Influence of Teachers' Lived Experience on Conceptualization of ESL Teaching

Kangombe Dickson[1] (PHD), Nstala Sekanse[2] (PHD)

[1]Lecturer – Technical and Vocational Teachers College, Zambia.

[2]Senior Lecturer and Director of Programmes,

Department of Languages and Social Sciences Education

The University of The Free State, South Africa

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish secondary school teachers' conceptualisation of ESL teaching in Luanshya District of the Copperbelt Province in Zambia. The objective of this study was to ascertain how secondary school teachers conceptualised ESL teaching using their lived experiences within the Zambian context. This study was interpreted using the narrative theory whose primary claim is that information is more convincing when provided in a narrative format rather than in an argumentative approach. The sample size was made up of eight (08) secondary schools, from which eight (08) teachers were drawn, one (1) teacher from each school. A purely qualitative research design was adopted, following the narrative inquiry strategy. Data was gathered using face to face narrative interviews and classroom observations, and analyzed thematically. The findings had shown that ESL teachers of secondary schools in Zambia conceptualized ESL teaching in various ways such as it being cognitively oriented, rule explanation dominated, increased exposure to material, eclectic oriented and practice dominated. In view of these findings, it is recommended that ESL teachers of Zambia should reconceptualize their view of ESL teaching as constituting isolated elements and adopt an integrated approach

KEYWORDS: Lived experiences, English as a Second Language (ESL), Teachers, Teaching, Learning, Zambia, Pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

English has established itself as a global language. It is at the centre of social economic and political transactions which are pushing the agenda of a global village (British Council, 2013; Keith, 2001; Geert, 2001; Paul, 2002). As a result, so many nations are making efforts to expose their citizens to this language for easy communication. Cheng (2011) explained that in China, a big population is making efforts to learn the English language as it is perceived to be a vehicle through which new technological, social and economic knowledge can be accessed to remain competitive in the global village. Hang (2009) also commented that in Vietnam, the desire to learn the English language among the Vietnamese people is also increasing. This is because those who can speak English are given priority when both state-owned and private companies are offering employment. The knowledge of the English language also opens up Vietnamese citizens to international jobs. In Hong Kong, Lee (2005) also explained that English has been given a special place in the education system. It is perceived as an integral part of the curriculum and taught

in kindergarten and pre-schools alongside other subjects such as science and mathematics. In Singapore, the perception of English is the same as that of Hong Kong, Vietnam and China. Goh and Luan (2003) stated that there are five official languages in Singapore including English. However, of the five, the English language is viewed as the most important and it is being used as the sole medium of instruction in the entire education system. In European countries, the situation is comparatively the same as that of Asian countries. English is being given a privileged position. Kirkgoz (2003) explained that English language use had permeated all spheres of life in Turkey. It had become a language of trade, governance and education. English is used as a foreign language and at the same time as an official language. It is used in the school system as a language of instruction from kindergarten to the university level. Nortier (2011) commented that in Netherlands English is being used as the only medium of learning at tertiary level. The government encourages its citizens to learn the English language as it gives easy access to both local and international jobs. It also helps easy interactions with people from different countries. The situation in German, Bulgaria and Greece is equally the same. Citizens are being encouraged to learn English besides their mother tongues. Parents are being encouraged to send their children to English schools (Guntzman 2005; Gass & Reed; 2011 & Georgieva, 2010). In this advocacy of teaching and promoting the English language, African countries are not exempted. For example, McKay (2006) explained that in Nigeria, English has the status of an official language despite the many local languages that exist. Parents prefer to take their children to international schools where their children can be taught in English and learn the cultures of the language. The knowledge of English is perceived to enable citizens to have easy access to opportunities in foreign countries. Since independence countries like Namibia which got its freedom in 1990 and Botswana in 1966 all adopted English as their official language. This happened against the background of having other national languages like German in the case of Namibia. In South Africa, English is presently established among people from different linguistic backgrounds (Puttz 2004, Batibo 2004). It is used as a lingua franca. It is the primary language of government business and commerce. It is a compulsory subject in schools and a preferred medium of instruction in most schools and tertiary institutions. From these discussions, it can be seen that English has established its place in the global space. In Asia, Europe and Africa it is preferred among other mother tongue languages as a language of everyday government business such as trade, politics, legislation and education. The influence of the English language cannot be ignored and keeps on expanding.

