic considerations implied by the context. In that way, language teaching allowed for the interplay of such factors.

7.4.2. Conclusions on the ESL classroom reality

In this section, I draw conclusions on the realities of the ESL classroom in Zimbabwe based on the findings and discussion presented earlier in the present chapter. I make a final stand with regards to the conceptualization of the teaching of ESL as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors as investigated in the present research. I contend that the findings generally confirmed that sociolinguistic factors are integral to the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe and that their full inclusion is the ideal.

This position confirms the influence of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL but cautions that the conceptualisation of ESL as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in its entirety is the ideal. It can be concluded that the CLT approaches discussed in chapter 1, all strive for this ideal, but it is yet to be realised in the Zimbabwean context. Nevertheless, some aspects of the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe echo this ideal by allowing for some form of the interplay. However, the research highlighted the many missed opportunities for improvement, courtesy of the impositions of outside influences. Notably, the examinations and the congested school curriculum force the teachers to ignore the sociolinguistic considerations that would make teaching ESL more meaningful and relevant. In the ensuing discussion, I give the conclusions that built up to this final position.

The first conclusion drawn, therefore, is that behind the classroom doors, teachers resort to unconventional methods, be they mini grammar lessons, drilling or any other ways of arriving at correct responses without any consideration of the learners' individual sociolinguistic predicaments and communicative needs in the outside world. It can further be concluded that the teaching of ESL failed to incorporate sociolinguistic factors adequately and fell short of the description 'the interplay of sociolinguistic factors.'

The failure of the classroom interactions to meet the ideal was attributed to various related factors. There was on the one hand, the loosely worded reference to sociolinguistic considerations and the teachers' failure to adequately translate the policy to practical implementation. Furthermore, the other weaknesses related to the non-native teachers' lack of sociolinguistic knowledge, attitudes towards the target language. Teachers also lacked the motivation to teach culture the culture of both the native and the target language since examination success was possible without such knowledge.

The above conclusions were all based on the initial data obtained through document analysis and the written questionnaire responses. However, subsequent data moderated the conception of ESL teaching as wholly the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. It emerged that the actual ESL practices significantly fell short of the ideal by failing to include sociolinguistic factors. For example, the teaching mostly focused on past

examinations. This meant that choice of comprehension passages, composition topic, and contexts for the presentation of language items was not influenced by the sociolinguistic components of the scripts. What mattered most was the likelihood of similar test items featuring in the examination for which the learners were being prepared for.

Regarding the role and inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching, it can also be concluded that there is no uniformity with regards to the range, description and intensity of their interplay in ESL teaching in Zimbabwe. Lack of clarity on sociolinguistic factors in the national curriculum document can also be said to be a contributing factor to the restricted allowance for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching. For example, elements of 'patriotism' and being 'ethical' which are singled out in the Curriculum Development and Technical Services (2015:6) are neither mentioned in any of the teacher documents analyzed nor acknowledged as the key guidelines in ESL teaching.

It can be concluded that the interplay of sociolinguistic factors has a significant role in ESL teaching in Zimbabwe. This is supported from a theoretical point of view by the initial findings based on the document analysis and the questionnaire data which elicited information on the respondents' views. From the data collected it can be concluded that the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in teaching ESL is the conceptualized ideal. This approach is synonymous with CLT approaches congruent with the recommendations made by the Zimbabwean ESL curriculum document, ZMSEC (2015) for the teaching of ESL, as discussed in chapter 6. The curriculum recommended approaches intended to make language more functional and purposeful by focusing on language structures and examples related to the learners' context. (ZIMSEC, 2015) The methodological implications of such approaches, notably the inclination towards CLT were extensively discussed in chapter 6. Notably the discussion concurred on the need to come up with tasks that that would allow the learners to use language that is socio-culturally meaningful to them. Furthermore, the discussion cited Richards and Rodgers (2001:172) definition of CLT as 'a set of diverse principles that that reflect a communicative view of language and language learning.'

The actual practices in teaching, however, fell short of this ideal. The research however concludes that this is despite the fact that this approach is preferred by the Zimbabwean national syllabus and that the teachers are well equipped to execute the approach. I conclude that teachers are predisposed to the use of these approaches. This is probably because of the quality of teacher training programs in Zimbabwe.

Looking at the actual practices, it can be concluded that the reality of ESL teaching is far from the conceptualized ideal of a classroom environment where the free play of sociolinguistic factors reigns; an environment which simulates the natural environment for language acquisition. On the contrary, the conclusion reached is that the exam-centric nature of the ESL school curriculum has pushed the teachers to a point of desperation. The teachers are so determined to achieve the highest pass-rate that they will do anything short of cheating, to achieve this goal. Citing Taber's (2006) observations in a parallel context of ESL teaching in Zimbabwe, Mareva and Nyota (2014) described such teaching as excessively superficial, uninspiring. In view of the observed unconventional practices that emerged, it can be concluded that behind closed doors teachers will use all sorts of props, including rote learning, spotting and anything that will give their students an advantage in the examination whether it be mini grammar lessons or memorising patterns in the examination format.

In other words, the classroom experiences restrict the interplay of sociolinguistic factors to a bare minimum by focusing on the examination and drawing both the goals and teaching activities from the nature of the examinations. Teaching of ESL at O' level in Zimbabwe can be described as artificial, dull and uninspiring. It can be concluded that the impositions of external forces in the form of the summative ZIMSEC assessment scheme and the exaggerated demands of the school curriculum, destroy the teachers' zeal and initiative. In other words, teachers theoretically grounded inclinations towards the contemporary preference for CLT approaches which favor the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the ESL lesson is muffled.

Therefore, it can be further concluded that, contrary to the initial impression and the desired ideal, the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the language lesson is low. The interplay stretches only to the extent that such factors were considered in the setting of the past examination papers used which are used in the 'teach-test-and-each' rituals that the language lessons have turned to be. In the final analysis, it can be concluded that very little room is given to the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the actual teaching of English at O' level in Zimbabwe.

It can be concluded that the syllabus offers many opportunities for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the ESL lesson, but such opportunities are often lost or ignored in pursuit of the more practical objective of making the grade. It can in fact, be concluded that language lessons were generally dry and lifeless because authentic texts and real lifelike situations are rarely used. For example, in the lessons on registers, teachers did not have time to contrive real life situations to illustrate the use of particular registers in line with the recommendations of the CLT approaches. Instead, learners were merely asked how they would react to situations or to match given situations to appropriate responses. All this did not constitute real communication and authentic language use emerging from the interplay of sociolinguistic factors. Furthermore, in some instances the learners were asked to define manner, character, attitude and reaction or come up with words to describe someone's manner, character, attitude and reaction to given situations.

The limitations of such approaches were explored in the data analysis in chapter 6 where it was noted that sociolinguistic competence demanded more than just being able to define, identify or classify particular structures as required by the examination questions. According to Angels, (2005), sociolinguistic competence was concerned with higher thinking competences that require the learners to demonstrate language use outside the classroom and managing information in the target language. These competences are congruent with some of the aims of CLT.

Such practices go against the grain of the ZIMSEC O' Level English Syllabus' (2015:7) recommendations that 'Role play is an ideal way to teach register. Pupils must be given

practice speaking in a variety of situations.’ Therefore, it can be concluded that while the syllabus may be clear in some of its recommendations the same syllabus’ assessment scheme is self-defeating in that it does not test the same skills in a way that complements its methodological recommendations.

7.4.3. Conclusions on methodology and the non-native teachers’ predicament

One major conclusion drawn from this research is that ESL teaching in Zimbabwe generally reflects shortcomings in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe. Some of the weaknesses relate to the problems associated with non-native ESL teachers with regards to the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors. As earlier confirmed by Bayyurt, and Akcan (2015) (2015) and extensively discussed in chapter 2, non-native teachers generally lack knowledge about sociolinguistic competence and are uncomfortable with the integration of this particular strategy. His tendency was evident in the lack focus on such factors and the marked focus on language structures and texts extracted from examination scripts rather than authentic texts. Moreover, the research showed that teachers faced difficulties in the integration process itself when the need arose. As discussed in chapter 5, they resorted to unconventional methods like drilling and rote learning to ensure that their students passed. In a way it can be concluded that teachers conveniently avoid emphasizing on the development of sociolinguistic competence in the learners since such competence is not adequately focused on in the assessment schemes.

These conclusions are supported by Asadia and Gholamib (2014) who focus on textbook-based EFL classroom which I equate to what I concluded to be examination-based teaching observed in the present research. The former concluded that the classes they observed offered limited opportunities for meaning-based interaction and the incorporation of sociolinguistic considerations. In other words the opportunities for the communicative negotiation of ideas were generally limited in length and scope. The

same conclusions apply to the present research in which I noted the missed opportunities to introduce sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of registers extensively discussed in chapter 6.