The Zambian situation is the same. There are arguably 73 mother tongue languages and yet English is highly preferred. It enjoys a higher status than other languages. English is the primary language used in legislative proceedings, official communications, and government administration (Mwanza, 2016; Goldman, 2019; Chishimba & Manchishi 2016; Banda, 2012; Mwanza, 2016; Wakumelo, 2013). The Zambian educational system reflects the prominent status of English. Regional local languages are used as media of classroom instruction during the first four years of primary school. From grade five on through postsecondary education, English becomes the only language of instruction (Curriculum Development Centre-CDC, 2013). All secondary schools must offer it as a required subject, and it is taught as a second language. Teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) in all the regions in Zambia are expected to be highly knowledgeable in their area of specialisation and competently deliver their lessons in a classroom situation (Ministry of Education-M.O. E, 1977; C.D.C, 2013). They are also expected to help interpret and implement the ESL curriculum adequately to help improve learner performance (Mwanza, 2017). The aim of teaching English in secondary schools in Zambia is to help learners acquire the necessary knowledge, values, techniques and skills 4 (writing, speaking, reading and listening) needed to function in real-life experiences (C.D.C, 2013).

Much attention is given to secondary education in Zambia because it is a foundation upon which learners must build their careers. However, there has been cumulative discontent regarding the ESL skills that school leavers display inter alia writing, reading and speaking (Ng'ona, 2016; Mumba 2019; Mubita & Mwanza, 2020; Musonda & Mwanza, 2021). The Examinations Council of Zambia reports on ESL learner results also

continue indicating poor performance in ESL school leaving examinations (ECZ, 2008, 2015, 2016, 2019,2021). The above situation has been attributed to teachers' lack of effective teaching skills, inadequate teacher preparations for lessons and under-stocked libraries (Ng'ona, 2016). Further factors include a shortage of well-trained teachers, lack of motivation, large and overcrowded classrooms as well as obstacles in language learning skills which in turn affects the performance of learners. Inadequate teacher training, lack of subject background knowledge, the inexperience of some teachers, use of poor teaching strategies, failure to cover set target items by teachers, low reading proficiency levels among learners, and scarcity of teaching/learning materials have also been characterising the teaching of ESL in the Zambian secondary schools (Mwanza, 2016; Mumba, 2019; Mwelwa & Mwanza, 2020). Among the possible causes of the poor skills of learners is an inadequate teacher training system. For example, teachers of English spend three to four years in colleges and universities. They are taught teaching methods and content (Mwanza & Manchishi, 2013; Masaiti & Manchishi, 2011; Mulenga & Banja, 2019). They are also given an opportunity as student teachers to put theory into practice for a period of about twelve weeks during teaching practice (Manchishi & Mwanza, 2013). After training, they are deployed in various private and public schools around the country to go and begin their careers. Despite undergoing training, teachers still fail to put theory into practice (Manchishi & Mwanza, 2013). The teacher training programmes are seen as not being responsive to the needs of secondary schools and need revision (Masaiti & Manchishi, 2011).

From these discussions, it is plain that the possible causes mentioned here neglect another important pedagogical aspect, which is the lived-experiences of ESL teachers. It is important to remember that teaching also has a cognitive component that emphasizes teachers' own experiences as well as other factors like feelings, emotions, attitudes, and perceptions. According to Oxford Reference (2021), personal knowledge about the world gained via direct, first-hand involvement in everyday occurrences rather than through representation generated by other people is what lived experiences are. This concept demonstrates how people create information and meaning about the world they live in through their experiences, which shapes what they may see as reality. Beyond their current position as teachers, early childhood education, primary and secondary schools, pre-service training, ongoing professional development, and post-retirement are all included in the lived experiences of ESL teachers. Therefore, there is no denying that teachers' personal experiences have an impact on how they teach. Islam (2017) argued in favour of this statement by pointing out that teachers draw on their own life experiences to deliver teachings effectively. Furthermore, according to Biesta (2015), while deciding how to set up the activities in the classroom, teachers rely on their judgment, which is shaped by their own life experiences. Tudor (2001) also brought up the idea that prior learning impacts how students behave in class. The experiences teachers had as students, according to Borg's 2003 argument, shape the way they think about teaching. Likewise, Lortie (1975) discussed the "apprenticeship of observation." He said that teachers don't walk into teacher preparation programs or meet students in a genuine classroom setting with a blank mind. They do, however, bring with them the extensive information they have acquired about teaching over the years as a result of their experiences as students. In the UK, observations were made that teachers form cognitions about teaching based on their personal experiences. These teachers find it hard to get rid of this knowledge as soon as they are presented with incongruous proof (Borg, 2015). Similar observations have been made in Turkey and confirmed that prior experiences influenced how teachers progressed in their teaching careers (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2017). In Chile, Canada and Lebanon, similar comments having been uttered, maintained that what teachers observed while they were learners strongly influenced their classroom decisions after qualifying as teachers (Bangau et al., 2011; Canciro, 2020). In African countries such as Tunisia, South Africa, and Mozambique, it has been noticed that teachers' cultural backgrounds, prior experiences, knowledge and beliefs influenced career choices and were reflected in classroom lesson delivery. (Nhapulo, 2013; Anyanwu, 2016; Bouchhioua, 2019) From the foregoing discussions, it can be seen that teachers lived experiences are being recognised as playing a vital role in the teaching of ESL within and outside the African context. It can be concluded, therefore, that teachers' lived experiences cannot be separated from classroom practice. For a long time now in Zambia, no research has been conducted on the lived experiences of ESL teachers. The focus has been on

components of methodology, such as; eclecticism, communicative language teaching and language competence, learner-centered techniques and integrated text-based approach (Lungu, 2006; Chishipula, 2015; Mwanza, 2016; Nyimbiri,2017; Sikaindo,2017; Mumba, 2019; Zulu,2019; Mwelwa & Mwanza,2020; Phiri, 2021). From these discussions, it is plain to see that the conceptualization of English as a second language in the Zambian research landscape is fixed on teaching methodologies. However, it must be pointed out that such a perspective is myopic. English as a second language has several dimensions and teaching methodologies are just but one of them. This study was a shift from methodology to lived experiences. It is against this background that this study endeavored to establish how lived experiences of secondary school teachers influenced the conceptualization of ESL teaching in Zambia.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A lot of studies have been done on teaching ESL in Zambian secondary schools. However, their primary focus has been exclusively ESL teaching methodologies. To my knowledge, there is no evidence of any study that aimed at ascertaining how lived experiences of teachers influenced their conceptualisation of ESL teaching in Zambian secondary school. To put as a question the problem was: how do secondary school teachers conceptualise ESL teaching using their lived experiences within the Zambian context?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To ascertain how secondary school teachers conceptualised ESL teaching using their lived experiences within the Zambian context.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How do secondary school teachers conceptualise ESL teaching using their lived experiences within the Zambian context?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research engaged a narrative methodology. The choice was motivated by the researchers' desire to investigate the experiences of people, in this case, the ESL teachers. Connelly & Clandinin (2000), who defined narrative methodology as a method in which the inquirers study human lives via stories, provided support for this choice. The scholars in question further argued that recounted and stored information is done so in a sequential manner. The researcher's and the participant's perspectives are blended during the procedure. By letting people narrate tales about themselves, a narrative strategy concentrates on people's lives, according to Riessman (2008). Through the use of this technique, participants were able to recall their early ESL learning experiences and encounters that have had a lasting impact on their teaching careers

Research design

A research design, according to Yin (2003), links the research questions that led to the study's inception to the methods of data collection and the findings. This academic added that a research design functions as a lens through which the complete study process may be visualized. According to Msabila and Nalaila (2013; p. 27), it is a "plan on how a study is conducted or a precise overview of how an investigation will take place." From these definitions, it can be deciphered that a research design highlights all the necessary steps that need to be taken to answer a given research question cohesively and coherently.