Another conclusion reached is that the ESL curriculum as it was, offered learners little opportunity to engage in authentic contexts with native speakers out of the classroom. This resulted from the fact that the target language was being learnt in a foreign context.

It was also concluded that teachers still faced the tension noted by Kramsch (2014); the tension of deciding what to teach in the classroom and what the learners would need in the real world after they left the classroom. This was so because of the many changes that have seen a change in the native and non-native composition of the discourse community for ESL in the Zimbabwean context. The ESL learner now has to be prepared mostly for interaction with other users ESL rather than the L1 speakers so that the culture of the native speaker is no longer as relevant.

Notwithstanding all the observed limitations, the final conclusion is that ESL teaching in Zimbabwe at O' level still values the communicative functions of language and is relatively sensitive to the various changing factors including factors such as the context, register, social status, gender and age, among others. How these factors mitigate the language acquisition processes, in a way, support the ultimate thrust to conceptualise the teaching of ESL as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors; an ideal yet to be realised.

7.5. Recommendations.

In this section, I now make recommendations based on the research findings. It is important to note that ESL teaching is an area of concern for many stakeholders, both inside and outside the school. The thrust of all the propositions is to call for a reconceptualization of ESL teaching in a context where language teaching has become so exam-centric that the objective of teaching language as an ever-day communication tool has been overtaken by incentive to make the grade and achieve a high pass-rate. Therefore, recommendations made are for the policy planners and item writers for the assessment schemes as well as the ESL teachers on the ground. The

recommendations focus on the language policy and the curriculum document; the content, teaching methodology and assessment schemes. These recommendations build on to a reconceptualization of ESL as the way forward suggested at the end of the chapter.

7.5.1. Recommendations for the policy planners

Based on the research findings the need to go back to the drawing board to draft a new policy framework for language teaching is glaring. This comes in the face of a curriculum that produces students who lack the essential sociolinguistic skills essential for effective communication in the target language in both the school and outside community. Such a lack of communicative competence skills was observed by the researcher among O' level graduates and confirmed by the literature review of related research-work and was the basis for the justification of the present research.

I, therefore, recommend that the ESL syllabus aims and objectives, the sociolinguistic content, the methodology and the assessment scheme all be realigned in a way that balances the attainment of sociolinguistic competence and linguistic competence skills. In other words, the curriculum should aim at imparting communicative skills to the learners through the inclusion of appropriate sociolinguistic content and activities. This makes sense because language acquisition/learning cannot be an end to be measured with the attainment of a school certificate at O' level. Rather, acquisition entails the learners' actual use of the target language in the diverse discourse community which they encounter outside the school in contexts that demand the appropriate adjustments for communicative effectiveness.

This recommendation has many implications for the curriculum content, starting off with a clearer policy on the adoption of local and foreign culture norms and the place of the first language in ESL teaching. I call for a deliberate focus on the sociolinguistic aspects of language to be enunciated in the syllabus document and further espoused in a supplementary document to accompany the syllabus document. This would ensure the

integration of sociolinguistics in the teaching of ESL in a way that attempts to standardise practices in all schools rather than leave it all to the whims, capacity and motivation of individual teachers as is the present norm.

The syllabus document also needs to be more explicit in its push for CLT approaches rather than the loose recommendations made in the present document. Furthermore, a separation has to be made between language acquisition and language learning. This will ensure that the ESL classroom experiences produce users who have acquired the language and language use, rather than learnt it, as is the case at present. Learners may be able to identify the right language scripts in the examinations, but unlike those that have acquired the language the use of these structures does not come out naturally in the real-life communication scripts.

This observation has implications for the assessment scheme, which in turn, must evaluate not just the mastery of linguistic competence, but also communicative competence. I recommend that curriculum planners should seriously consider a language curriculum and assessment scheme less dependent on summative evaluation. Such a scheme should be comprehensive in its view of the totality of language so that it evaluates whether the learner has achieved a certain level of language proficiency commensurate with being able to communicate in the target language.

As the first step towards that, I recommend a restructuring of the assessment scheme. There is a need to introduce a continuous assessment component to the assessment scheme, since in my view the language acquisition level of a learner over a period of 11 years of primary and secondary education cannot be competently evaluated in only three hours; one and half for paper 1 and one and half for paper 2. Such a framework was found to be inadequate in several fundamental ways. Notably that language acquisition incorporates all the four skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Also, the communicative competence skills targeted by the teaching of ESL cannot be adequately measured through the five major tasks performed in the examination setting;

- a free composition,

- a guided/structured composition
- answering comprehension questions including a summary
- ten register items

Another reason for the recommendation of a new assessment scheme as that, in the present study, the assessment scheme for ESL at national level, turned out to be the single most effective determiner of the language learning/ teaching experience in the Zimbabwean context. Chances are that even after my suggestions, examinations may still have a strong influence on teaching so that the same situation will prevail. Therefore, designing a comprehensive assessment scheme would ensure that not much would be lost in the case of the eventuality that teachers still focus on the examinations as their source of all teaching materials.

In setting the examination and designing the curriculum the examining board and the item writers should work closely together so that there is no discord between them. There should also be a consensus on the sociolinguistic component of the ESL syllabus and this should flow from the rallying point that no one nation has proprietary rights over the English language. In making this recommendation the dilemma that confronts the current syllabus should be noted.

On the one hand is the view that language is the property of the native speaker, packaged with its culture and norms, whereas on the other extreme, is the concession that English is an international language; a tool available for everyone and open to adopt the local culture and norms. The former position which is grounded in the “World Englishes debate,” discussed extensively in chapter 2 and alluded to throughout the research document, supports my recommendation for a more comprehensive policy enunciation on the nature and extent of the Zimbabwean culture to be incorporated in the ESL syllabus at the status and acquisition planning stages.

7.5.2. Recommendations for the teachers

Assuming that an enabling curriculum is put in place, teachers should take charge of what happens in the ESL classroom and be guided by sound theoretical grounding in

SL acquisition. They should realise that ESL teaching should focus beyond the classroom and the prescribed curriculum and the assessment scheme. In fact, making the grade should not be conceptualised as an end, but merely proof of the attainment of the higher order objective; that of being able to communicate effectively in different contexts in the outside world. In line with Zhang and Wang's (2016) recommendations teachers must not only pay attention to the teaching of language rules while ignoring the social context. They must instead, allow for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors by integrating language with the social context. In real terms the role of the teachers should be to facilitate learning the language as a social phenomenon and that can be done through many imaginative ways including the adoption of instructional conversations into the CLT approaches recommended as outlined the model proposed below.

Based on the recommendations above, I now propose a teaching model to strengthen the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL. I concede from the start that this model is not new, but is only intended to refocus some aspects of the existing practices so that the teacher now consciously mediates the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence rather than leave this aspect of ESL to chances that only comes up if such aspects are there in the texts that are used in the ESL classroom and only if the teachers decide to focus on them in a context where there are no incentives for doing so.

7.5.3. Recommendations for the adoption of CLT approaches

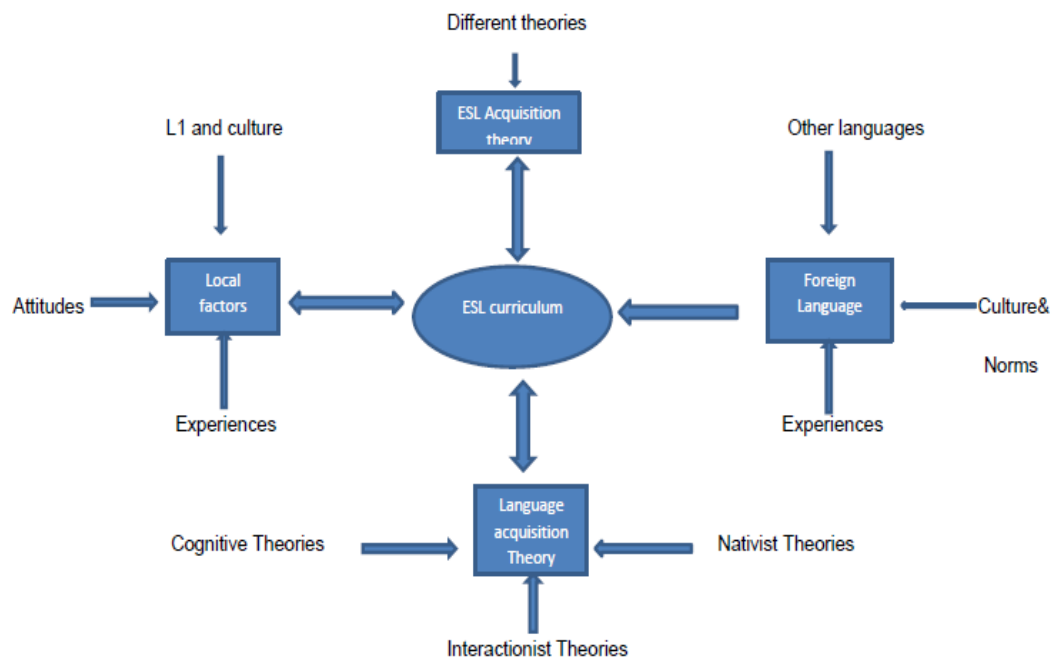
In the findings of the research, it emerged that teachers are not fully committed to the adoption of communicative approaches in ESL factors as a result of mitigating factors like the demands of the examinations and the congested curriculum which left inadequate time for the adoption of the communicative approaches. In light of the weaknesses reflected through the persistent lack of communicative competence among the O' level school graduates, I recommend further commitment to the adoption of communicative methodologies in teaching ESL. This, however, implies adjustments throughout the ESL curriculum provisions so that the overall thrust motivates and supports the use of communicative approaches.

The concept of communicative competence was explored in the detail in the chapter 2. Central to all CLT approaches is the aim for communicative competence which is closely related to sociolinguistic competence, rather than linguistic competence. According to Angel (2005: 15) sociolinguistic competence offers 'a platform for appreciating language in its social cultural and linguistic dimensions.' CLT approaches that strive for such competence focus on the meaning rather than the form or structure of the language.

Central to this recommendation is the need to restructure the language assessment schemes so that they measure the assimilation of the sociolinguistic dimensions of language embedded in CLT. Notably, the items for assessment must be more practical rather than technical. In other words, learners must be asked to construct authentic texts rather than comment on provided texts or select the correct/appropriate texts from given sets. The current ESL practices encourage teachers to identify separate skills tested in the examinations so that teaching is accordingly focused on these skills in isolation, divorced from the goal of communication. In line with Yu (2008), I recommend that teaching ESL should avoid the division of language into separate exam-focused skills since this can be restrictive and detracting from the goal of communicative competence.

Instead, I recommend a stronger focus on the interplay of sociolinguistic factors as illustrated in Figure below:

Figure 6: The proposed ideal for the interplay of sociolinguistic factors



The above diagram summarises how the ESL curriculum is conceptualized in the present study. The ESL curriculum in the center is fed by various factors chief among them, the foreign language, English, language acquisition theory, local factors and the language teaching goals. The language acquisition theory is inclined towards CLT models as recommended in the syllabus. However, the discerning teacher realizes that

there is no one-fit all model for language teaching. The local factors are inclusive of the L1; its culture and norms, all the experiences that the learner brings into the classroom and all that the teacher may deem necessary for inclusion as explanations for cross-linguistic transfers.

The foreign language is the target language and it comes as a complete package including its culture and norms. The classroom interactions, therefore, can be seen as the adaptation process where the language loses its foreignness in line with the Kachruvian (1985) conception of the spread of English across the globe in outer circle nations. The phenomenon is extensively discussed in the literature review and alluded to in various sections of this research. Citing Kachru (1985) in this research, I equated the learning process with the norm adopting and norm developing process and conceptualized this as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the teaching of ESL.

7.6. Proposed Model for the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL

In this section, I propose a model that can be adopted for the inclusion of sociolinguistic actors in ESL teaching. The model is based on Goldberg's (1991) Instructional Conversation Model (IC), as cited by Compennolle and Williams (2012). The model focused on teacher–student collaborative interaction within a group's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in the process of developing learners' conceptual understanding of language variation. In this context, I adapt the model for the development of the ESL learners' sociolinguistic competence skills through providing instructional mediation in the form of collaborative interaction, which collaboration I equated to the interplay of sociolinguistic factors in the language lesson.

In proposing this model, I made basic assumptions about the language level and sociolinguistic competence of the ESL learner at form three level and drew parallels with Vygotsky's propositions on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which informed the proposed model. Vygotsky's, (1978; 86) defined the ZPD as:

The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers.

I adopted Vygotsky's (1978) identification of the ZPD in the context of the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL as an important starting point in determining the learning experiences for any group of ESL learners.

Noteworthy, in my propositions was McLeod's (2018) clarification that in most literature, the ZPD has become synonymous with the term scaffolding, a term which he said, was adapted to refer to all the activities provided by the educator, who can be a more competent peer in the process leading through to the ZPD. Macleod (2018:1) defines this as scaffolding; a process 'that enables a child or novice to solve a task or achieve a goal that would be beyond his unassisted efforts.'

My model concedes that coming up with a comprehensive inventory of sociolinguistic norms that affect the meaning of utterances in different communicative events has many challenges. In the proposed model however, I assumed that after ten years of learning the target language, the learners had been exposed to a wide range of texts in the target language; both written and spoken so that in any given class, there would be a rich resource base of sociolinguistic information.

Furthermore, I anticipated a gap in knowledge between the most proficient language users and least knowledgeable learners. This gap predicted the highest language proficiency levels that all the learners could achieve and I equated it to the ZPD. The learning process to arrive at the highest level within the ZPD could be achieved by learners on their own or with the help and encouragement of their peers a process that I equated to scaffolding process referred to by McLeod's (2018), as discussed above.

Likewise, peers can be conceptualised as the knowledgeable or more competent other. In the context of the present research, this group comprised of the learners from advantaged backgrounds. They were learners who might have attended multiracial preschools, used English at home and had access to television and media that exposed them to a variety of texts. Such learners stand out in their fluency and their language can be said to be a notch above their peers. From that perspective their language output provides the input from which others can also acquire the target language. This input in the acquisition/learning process can also be conceptualised from Krashen's

(1985) Comprehensible Input Hypothesis as, extensively discussed in chapter 3 (Krashen, 1985)

The table below outlines that features of the proposed model labelled the Instructional Conversation Model (IC). The model basically suggests a classroom interaction where the teacher assumes a background role as he encourages learners to focus on sociolinguistic aspects of language and facilitates interaction that will enable acquisition rather than learning sociolinguistic competencies.

Table 7.1 Features of the proposed Instructional Conversational Model (IC)

Feature	Description
Thematic focus	Planning the IC around a particular sociolinguistic theme to be explored by students (e.g. expressing of politeness, courtesy etc.) A general, albeit flexible, outline or structure for the IC (i.e. a 'roadmap' allowing detours) is designed in advance.
Use of background/relevant knowledge	Tapping into/providing relevant sociolinguistic background information necessary to understanding the theme. (Culture, religion, values etc.) -to be woven into the IC as assistance.
Direct teaching	Providing 'direct teaching' or 'overt instruction' of a particular theme only when necessary.
Promotion of more complex expression	Encouraging elaboration of student contributions through any number of techniques (refocusing, prompts, questions, pauses).
Promotion of argument support	Eliciting supporting arguments from students through texts or reasoning- the teacher tries to ascertain the basis of a student's contribution.

Few 'known answer' questions	The IC centres around questions for which there are any number of potential answers and/or interpretations.
Connected discourse	The IC comprises multiple, interactive turns at talk, which successively build one upon another
Challenging but non-threatening atmosphere	The teacher challenges students to work beyond their current individual capabilities. The teacher is more of a collaborator than an evaluator.
General participation	No individual – especially the teacher – holds exclusive right to determine speaker turns. Students are encouraged to select themselves as the next speaker or otherwise influence the selection of turns-at-talk


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In the proposed model, the instructor collaborates with students in their ZPD to develop sociolinguistic competence cognizant of the sociolinguistic variants that affect the construction of meaning. The table above suggests features and themes that can be adopted. The objectives that guide the IC include the development of the learners' understanding of sociolinguistic variations of ESL in different contexts so that they can formulate hypotheses about the nature of language variation and meaning. Furthermore, learners should also be able to come up with appropriate texts and use them correctly.

This process can be seen as the transition from a classroom student to a user of the target language in authentic sociocultural contexts, thereby, overcoming the trans-lingual transfers and variations construed as the lack of sociolinguistic skills identified in chapter one as the factors that inspired the present research. In the section below, I suggest examples of the appropriate activities to be focused on in the IC. Activities

focusing on the sociolinguistic aspects of the language may be introduced into the ESL lessons. The time for language and registers may be used for this. However, the activities in the other lessons may also adopt the teachers-student collaboration inherent in IC.