Target population

A population is defined as a group of individuals, objects, or things that share certain traits from which samples may be taken to be used in a specific study (Kombo & Tromp, 2006; Msabila & Nalaila 2013). The Copperbelt Province's Luanshya district is where this study was conducted. There are 16 secondary schools in the Luanshya district. Four (4) of these are located in the district's peri-urban areas, and thirteen (12) are in its urban areas. About 171 ESL teachers work in secondary schools overall, according to estimates. All of the ESL teachers from the 17 secondary schools in the Luanshya district made up my study's population.

Sample size

According to Kasonde (2013), a sample is that portion of the population that is thought to be representative of the study's total population. According to Mungenda & Mungenda (2012), a sample size is a small group or a subset of a population selected for a study from which generalisations about a community's features are made. A smaller sample size, according to Mungenda & Mungenda (2012), makes the researcher's task of managing and controlling the participants easier. The eight ESL teachers included in this study all came from the district of Luanshya's eight (8) chosen secondary schools.

Sampling techniques

According to Hamed (2016), sampling is a method of obtaining data for an investigation that is thought to be representative of a wider population. This study involved individuals who are specialists in the teaching of ESL by using purposeful sampling (Robinson, 2014). To provide crucial data that cannot be gained from other selections, individuals, situations, or events are purposefully chosen in purposeful sampling, according to Hair et al. (2011

Research instruments

Mkandawire (2010) explained research instruments as tools or guides that an inquirer may use to gather the intended data. In this study, researchers used interview guides, observation schedules and an audio recorder. Interview guides helped to elicit information during face-to-face interviews with teachers to find out their lived experiences with ESL. Furthermore, observation schedules were used to observe the lessons of teachers in their classrooms to find out whether or not their lived experiences influenced their classroom judgements and decision-making. An audio recorder was used to record the interviews.

Data analysis

As epistemological methods in research based on the narratives of participants, Holstein and Gubrium (1997) proposed constructivism and naturalism. To comprehend how teachers interpreted their experiences, discussed their experiences, and positioned themselves in tales, this study adopted a constructivist perspective. Additionally, the researchers looked at how different stories were communicated as well as how social and interpersonal interactions affected how those stories were put together. thematic analysis was used to analyze and classify repeated patterns or themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) described the thematic approach as one method of data exploration that involves examining data numerous times. According to Kiger & Varpio (2020), successful analysis of qualitative data requires that six phases in identifying themes be followed: getting acquainted with the data, creating preliminary codes, looking for themes, analyzing themes, identifying and labelling themes, and writing a report or manuscript is among them.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In Zambia, the Ministry of General Education expects teachers of ESL to express competence in subject content as well as teaching methodologies (M.O.E. 2013). This implies that teachers must have a deep

understanding of what ESL teaching and learning is all about. This is because it is what teachers know which dictates the choices and decisions made during lesson delivery. To ascertain how secondary school teachers conceptualized ESL teaching using their lived experiences within the Zambian context, the study used the narrative face-to-face interview guide. The findings were presented as follows: a cognitive approach to teaching language, a rule-dominated approach to language teaching, exposure to language materials, an eclectic approach to language teaching and practice-dominated language teaching.

Cognitive approach to ESL teaching

From the interviews conducted, it was discovered that some teachers' conceptualization of ESL teaching was a cognitive one. This meant that they preferred the cognitive approach to teaching the English language. For instance, Teacher 1 and Teacher 4 cited ESL teaching as being a revision of previous work and a recap of main points after teaching as being strategies they learnt from their previous teachers. This can be seen in the following verbatim:

 Teacher 1: Everything I do in class I learnt from my past teachers. I learnt the technique of recapping the previous lesson before starting a new one from my previous experiences with colleagues and past teachers during my secondary and primary school days. I saw them doing it and I also do it because it works.

Teacher 4: Our teachers would always do a recap of the previous lesson before beginning a new one. After the new topic has ended they would also do a recap. They would also frequently ask questions. I have adopted this way of teaching because it helps to ensure that learners are following the lesson

Teacher 4: Most of what I do in class I learnt from my previous teachers of English. They could revise the previous lesson before starting a new one. Our teachers could also be strict with us on spelling, tenses and punctuation, especially in secondary school. Also in our days, our teachers used learner-centered methods so I use it as it allows language practice for easy remembrance.