7.6.1. Variations of the instructional conversations

Still contextualized in Vygotsky's (1978) ZDP, the instructional conversations could take the form of teacher fronted tasks where the learners can work in any of the combinations;

- Individual work
- Pairing
- Group work
- Whole group

The tasks given require resourcefulness on the teacher who must source different authentic texts, design texts specifically for teaching particular sociolinguistic aspects and create an inventory of learner constructed discourse. The guiding principle o=in all this is that the selected texts should have the potential to develop learners' conceptual understanding of contexts, texts, meaning and sociolinguistic variation. The tasks given may include:

- Analysing learner-produced discourse
- Reconstruction of alternative discourses

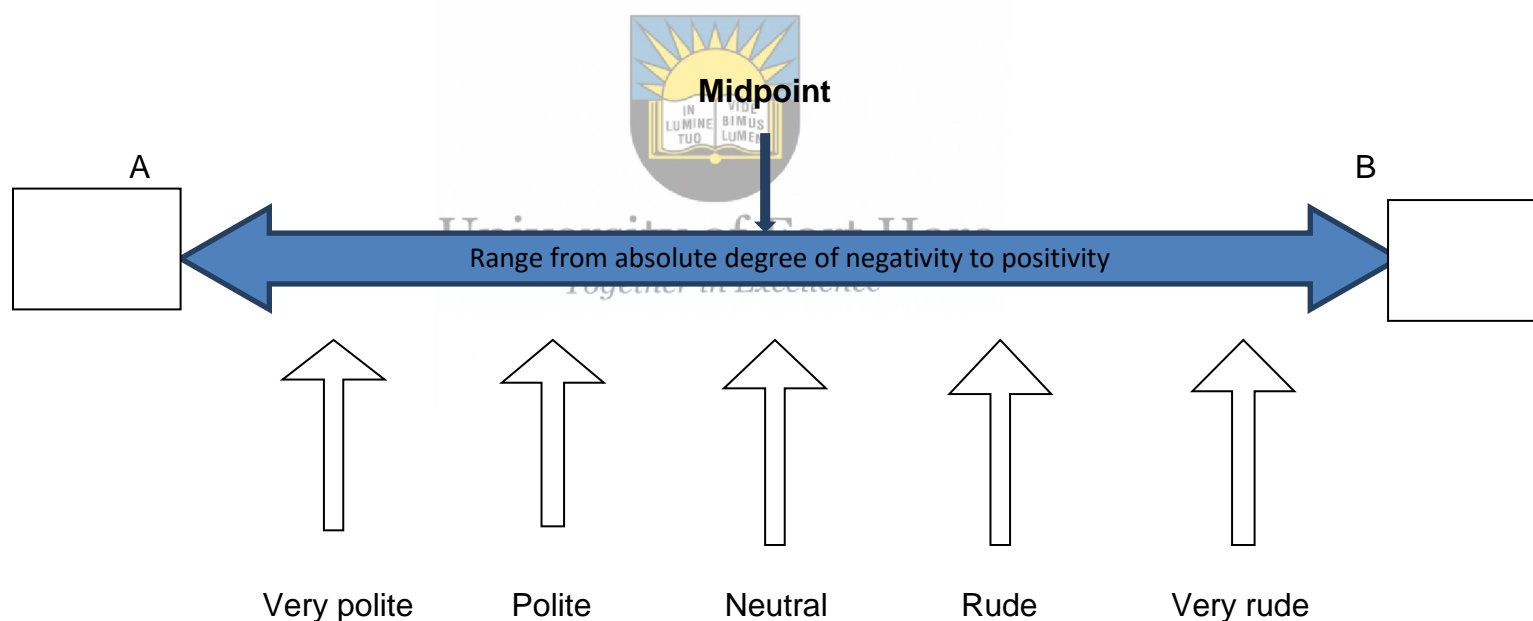
7.6.2. Analysis of selected texts or genres

In this activity, learners are asked to consider different constructs like politeness, kindness, rudeness anger, resentment, formality and a whole range of attitudes behaviour and manner. These are the sociolinguistic constructs currently focused in in the English Language Paper 2 as registers. Using the IC model learners is to position an utterance or text appropriately on a continuum constructed along the lines of the diagram below and adjusted according the theme focused. The IC procedures then

unfold as outlined in the model to justify the learners' placement of the construct on a particular point on the continuum. Furthermore, the learners are guided to explore cross-linguistic influences that impair meanings or render inappropriateness to different meanings to the same text under different contexts. The Figure below shows a continuum scale around which the IC could be constructed.

This scale is flexible and can be adjusted for different contexts and themes drawn from the learners' sociolinguistic context and those encountered in cross-cultural contexts. In other words the scale can be used for authentic texts and texts drawn from literature texts.

Figure 2: Continuum scale for measuring some aspects of registers



To measure themes like

- Politeness
- Formality
- Manner
- Attitude,

The scale can be adjusted accordingly against the construct being explored. Whole texts may also be adopted for such analysis so that the resulting IC will focus on the different sociolinguistic themes that emerge in the text. In the teacher/learner collaborative interactions the language should emerge not only as a communicative tool but also a means of mediating cognitive activity. This view is supported by Canal and Swain (1986) who contend, there is no contradiction between using another language to mediate understanding of a concept in another language then applied this to understanding how the language works. This implies that in the IC the learners are free to use their first language to explain themselves but all this should lead to an understanding of the sociolinguistic influences that impact on language use.

7.7. Way forward



As a last word, I now make a statement on the way forward based on the foregoing research findings, conclusions and recommendations. What comes out most eminently is to reconceptualise ESL teaching along the topical trends towards the unmitigated inclusion of sociolinguistic factors. The process should start off with introspection on the current practices by all the stakeholders; the curriculum designers, the teachers and the learners, who must all contribute to the needs analysis in the context of ESL at O' level in Zimbabwe and feed the way forward. In short, the way forward calls for a reconceptualization of the teaching which in turn, calls for further refocusing of the way forward in light of the foregoing recommendations.

7.7.1. Reconceptualising the teaching of ESL

As the way forward, policy planners have to revisit the adoption of ESL and its acquired official status in Zimbabwe. This calls for a reconceptualization of ESL so that the target language assumes its rightful position as a world language available for adoption and use in today's global economy. The policy makers need to take the bold step to acknowledge the status of Zimbabwean English as one of the world 'Englishes'

alongside American English, Australian English and other versions so far recognised. Such a mind-frame would then widen the discretion to adopt and develop local norms to be included in the teaching of ESL. The teaching of ESL should be done in a manner that echoes the provisions for a foreign language to lose its foreignness when it is adopted as a second language in the outer circle, as defined by Kachru (1997)

The proposition for the adoption of English in different contexts were extensively discussed in chapter 2 and variously alluded to in the subsequent chapters. Notably, Kachru (1985, 1997 and 2005) proposed the concentric circles model which defined the adoption of English in different nations across the globe. The model conceptualised the adoption of the English language in the outer circle as norm-adopting and norm developing in the outer circle. Schneider (2007:3) proposed various names for what he terms 'post-colonial Englishes' adopted in the different nations in his Dynamic model. Furthermore he contends that these in the adoption of these 'Englishes,' he speakers redefine and express their social identities so that they are aligned with the context of language use.

All these considerations have to be taken aboard in the re-conceptualisation of ESL. According to Schneider (2007), this would imply that ESL teaching/learning should be guided by the learners' needs in terms of whom they wish to associate with and be associated to. Learners should realise that an utterance considered right or appropriate in a given context would not necessarily be judged so against British norms or other norms for that matter. A reconceptualisation of ESL teaching therefore, opens up for the teaching of culture and full cognizance of the sociolinguistic factors as investigated in the present research.

In other words, the syllabus document should empower the language learners to be able to express meaning in their own context, rather than try to modify what they say in line with the culture of the target language.

7.7.2. Way forward for future research

The way forward starts off with a change of the mind-frame of all the stakeholders in the teaching of ESL in Zimbabwe: the curriculum planners, the examining board, teachers and learners who must all be clear on what means to acquire a second language. Notably, that language acquisition goes beyond grammatical competence and includes sociolinguistic competence and pragmatic competence.

At the next level, the curriculum designers need to come up with a comprehensive language curriculum that addresses the grey areas that were manifested in the lack of sociolinguistic competence among O' level graduates. These are the cross-linguistic inconsistencies construed as errors or that were noted in the justification of the present research. A policy-guided inclusion of sociolinguistic factors conceptualised from the ideal view of the teaching of ESL as the interplay of sociolinguistic factors would go a long way towards improving the achievement of sociolinguistic competence.

Furthermore, curriculum planners have to embrace the reality the English language as an adopted official language in the context of an autonomous post independent state preparing its nationals not for communication with the native speaker but the 'real world' which comprises of both native and non-native speakers. This would imply a balance of the local and foreign language culture. Through such a fusion language learners would then be able to assess and use the appropriate language in different contexts.

Lastly, there is need for more scholastic engagement in the form of research by researchers from different fields. The sociolinguistic and ESL teaching is dynamic and demands the contributions from sociolinguists, linguistics and psychologists who must agree on inclusive methodologies that take aboard various theories of language leaning. This implies that future research should focus on the inclusion of sociolinguistic factors in ESL teaching to establish whether such approaches would improve the attainment of sociolinguistic competence in the learners.

Furthermore there is a need to investigate other ways of assessing language acquisition since the present method of summative assessment was found inadequate. Coupled with the other demands in the school setting, test-centric approaches exert so much

pressure on the language teacher that the broader goals of language teaching concerned with communicative competence are ignored.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Questionnaire for Teachers

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Section.1. Demographic data

1. What qualifications

Pre-trained	Diploma	Degreed- With education

2. Teaching Experience in Years

0-5yrs	6-10yrs	11-15yrs	16-20yrs	Over 20

3. Indicate the number of years you have taught English at these levels.

For 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4

Part 2

For each of the statements answer yes or no by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

		Yes	No
1	Is there a relationship between what and how you teach and the local environment		
2	Should the language teaching content be different in different contexts?		
3	Should language teaching methods be different in different contexts?		
4	Do you include cultural/sociolinguistic information in your language teaching?		
5	Should teachers decide on how to incorporate sociolinguistic factors in their teaching		
6	Is the English culture important in teaching English as second language?		
7	Is the local culture important in teaching English as a second language?		
8	Is there a relationship between communicative competence and the cultural component of second language teaching?		
9	Do the activities in your teaching reflect the sociolinguistic environment of your school?		

10	Do you take the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the culture of the language and the culture of the learners?		
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Part 3

Use the spaces provided to answer the following questions.

1. How can you define the general concept of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching?
3. What is the place of (sociolinguistics) culture in the teaching of ESL? 1. What sociolinguistic/cultural knowledge/ information may be used in the in the English language classrooms?
2. What is the aim of presenting cultural information in English language classrooms?
5. What are your reasons for including or omitting cultural information in your teaching?
6. How do you incorporate sociolinguistic factors?



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Appendix 2: Interview guide

1. What do you understanding of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching/

2. How do you include sociolinguistic factors your teaching in terms of the following aspects?

the methods you use

the teaching materials

motivating the learners

4. Do teachers of English as a second language familiarise themselves with the culture of the language and the culture of the society in which the language is taught?

5. How do the sociolinguistic factors feed the quality/ relevance of language teaching?

6. What activity/activities prove(s) that the sociolinguistic factors are important in second language teaching?

7. Could you explain the sociolinguistic factors that should affect language teaching in Zimbabwe?

8. How is the importance of sociolinguistic factors reflected in your assessment scheme at school level?

9. How do you consciously cater for the sociolinguistic factors in your teaching?

10. Should individual teachers decide on how to incorporate sociolinguistic factors in their teaching?

11. How can you relate communicative competence to the sociolinguistic factors of the teaching setting?

Part I (demographic features of the participants):

1. How old are you?

2. When and where did you learn English?

3. Could you tell me about your educational background?

3. Can you also give me some information about how long you have been teaching English? Where, when and to whom?

Part C

1. What is your understanding of sociolinguistic factors in second language teaching? Give examples.
2. How are some of these factors reflected in your teaching?
3. Do you consider the sociolinguistic factors important in designing your school curriculum?
4. How do you make the language you teach relevant to the students you teach?

Appendix 3

Focused Group Discussion Guide



For each of the ten statements indicate whether you agree (YES/ No)

1. Should second language teaching be the same in every school regardless of the setting?

Discussion should focus on the school, the community and the nation.

2. Language teaching should be influenced by the context in which the language is taught.

3. The local culture should be incorporated in second language teaching

4. Foreign culture should be taught

5. Teaching materials should be uniform in all schools

- . Learning objectives

6. Teaching styles/methods are dependent on the setting

7. Assessment schemes

8. Motivation



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Appendix 4

Questionnaire to assess the prevalence of communicative approaches

Instructions

Use the following key below to show your response for the 4 questions in this section.

1. Strongly Agree, 2. Agree 3. Neutral, 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree

1. The statements below are proposed as the most important objectives for second language teaching. Indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the statements.

		1	2	3	4	5
A	The students should know the rules of the language.					
B	The student should be able to behave in ordinary situations					
C	The students should be able to communicate with other people.					
D	The students should be able to understand and transmit information					
E	The students should both know the rules and be able to communicate and behave.					
F	The students should become better people emotionally and socially					

2. Each of the items below completes the statement, 'In the teaching of English the most important technique is...' Indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement.

(Which of these techniques were valued most?)

		1	2	3	4	5
A	Explaining the grammatical rules					

B	Mechanical drills					
C	Communication games					
D	Listening comprehension					
E	Presentation and practice of function					
F	Discussion of controversial topics					

3. How would you describe the language you are teaching and the students in your classroom?

		1	2	3	4	5
A	Rules about language					
B	Grammatical patterns					
C	Language functions					
D	Emphasising content rather than form					
E	Grammatical structures and functional elements					
F	A way of unveiling students' own personality					

4. Do you think the students are learning language chiefly by:

		1	2	3	4	5

A	Consciously understanding the language rules					
B	Forming habits of using the language					
C	Communicating with each other in the classroom					
D	Trying to understand what is said to them					
E	Understanding rules, forming habits and communicating					
F	Engaging in activities that are personally meaningful to them					

Analysis table to assess the preferred style

Answer	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Teaching style
A					Academic
B					Audiolingual
C					Social communicative
D					Information communicative
E					Mainstream EFL
F					Other

[Adopted from Cook (1996:174-175)]

Notes

The instrument above is intended to measure the inclination of prevailing teaching methods towards communicative approaches. The study assumes that if second language teaching is responsive to the interplay of the sociolinguistic factors in the

environment in which the language is taught, this should be reflected by a distinctive slant towards communicative language teaching.

Having established the existence or otherwise of such a relationship, the next data collection instrument follows up to establish the actual teaching practices so that a judgement can be made on how language teaching responds to the sociolinguistic factors.



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APPENDIX 5

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SYLLABUS

ZIMBABWE SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL (ZIMSEC)

ZIMBABWE GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION (ZGCE)

For Examination in June/November 2013 – 2017

O-Level Syllabus

ENGLISH LANGUAGE (1122)

Subject Code: 1122. ENGLISH LANGUAGE 2

1.0 RATIONALE

1.1 The changes in O-Level syllabus are intended to make the teaching and learning of English Language conforms to the changes taking place in the educational system of Zimbabwe and to:

1.1.1 Streamline the O-Level language syllabus such that it reflects, and is consistent with, educational objectives from primary to lower secondary;

1.1.2 Provide Zimbabwean pupils with functional communication skills which they will need in their working situations;

1.1.3 Stimulate pupils to read, appreciate and enjoy a wide range of books, so as to develop their language abilities, increase their general knowledge and form a lifelong reading habit.



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2.0 APPROACH

2.1 This syllabus is intended to provide pupils with communication skills necessary for the different roles and situations in which they are likely to find themselves after leaving school. It is hoped to make the learning of the English Language more functional and purposeful by drawing language structures and examples from, and relating them to, such roles and situations. It is also intended that Language learning should incorporate Zimbabwean and similar social, economic, political, scientific and technological experiences and reflect national needs in these areas.

3.0 AIMS

The aims of the syllabus are to:

3.1 promote in pupils an awareness of

3.1.1 The usefulness of the English Language as a medium of national and international communication;

3.1.2 The value of effective language command and use for personal and national development.

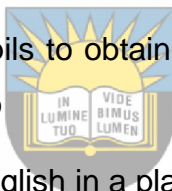
3.2 develop reading abilities and skills that:

3.2.1 Are useful for everyday life such as reading instructions, newspapers, and reports;

3.2.2 Are essential for reading books on various subjects across the curriculum, including appropriate techniques for intensive and extensive reading such as skimming and scanning;

3.2.3 Will motivate pupils to develop a lifelong reading habit for enjoyment and knowledge.

3.3 provide the opportunity for pupils to obtain sufficient understanding and knowledge of the English Language in order to



3.3.1 Become effective users of English in a place of work;

3.3.2 Communicate effectively in both spoken and written English in different situations and registers;

3.3.3 Write different kinds of letters, notes and reports;

3.3.4 Express them creatively in imaginative writing.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

NOTE: Assessment objectives outline the skills which may be assessed by public examinations.

However, teachers should not limit themselves to these objectives. They should use the aims above to derive the language skills to be developed throughout the two – year course.

4.1 Appropriate use of Register

At the Ordinary Level examination, candidates should be able to:

4.1.1 Identify degrees of formality ranging from informal to formal;

4.1.2 Differentiate degrees of informality and formality;

4.1.3 Interpret speech acts such as apologies and compliments in a variety of social situations;

4.1.4 Respond appropriately to utterances in a variety of social situations;

4.1.5 Initiate speech acts such as complaints and requests appropriately in a variety of social situations;

4.1.6 Identify and use correct forms of address taking into account the addressee and the situation;

4.1.7 Recognise appropriate use of register in a variety of social situations.

4.1.8 Identify and use register appropriately depending on the topic, participants, settings, occasion and purpose;

4.1.9 Recognise and identify appropriateness of meaning in an utterance in a given social situation in terms of manner, mood, attitude and atmosphere;

4.1.10 identifies the intention of an utterance such as to persuade, ridicule, motivate, mock, cheer and discourage;

4.1.11 derives different meanings from an utterance according to the situation.