From the above verbatim, the teachers did not report anything concerning the understanding which guided their past teachers. Revision, recap and learner-centered techniques in language lessons are located within the framework of the cognitive code approach. The emphasis of this approach is the mind of a learner. The learner must be given opportunities for storing, processing and retrieving language information. The teacher becomes a facilitator (Demirezen, 2014). The weakness of this approach is that it focuses more on the learner, employing deductive ways of teaching grammar rules and neglecting the use of authentic material. The aforementioned has implications for practice. Firstly, Teacher 1 and Teacher 4's conceptualization of ESL teaching may result in their learners gaining the knowledge of grammar rules but failing to apply them in real-life situations. Secondly, application of learner-centered technique as highlighted by Teacher 4 may result into giving learners too much freedom to direct their learning. This may be time-consuming leading to teachers failing to meet other curriculum demands like completion of the syllabus. What teachers need is an understanding of the theoretical background of every language knowledge they may have to know how to strike a balance.

Rule-dominated ESL teaching

Some teachers viewed ESL teaching as the ability to teach the rules of the language to learners. For example, in light of their lived experiences, Teacher 4 and Teacher 6 viewed ESL teaching as being just about following rules to manipulate words and sentences and correct spellings and pronunciations. This is as evidenced in the following verbatim:

Teacher 4: In primary school, my teachers, were not so strict about following rules. Sometimes they could mark my work and make corrections on my behalf. When I went to secondary school, it was different

altogether. Our teachers became strict with rules. If you are given work and do not follow the grammatical rules like changing tenses in reported speech they would mark you wrong. Because of that, I have come to understand that grammatical rules are more important when teaching English. I make sure I teach mystudents the rules.

Teacher 6: During my primary and secondary years my teachers used to insist on us learning the grammatical rules. I still also find myself insisting that my learners must follow the grammatical rules of the language.

The above findings are similar to Phiri (2021) who explored teacher understanding of ESL grammar and found that teachers of ESL in Luanshya district of Zambia understood grammar as a simply manipulation of rules. For the teachers in my study, ESL was all about teaching grammatical concepts. Such a notion is framed within the transformational generative grammar which was proposed by Noam Chomsky (Brown 1994, Chomsky, 1957). For Chomsky, grammar was a system of rules used to combine words to form grammatical sentences. The whole process involved the use of defined operations called transformations which could be used to provide new sentences from existing sentences. The challenge with this kind of conceptualization is the failure to consider context and go beyond the sentence structure (Tolulope, 2021). The implication for practice is that teachers with such kind of an understanding may fail to integrate appropriate context into the concepts they are teaching. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education encourages ESL teachers to teach learners how to apply the rules of grammar so that they can speak and write grammatically correct English. This in return will enable them to communicate intended messages and function effectively in appropriate social contexts. Also, ESL teaching in Zambia should go beyond grammatical rules to include summary, composition, comprehension, speaking and listening as directed by the Ministry of Education (C.D.C., 2013).

Increased exposure to ESL material

In this study, other teachers understood ESL teaching as being exposed to ESL language materials. The aforementioned was true in the case of Teacher 7 and Teacher 8. These teachers had the following to say:

Teacher 7: What is needed when teaching English is exposure to the material. Our teachers at secondary school were trying to expose us to textbooks even though they were not enough but we had some kind of exposure. Because of that I also give my learners' readers (story books) to go with them to their homes so that they can read and practice other items like comprehension, composition and summary

Teacher 8: For me exposure to material is important. In our days, our teachers never used to expose us to language materials, we had no exposure to language materials whether spoken or written. We just relied on what the teacher said. Contrary to what I experienced, in my class, I try by all means to expose learners to material which relates to what I teach them.

From the above verbatim, it can be seen that teacher 7 had a positive lived experience with materials which positively influenced his understanding of ESL teaching. However, teacher 8 had a negative experience which affected her positively as she always strived to expose her learners to language materials because she didn't want her learners to have the same experience as hers. The situation which influenced teacher 8's understanding of ESL is technically referred to as anti-apprenticeship of observation (Borg, 2003; Lortie, 1975). The aforementioned scholars explained the anti-apprenticeship of observation as a situation in which prior negative language learning experiences positively shape one's conceptualization of ESL teaching and learning. Language learning materials are at the centre of a language classroom as they are a channel through which teachers facilitate learning both within and outside the classroom (Castillo et'al, 2017). In their conceptualization, Teacher 7 and Teacher 8 did not make a distinction between classroom-tailored language materials and authentic language materials. Classroom-tailored language materials are specifically

designed to be used within the confines of a language classroom whereas authentic language materials are those which are not tailored for the classroom but have the authenticity of the language (Tomlinson, 1998). Morrow (1977) claimed that authentic texts are language materials made up of authentic language designed by authentic producers meant for an authentic audience and to convey authentic information. The use of authentic materials is recommended in the Zambian Senior Secondary English syllabus through the concurrent use of communicative language teaching and integrated text-based approaches (C.D.C, 2013). The communicative language teaching approach advocates for use of authentic communicative situations whereas the text-based approach emphasizes the use of authentic texts in engaging learners in reading. Authentic language materials help learners to learn easily, cope with real-world language, and increase confidence, concentration and involvement in target activities ((Hammer, 1994; Peacock, 1997; Hedge, 2000). Teachers should, therefore, expose learners to both types of language learning materials if learners are to learn the language easily and have the confidence to use the language in real-life situations. Furthermore, the understanding expressed by Teacher 7 that language exposure is all about textbooks is quite a narrow one. A multimodal understanding is what is encouraged. Multimodality can be defined as an understanding by a teacher that language exposure goes beyond texts to involve videos, audio, pictures and comics. The advantage of such a perception is that it avails both teachers and learners with a variety of learning styles by making language learning interesting (Kress, 2010).

Increased eclecticism in ESL teaching

Furthermore, Teacher 2 and Teacher 5 conceptualized ESL teaching as a combination of various methods. During the interviews these teachers had the following to say:

Teacher 2: During my secondary and primary school our teachers could vary the way they taught us. Even in college, it was the same. They could use question and answer, class discussions or even debates. Even when I am teaching I used questions and answers, class discussions, group discussions and debates. Pupils can't learn using one method.

Teacher 5: Our teachers could take us through drills, and direct methods and use teaching aids sometimes they could just explain concepts. They used various methods. In my classes, I do the same. I combine methods. I explain concepts, conduct group discussions, and debates and sometimes use teaching aids.

A combination of methods, which Teacher 2 and Teacher 5 were referring to can technically be called eclecticism. The above findings are in line with Mwanza (2016) who found teachers of the Central Province of Zambia using eclecticism in their teaching of English grammar. These findings are also in line with the Senior Secondary Zambian English syllabus (M.O.E, 2013, p 42) which states that 'The teaching of English should be eclectic to include various approaches such as question and answer, group work and class discussions. In addition, the conceptualization that Teacher 2 and Teacher 5 exhibited is pedagogical in nature. However, M.O.E (2013) recommends that ESL teachers be knowledgeable in both pedagogical content knowledge and subject content knowledge. Such an understanding as exhibited by the teachers under discussion may lead to ESL teachers who are competent in content knowledge and yet lacking in pedagogical knowledge. In addition, Teacher 2 and Teacher 5 could not differentiate methods from techniques. The English syllabus which should guide teachers on such matters fails to provide clear explanations of these terminologies. It uses them interchangeably (M.O.E, 2013). What the syllabus and teachers explained as methods, for example, pair work, question and answer, and class discussions were not methods but techniques. These findings are in line with Mwanza (2016)'s study on eclecticism which established the failure of Central Province teachers to differentiate methodology from techniques. A method or methodology is defined as an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material whereas techniques describe the practical aspects of classroom implementation (Richards and Rodgers, 2006). The misunderstandings of methodology and techniques by teachers of Luanshya may suggest three things. The first one may be that they may have been misinformed by the Zambia Senior Secondary English language

syllabus. Secondly, the teaching methodology courses they learnt may not have adequately addressed these matters. The third one is that the teachers might have been taught at college but over the years forgot how to differentiate the concepts in question. If such misconceptions are to be addressed, policy documents such as the Zambian Senior Secondary English syllabus must be written by experts with detailed pedagogical knowledge. In addition, colleges and universities must clearly outline to the students the differences that exist been methodology and techniques and marry them with content. Furthermore, as the teachers are serving, besides just focusing on subject content knowledge, such methodological knowledge can be preserved and expanded upon through research and School-Based Continuous Professional Development.