4.2 Writing skills

At the Ordinary Level examination, candidates should be able to:

4.2.1 Write a continuous narrative, an argument and a piece of descriptive or informative writing such as that of a process, of a character, a scene or of an event;

4.2.2 Write letters, both formal and informal, and a report from notes, diagrams, statistical data, and pictures;

4.2.3 Write in a style and register appropriate to the subject matter, displaying a range of vocabulary and idiom appropriate to that subject matter;

4.2.4 Make general points and exemplify them;

4.2.5 Organize their work satisfactorily into paragraphs and show a sense of cohesion /coherence within paragraphs;

4.2.6 Show an awareness of discourse markers that include 'however', 'moreover', 'on the other hand', 'first', 'thus';

4.2.7 Write with grammatical accuracy, spell accurately and punctuate their work correctly, in particular, in punctuation, they should be able to mark comprehension materials sentence boundaries and direct speech.

4.3 English Comprehension and Communication



4.3.1 At the Ordinary Level examination, candidates should be able to read and respond appropriately to various authentic texts that may be;

- extracts from novels and essays
- extracts from newspapers and magazines
- advertising material

4.3.2 Candidates should also be able to interpret information displayed in graphs and charts.

Comprehension skills

Candidates should be able to:

4.3.3 Follow the sequence of events in a text and recognise how language is used to indicate these;

- 4.3.4 Follow the development of an argument;
- 4.3.5 Recognise main propositions and exemplifying or qualifying details;
- 4.3.6 Identify the writer's attitude(s) towards his or her subject;
- 4.3.7 Understand explicitly stated information;
- 4.3.8 Infer information that is indirectly stated;
- 4.3.9 Summarise aspects of the text relevant to answering specific questions;
- 4.3.10 Understand or work out meanings of words and phrases

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5.0 SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

The ability of candidates to express themselves clearly and to present their answers neatly and accurately will be taken into account in the assessment of their work.



Two compulsory papers:

Paper 1: (One and half hours) (50 marks)

Candidates will be required to express themselves in English and to demonstrate their ability to

write English in a variety of ways: a) a composition (30 marks), for which topics considered

suitable for Zimbabwe will be set. They will be on different subjects, including scientific ones, and will try to cater for as wide a range of writing styles, registers and interests as possible. The topics set may be descriptive, informative, argumentative or narrative;

b) communication in writing which may be situational (20 marks) such as reporting for a newspaper, a letter, or memorandum, or information transfer involving interpretation of such materials as diagrams, statistical data, pictures and graphs.

There will be a choice of topics in part (a) and one question in part (b) as described above. Marks will be allocated according to the desired length of each answer. Candidates will be awarded marks for appropriateness and clarity of expression and accuracy of idiom, grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation.

Paper 2: (Two hours) (50 marks)

a) (40 marks) A passage or passages of prose will be set upon which candidates will be expected to answer questions;

(i) to test their ability to understand the content and argument of the given text and to infer meaning from it and the writer's attitude(s) towards his or her subject;

(ii) on vocabulary derived from the passage;

(iii) to test their ability to summarise.

b) (10 marks) A test of the candidates' ability to recognise appropriate use of variety and register in a range of situations.



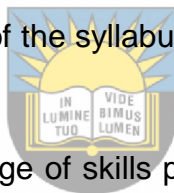
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Appendix 6

TEACHING OBJECTIVES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE – APPENDIX

INTRODUCTION

The following supplement to the English Language O-Level Syllabus has been prepared by the Curriculum Development Unit. The assessment objectives (Section 4) in the syllabus sum up those objectives of the syllabus which can and will be tested. However, these are necessarily just



a partial selection of the wider range of skills pupils are expected to acquire during the two-year course. The supplement supplies the teacher with a fuller list of skills which must be taught over the two-year period. This is intended to help the teacher plan a fuller, broader, and more effective course which will better achieve the broader aims of the syllabus.

NOTE ON APPROACH

The teaching of English Language, particularly at the upper secondary level, often has more testing than teaching. The teachers assign a complete comprehension or composition exercise, mark the answers right or wrong, then assign another similar exercise, threatening the pupils that they must do better or else! The teachers do not explain the reasons for the answers, nor teach pupils strategies to use to try to do better in the future. How difficult it must be for pupils to learn and improve when they only spend their time in making yet more mistakes!

One alternative to constant testing is the skills approach; this is the approach recommended by the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council. The skills approach tries to give pupils practice in doing small, simple things correctly before they attempt more difficult things. Pupils learn step by step, progressing from the simple to the complex, mastering each step along the way. The skills approach is of course the natural way to learn. Think of the following example: before a child can run, he or she must first learn to sit, crawl, stand and then walk. In the same way, before a pupil can write a coherent, competent and persuasive argumentative essay, he or she must be able to write grammatically correct sentences, form cohesive paragraphs, use discourse markers (see 4.2 (c), and all other skills enumerated in points 3.1 (a) to (i) and 3.2(b) of the teaching objectives below. These skills must be taught consciously and separately, which involves a lot of thought and planning.

It is important when following the skills approach to keep in mind the difference between general knowledge or 'content' and actual English Language 'skills'. An English Language lesson must be based on an English Language skill such as those listed in this document. The objective of a lesson is never only to have pupils understand a particular bit of content, such as the importance of trees" or methods of irrigation". While many lessons may even contain in-depth discussions of aspects of general knowledge, those are just a medium through which the actual English Language skills being taught in the lesson are presented and practised.

Here are some tips on how to plan for the skills approach.

1. As a department, make a school syllabus (scope and sequence chart) using the official syllabus and these teaching objectives. Do not make your school syllabus using only a textbook or textbooks. The school syllabus should cover the two years of the Ordinary Level course, and should develop from a similar school syllabus your department makes for the Zimbabwe Junior Certificate course.

2. To make a school syllabus you must:

a) make a list of all the topics to be taught (such as summary writing, guided composition) and

the skills which need to be developed for each topic; You will find the topics and the lists of skills in these teaching objectives, but you and your department may decide that additional skills need to be covered, and that some are much more important than others. You may also want to break down some of the skills into smaller and more specific parts.

b) decide roughly in which order and when, during the two year course, each skill is to be taught.

(Remember, skills are not taught once only but must be frequently revised and extended).

Make your individual scheme of work from the school syllabus. Here is an example of one small section of a school syllabus. Remember, it is just an example to give you an idea of what a school syllabus might look like. A school syllabus will vary from school to school, and also possibly from year to year. This section is based on the topic 'ORAL COMMUNICATION', and the sub-topic 'Speaking' (1.1, page 11 of this document). The teachers who prepared this school syllabus looked at that sub-topic and the skills listed under it and rewrote them in greater detail, to make it easier to plan individual lessons. They based their list of specific skills associated with 'conversation skills' on the abilities and needs of the particular pupils in their school. Conversation skills and use of appropriate register conversing in English and using the appropriate register comprises all the following skills. Pupils should be able to:

1. pronounce words in a way that is acceptable;
2. use correct intonation and stress patterns;
3. Use contractions and shortened forms such as 'isn't' and 'wouldn't'
4. exchange greetings in formal and informal situations;
5. make and respond to formal and informal introductions;
6. engage in a conversation after formal and informal introductions;

7. keep a conversation going, speaking freely but courteously;
8. have a telephone conversation;
9. describe people and scenes;
10. describe and explain simple processes, events and activities;
11. give messages;
12. give directions and instructions;
13. make announcements;
14. respond to make requests;
15. give, accept and refuse invitation politely;
16. make and accept excuses;
17. make and accept apologies;
18. express appreciation, dislike and disapproval;
19. express opinions clearly on topical issues;
20. Discuss controversial issues and be able to see other people's point of view.



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Although an effort has been made to arrange these skills in order of increasing difficulty, they have not been divided into skills to be covered in Form Three and those to be covered in Form Four. All of these skills will be practised at both levels, but with the emphasis in Form Three on the slightly simpler skills and in Form Four on the slightly more difficult ones. Each skill can have easier and more difficult activities and exercises associated with it. For example, when teaching objectives 4-8 and 14-18 in Form Three, the teacher would do more activities which stress the informal register, whereas in Form Four, he/she would stress the more difficult formal register. For objectives 19 and 20, the emphasis in Form Three would be on local issues, whereas in Form Four they could tackle more international issues. In this way, the same skills are strengthened and

extended at the higher level. In other topic areas, there might be some skills which are not introduced until Form Four.