Practice-dominated ESL teaching

The findings had also shown that some teachers perceived ESL teaching as being all about practice. For example, Teachers 3 and 7 stated the following:

Teacher 3: *I make sure I give my learners a lot of work to practice both written and spoken. When I was at Fatima girls and Kasama girls boarding schools that was how we were taught by nuns.*

Teacher 7: *for learners to understand and learn they need a lot of practice. During my time at secondary school, our teachers could display a lot of structures for us to practice almost every day. I also do the same I make sure that my learners practice a lot be it structure, comprehension, summary and composition. I make sure we practice together.*

The above findings are in line with both the Zambia National Curriculum Framework and the Senior Secondary Zambian English syllabus which explain that Learners must be given enough time to practice what they learn in an oral and written manner (M.O. E, 2013; C.D.C 2013). Such an understanding inclines mastery of concepts. However, the ultimate goal of a teacher is not helping learners to develop mastery of language concepts but the ability to communicate which may need little of the target language (McColl and Thomas, 2013). Furthermore, what Teacher 3 and Teacher 5 saw from past teachers was just classroom language practice. However, there is also the practice of language outside the classroom. Teachers of ESL should therefore encourage learners to practice in the classroom as well as outside their classroom in everyday life situations to help learners develop both their linguistic and communicative competence. Chomsky (1965) defines linguistic competence as the aspect of possessing vocabulary and grammatical knowledge and being in a position to distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical structures. Hymes (1966) contrasted Chomsky's linguistic competence by introducing communicative competence. For Hymes, knowledge of grammatical rules was not enough, context must be added. A speaker of a given language was to possess, 'knowledge about what to say, when to say, were to say, how to say, why to say and to whom to say' (Phiri, 2021, p 71).

The above findings are consistent with the narrative theory adopted for this study, which contends that humans have different experiences of the same phenomenon; as a result, they formulate different meanings out of the same experiences. In this study, participants were all teachers of ESL with varying years of practice. However, based on their personal experiences of being learners and teachers of ESL, they expressed different understandings of what ESL teaching was all about (Fisher, 1985). They highlighted various understandings such as the cognitive approach to teaching language, rule- dominated approach to language teaching, exposure to language material, eclectic approach to language teaching and practice-dominated language practice. What should be advocated therefore is an integrated approach towards ESL teaching as recommended by the Ministry of Education through the Senior Secondary English syllabus (M.O.E). Teachers of ESL must be vested in all the components of pedagogical knowledge as well as all the components of subject content knowledge. During classroom practice, teachers should use the pedagogical and content knowledge of ESL to help learners develop both linguistic competencies as well as communicative competence (Castillo et' al, 2017).

The above findings are in line with the narrative theory upon which this study is framed. This theory embraces an interpretivist or constructivist stance on the creation of knowledge and meaning. With the narrative theory, humans form meaning or understanding out of the stories of their lives (Hammersley, 2013; Fisher, 1985). This meaning is relative to the personal stories or experiences of humans. In this section, the respondents who were teachers displayed their understanding of what ESL teaching was all about. Based on their personal stories or experiences they have had with ESL as learners, they displayed various forms of conceptualization of ESL teaching, during interviews, as discussed above.