3. When you come to plan individual lessons, make sure each lesson is centered on a skills-based objective. This means you know what particular skills you are teaching and what new thing the pupils ought to know and be able to do at the end of the lesson. This will mean finding or designing exercises to teach and strengthen that particular skill (as opposed to a general exercise). For example, if you are teaching the skill of making general points and exemplifying them

(3.1)(f), you might design a group exercise where pupils think of examples for general points given by the teacher and then an individual exercise where pupils practice making points and giving examples.

Each lesson ought to have three stages: presentation of the new idea by the teacher, practice of the new skill by the pupils in pairs or groups in a classroom activity and finally production, when pupils try out the new skill by producing something on their own. (Presentation, practice and production can be remembered as „the 3Ps“).

4. When it comes to marking, make sure you give the most points to the particular skill you were teaching in the lesson. Each marking scheme should be tailor-made for each lesson and its goals.

For example, with the exercise on making general points and exemplifying them, probably eight out of ten points should be devoted to how well pupils have made the general points and given examples. It would not be appropriate, in this case, to give a lot of marks for vocabulary, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, spelling etc.

5. Use the work done by the pupils to diagnose whether or not the majority of pupils have successfully mastered the new skill. If most pupils have done poorly, there is not much point in going ahead with new material. You can be sure that later more complex skills will not be mastered if the underlying basic skills have not been learnt.

The skills approach advocated by the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council requires a lot of thought and effort on the part of the teacher. Teachers focusing on skills will not be able to follow a textbook from start to finish. They will be forced to skip around in the book looking for– and often adapting – lessons which focus on the skill they want to teach. They will also have to write exercises of their own when nothing in the textbooks they are using is suitable. But while the effort may be greater, the rewards will be greater still. The teachers will have the pleasure of seeing their pupils successfully mastering the work, with all the accompanying pride and confidence this implies.

TEACHING OBJECTIVES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1. ORAL COMMUNICATION

1.1 Speaking

Phrasing and stress: pupils should be aware that English has a system of grouping words in phrases, each with a stressed (louder) word. In all the following speaking skills, they should be able to identify pauses and stressed words in spoken English. N.B. this should not be taught in isolation but integrated with the skills below.

1.1.1. Expressing ideas orally:

Pupils should be able to communicate ideas clearly, accurately and fluently through such activities as:

- a) describing processes, activities, scenes, events and people;
- b) presenting and expressing opinions on a variety of topics and holding discussions and debates;
- c) making pieces of announcement, giving messages, directions, explanations and instructions.

1.1.2 Conversation Skills

Pupils should be aware that spoken language differs from written languages. They should be able to:

a) speak freely, courteously and appropriately in a variety of social interactions ranging from formal to informal, including introductions, greetings, invitations, requests, congratulations, apologies and expressions of appreciation and regret;

b) speak in the correct register, according to the context as determined by:

i. the subject matter or area being discussed. Many areas have a specific “jargon” (terminology) and way of speaking associated with them. Take, for example, religion, chemical engineering, ordinary gossip, or discussions about love. A job interview will be very different from a discussion on sports, just as talk of a death will differ from talk of a wedding or other celebration. Notice also that the audience will affect the register: two chemical engineers discussing a complex technical issue together will speak in a different way than if one of them is trying to explain the same issue to someone who knows nothing about the same issue or subject.

ii. the relationship between the people speaking to one another. For example, a pupil is likely to speak in an informal register to a friend but in a semi-formal register to a teacher.

iii. the situation or occasion, including the time, place and atmosphere.

The same pupils in (ii) above will speak informally to the teacher when they are travelling together on a bus, and formally when in an interview in the headmaster’s office.

Note: Role-playing is an ideal way to teach appropriate register. Pupils must be given practice speaking in English in a variety of situations.

1.2 Listening

Speaking and listening go together and are often taught together. In addition to the speaking skills listed in 1.1 above, pupils should be able to:

a) listen with concentration and patience;

b) follow the plot of a story being read aloud, and a speaker’s line of argument;

- c) understand and act on oral messages, pieces of announcement, explanation, instructions and directions;
- d) answer factual, interpretive and evaluative questions based on what they have listened to.

2. READING

2.1 Reading Materials and Skills

Pupils should be able to:

- a) understand and use the different types of reading materials they are likely to meet both inside and outside school, including fiction, poetry, drama, non-fiction, textbooks, reference books (especially dictionaries), magazines, newspapers, instruction manuals, pamphlets and reports;
- b) read at a speed appropriate to the text and to the purpose of the reading which includes the ability to skim, scan, and read closely;
- c) identify the places in written English where pauses occur, and the word which should be stressed, and read aloud with acceptable intonation and stress;
- d) use the various parts of a book (for example, the title, the blurb, table of contents, headings, photographs, diagrams and other illustrations, captions and indices) to find information quickly;
- e) Locate books in a library.

2.2 Intensive Reading

- a) Pupils should be able to read and comprehend a text (including information presented in charts, graphs and diagrams) on various levels, and with the many comprehension skills associated with comprehension on these levels, as indicated in the chart below.

LEVEL OF SKILLS

UNDERSTANDING

Knowledge - understand explicitly stated information

- locate details and answer factual questions
- identify and recall in chronological order a series of events
- follow the sequence of events and recognise how language is used to indicate this sequence

Comprehension - follow the development of an argument

- recognise main propositions and exemplifying details
- infer information that is not directly stated
- deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases using context clues

Analysis - make notes on a text

- identify the main idea or ideas of a text
- describe the feelings, qualities and motives of character in a text
- discuss the language and style used
- identify the writer's attitude towards his or her subject

Synthesis - express the main idea of a text

- summarise aspects of a text relevant to answering specific question
- use knowledge and insight gained from a text to comment on related topics

Evaluation - form and express an opinion about what they have read

- evaluate the effectiveness of a text

b) Pupils should have skills specific to the writing of summaries, such as the ability to:

- i) identify the topic sentence of a paragraph;



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- ii) identify the main idea(s) in a paragraph and a text;
- iii) synthesise information and ideas from a text;
- iv) select information and details from a text relevant to answering specific questions:
this
includes the ability to select events, actions, thoughts and feelings – as distinct from one
another
– of particular characters. They should be able to make this selection at places in the
text, or at
particular points in its time sequence or within given line references.

2.3 Extensive Reading

Pupils should read widely in all subject areas as well as fiction, poetry, drama and non-fiction of
all types, for enjoyment and with the aims of improving their language proficiency, widening
their general knowledge and enhancing their skills of expression in creative and factual writing.

3. WRITING

3.1 General Writing Skills

Pupils should be able to:

- a) plan a composition logically and thoroughly with an introduction, body and conclusion;
- b) write with grammatical accuracy, including correct spelling, punctuation and use of vocabulary and idiom;

- c) construct a variety of sentence structures, including simple, compound and complex sentences;
- d) write coherent and cohesive paragraphs (paragraphs which are clear and well-structured);
- e) link paragraphs logically and skillfully, using discourse markers where appropriate;
- f) make general points and exemplify them;
- g) display a proper range of vocabulary and idiom, correctly and sensitively used and in a style and register appropriate to the subject matter;
- h) show imagination and originality in their writing to arouse the interest of the reader;
- i) write with attention to detail and relevance to the topic.



3.2 Free Compositions

Pupils should be able to write the types of compositions listed below using some of the specific skills associated with each type

- a) Narrative: skills include originality, use of direct speech, good opening and closing paragraphs, wide vocabulary, powers of description and appropriate mood and pace.
- b) Argumentative: skills include paragraphing and use of discourse markers, balancing general points and examples, and using both sides of an argument.
- c) Descriptive: e.g. of a process, character, scene or event: skills include a vivid and lively style, varied vocabulary and an ability to sustain atmosphere and observation.
- d) Informative: skills include thoroughness, use of discourse markers, maintaining the readers' interest through both familiar and interesting examples and use of appropriate language.

3.3 Guided Compositions

Pupils should be able to write guided compositions based on notes, pictures, diagrams, graphs

and a variety of source materials. This includes being able to:

- a) follow instructions carefully;
- b) use the appropriate register according to the context specified in the instructions, write in a number of specialized forms such as newspaper articles, business and personal letters and speeches;
- c) select, re-arrange, develop and expand upon the notes provided;
- d) assemble information and organise it in complete grammatical sentences and correct paragraphs.

4. LANGUAGE

The ability to communicate fully in oral and written English cannot be achieved without a thorough knowledge of language structures and an ability to make grammatically correct sentences. Throughout the two-year Ordinary level course, teachers will have to continue to help pupils improve their language skills. This means:

- a) identifying and rectifying problem areas;
- b) widening and deepening pupils' knowledge of how language is used.

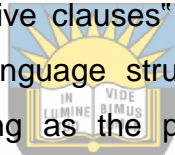
In order to strengthen basic language skills, teachers should familiarize themselves with the language structure lists in the Grade Seven and Zimbabwe Junior Certificate syllabuses and review any areas of continuing difficulty with their pupils. Teachers must identify problem areas (whether in spelling, punctuation, verb tenses, vocabulary, use of pronouns etc) and help pupils learn the correct forms.

It is always useful to solve errors which are common to many pupils with the whole class. Of course, teachers should avoid "teaching" pupils common errors: they should not bring errors to the attention of the pupils which the pupils do not make or encounter. However, it is often possible and productive, after identifying a common class problem,

to teach the correct way of using the language structure, thus showing how the errors can be avoided.

In addition to getting rid of common errors and strengthening basic language skills, the teacher will also have to help pupils widen and deepen their understanding of how to use language creatively and with variety. This means encouraging wide reading, and helping pupils identify and master language structures they come across in the comprehension passages and books they read.

Some teachers think that using the communicative approach means that they should not teach language structure and should never use the words, 'noun', 'verb' and 'adjective'. This is not true! The communicative approach tries to discourage teachers from having pupils learn structures in isolation, for instance, memorizing adjectives without using them, conjugating verbs without putting them in sentences or learning grammatical terms such as „relative clauses“ and predicate phrases“ out of context. Helping pupils learn and use language structures is perfectly consistent with the communicative approach. As long as the pupils are practising the structures for themselves and looking at how language is used in writing and in speech, then they are learning to communicate.



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4.1 Review and Continuing Topics (including areas of common difficulty)

a) Countable and uncountable nouns

Example of tricky uncountable nouns: luggage, furniture, advice, bread, behaviour, permission, weather, property.

Examples of verb agreement: Most of the furniture is undamaged, but three pieces are broken.

b) Comparative and superlatives

She is taller than Sifiso.

She is the tallest of them all.

c) So, too, very, much

She is so tall that she can touch the ceiling.

She is too tall to stand in this hut.

She is very tall.

She is much taller than Sifiso.

d) Use of pronouns

Possessives, reflexives and the avoidance of unnecessarily repeated pronouns, the correct use of

‘we’ etc.

I poured myself a glass of water.

John and I went to the shops. We went ... (not ‘we, with John....’)

He gave the message to John and me.

My aunt from Mhondoro took the bus home (no extra pronoun)

e) Some, other, one another

Some wear trousers while others wear shorts.

I saw one on Wednesday and another on Thursday.

f) Otherwise, perhaps, maybe, sometimes (commonly misused)

Leave me alone, otherwise I'll scream!

We must water the flowers, otherwise they will die.

Perhaps it will rain tomorrow.

Maybe it will rain tomorrow.

Sometimes I walk and sometimes I go by bicycle.

g) Time phrases, reasons and purpose, contrast and comparison



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The last time I went there, there was nobody home (the first time, the next time, when, etc).

I arrived in time for assembly.

I got there on time at exactly 7pm.

I got there late because the bus broke down.

The black cow is bigger but the brown one gives more milk.

He spoke up in order for everyone to hear him.

h) Frequency, quantity, degree

Words such as: sometimes, every now and then (same as occasionally), often, rarely; many,

most; quite, rather, very, fairly.

i) Verb tenses Tenses including perfect and continuous tenses, passives, verb agreement and progression.



We had just entered the house when it started raining.

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We were just entering the house when it started raining.

Itai's bag was stolen last night.

I had thought it was over, but then I realised there was more.

j) Giving suggestions and advice, modal verbs

I think you should

In my opinion, you ought to ...

One possibility is that you could

He won't be able to see you today.

I should be able to finish by 9p.m.

k) Prepositions

Sit on, listen to, on the way, in my opinion, in the shade, on the radio, etc.

l) Phrasal verbs (and verbs incorrectly used with prepositions)

Knock down, operate on, pick up, look after, put out, etc; return (no back), discuss (not about), cope (no up), dress (normally no up) etc.

m) Conjunctions, ways of joining sentences

Only one conjunction joins two clauses; two conjunctions join three clauses. Difficult conjunctions include: every time (often incorrectly used as an adjective); otherwise; because and so. 'He went up to the door.'

Plus 'He did not knock.' Become 'He went up to the door but did not knock.'

n) Direct and indirect speech

Correct punctuation in direct speech; use of „that“ in indirect speech; the ability to switch from direct to indirect, particularly with negative statements, exclamations, imperatives and all kinds of questions. 'Don't be late!' she said. /She told me not to be late. 'Why haven't you finished?'

/She asked me why I hadn't finished.

„Be quiet!“ she shouted. /The teacher told us to be quiet.

„Sh-h-h!“ /The teacher told us to be quiet.

4.2 New and Continuing Topics

Please note

What follows is a sample of some of the structures which ought to be reviewed and taught during the two year course. It has been included mostly just to give teachers ideas and examples. Most of the new language structures you teach will arise from the comprehension material the pupils are studying. Teachers should not feel they must teach these structures and no others. This is neither a complete list nor an obligatory one.

a) Compound verb tenses and constructions

Future perfect, future continuous and other compound tenses. Constructions such as the past infinitive.

By this time next month I will have finished building my house.

I will be boarding the train at 7a.m.

I would like to have met her.

I'm pleased to have been able to help.

b) The subjunctive in „if“ clauses

I wish I were/was taller.

If I were/was taller, I could be a policeman.

If I were/was you, I would think twice before bringing up the issue again.

c) Use of discourse markers

Emphasis words:



Above all; It is important to note; most of all; a significant factor; remember that; the point is; it should be noted, etc.

Addition words:

First; for one thing; another point is; secondly/thirdly; the third issue/ reason/ point /item; also; in addition, finally; moreover; likewise; next, etc.

Change of direction words:

But, however, in contrast; yet; instead; still; on the contrary; on the other hand; conversely; nevertheless; while, etc.

Illustration words:

For example; specifically; once; for instance; such as; to illustrate, etc.

d) Ways to begin sentences (some examples)

Participial phrases:

Searching round for evidence, they found two footprints.

With her husband living in the city, she ran the farm herself.

Clauses beginning with conjunctions:

As long as you are there, I don't mind what happens.

Provided that it rains within two weeks, this will be an excellent crop.

Sentence modifiers and connectors:

Unfortunately, the news is bad.

Reluctantly, I carried out her orders.

To be frank, I wish I'd never come.

What's more, he didn't tell me he was leaving.

e) Preposition and gerund constructions

I came straight here without going home first.

On hearing the news, she decided to go home.

f) Indefinite constructions

Wherever you go, I will always think of you.

Whatever I do, it seems I'm doing the wrong thing.

However, whoever, whenever etc.

g) Comment clauses

As you know, I detest smoking.

The problem – as far as I understand it – has to do with the method of drying the leaves.

What we need, I suppose, is a new valve.

h) Relative clauses



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With prepositions: That's the man to whom I sold my cow.

With contact clauses: That's the man I sold my cow to.

With 'which': Here's the bus which goes to Shurugwi.

(Not 'of which', often incorrectly used as in the incorrect sentence 'The teacher told Mary to go

home, of which she refused.')

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i) 'What' clauses as subjects

What I do at home is my own business.

What annoys me is that he denies it.

j) The infinitive of result

I returned home to find the place in total disorder.

I arrived early, only to discover he hadn't got out of bed.

k) Impersonal 'it' + 'that' clauses

It is strange that she should want to leave so suddenly.

It is important that we finish before it rains.

l) Adverbs and 'enough'

I couldn't run fast enough to catch him.

I didn't stand up quickly enough.

m) Construction with 'such'

It fell with such force that it shattered into tiny pieces.

It was such a long way that we decided to leave early.

n) So as to, so that"



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She climbed the tree so as to have a better view.

She climbed the tree so that she would have a better view.

o) 'Except'

It was a wonderful idea, except that there wasn't enough money.

Everyone was cheerful except Susan.

p) Whether or not

Whether or not it rains, we will go out.

Whether it rains or not, we will go out.

q) Progressive tenses and 'always' to denote disapproval

You're always breaking things.

He's always telling lies.

r) 'So + 'do' to replace a verb group

Themba drives a lorry. So does Taurai.

He promised to finish spreading the manure, but he didn't do so.

s) Negatives

Double negatives: His statement cannot go unchallenged.

Negative questions: Don't you know where the bursar is?

Neither / Nor: Neither Jenny nor Tapiwa was paying attention.

Quasi-negatives: We rarely/seldom visit our aunt. Scarcely any were left. I can hardly / barely / scarcely hear him.

Only in times of severe drought does the river dry up.

Few people succeed without hard work.

Little rain means a small harvest.



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Negative constructions: Why don't you ask the teacher?

Don't you want to have some supper?

I think so, not that I'm an expert!

t) Precise references to day and times

Phrases and expressions such as: every other Monday; the first Tuesday of every month; the day before yesterday; the day after tomorrow, etc; the 24-hour clock, seventeen hundred hours, etc.

u) Directions

Expressions such as: on the left/right, to the left/right; the second turning; by the; when you come to the; right at the end of the, etc.



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