CONCLUSIONS

All the teachers in this study conceptualized ESL teaching in various ways due to their lived experiences. These views were purely pedagogical. However, ESL teaching is not just about pedagogical knowledge. It also encompasses knowledge of content, knowledge of learning, knowledge of classroom management, knowledge of students, knowledge of culture and knowledge of the context (Dadvand & Behzadpoor, 2020). Furthermore, some teachers' conceptualization of ESL was rule dominated, a notion which is framed within transformational generative grammar (Brown 1994, Chomsky, 1957). The aforementioned view neglects a critical aspect of language which is context. In the light of the findings and conclusions presented in this study, the following are recommended:

- School authorities should formulate programs and curricula that would prepare teachers to become competent both locally and globally in teaching English.
- There should be a more integrative approach to the target language assessment in terms of grammatical, spelling and vocabulary performance to gauge second language accuracy and complexity.
- There should be innovations in the 2nd language assessment strategies among schools for the benefit of both teachers and students.
- Language instruction in all schools should take the form of separate target language lessons and should also be integrated into communicative activities (a focus on-form approach).

REFERENCES

1. Anyanwu, M. A.2016. Experiences of the South African high school classroom: A case study of High school English classroom experiences of student teachers of English at a university in KwaZulu-Natal. Unpublished master's dissertation. University of KwaZulu-Natal, KwaZulu-Nata
2. Banda, D. 2012. Empowering or disabling. The evaluation of the primary reading programme (PRP) in Zambia. Koln: Lambert Publishing Company-German
3. Bangou, F., Felemis, D., and Ann, C. 2011. Pre-Service teachers' beliefs related to ESL and EFL. Where is the difference? Theory and Practice in Language Studies,1(9) 1031- 1046.
4. Banja, M.K. and Mulenga, I.N.2019. Teacher education at the university of Zambia and Teacher Quality with specific Reference to English. Makerere Journal of Higher Education, 10(2)171-191
5. Batibo, H. M. 2004. Setswana: An under-exploited national resource? In K. Bromber & B. Smieja(Eds.).Trends in linguistics: Globalisation and African languages: Risks and benefits. (pp. 53-63). Berlin: Mouto
6. Biesta, G.2015. What is Education For? On Good Education, Teacher Judgement, and Educational Professionalism. European Journal of Education, 50 (1) 75-87.
7. Borg, S. 2015. Teacher cognition and Language Education: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe and do. Language Teaching, 36 (2), 81–109.
8. Bouchhioua, N. 2019. Teacher cognition on pronunciation teaching and testing in the Tunisian EFL

context. Journal of Second and Multiple Language Acquisition – JSMULA, 7 (2) 48-6.

9. Braun, V., & Clarke, V.2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qual Res Psychol.3(2) 77-101

10. British Council. 2013. The English Effect: London

11. Brown, D.H.1994. Principles of Language Learning. New York: Addison Wesley, Longman Inc

12. Canciro, M., Daran, M. & Solorza, C. 2020. What learning can do to teaching. Assessing the impact of apprenticeship of observation on pre-service teachers' belief. English Teaching & Learning, 44(3) 297-312.

13. Castillo L, C. A., Insuasty, E. A., and Jaime O.M. F. 2017. The impact of authentic materials and tasks on students' communicative competence at a Colombian language school. PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development,19(1),89-104.

14. Cheng, X. 2011. The English curriculum standards' in China: Rationales and issues. In A. Feng (Ed.). English language education across Greater China. (pp. 133- 150). Bristol, Buffalo, and Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

15. Chishimba, G. M., & Manchishi, P.C.2016. The Language Strategy in the Zambian Education System from 1924 to 2014. International Journal of Language and Literature, 4(1), 54-59

16. Chishipula, J .2015. Factors Hindering Teachers of Language From Implementing communicative language teaching approach: A case of Selected Secondary schools in Chongwe District. Unpublished Masters Dissertation. Lusaka. The University of Zambia.

17. Chomsky, N.1965. Aspects of Syntax of Theory of Syntax. Cambridge: MIT Press.

18. Chomsky, N (1957). Syntactic Structure. The Hague: Mouton.

19. Clandinin, D. J. and Connelly, F. M. 2000. Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research.

20. Curriculum Framework.2012. Planning, Organisation & Management of school/ classroom processes. A position paper. Directorate of State Education, Research and Training. Bangaluru.

21. Curriculum Development Centre.2013. Senior Secondary English language Syllabus (Grade 10-12). Lusaka.

22. Dadvand, B. and Behzadpoor, F. 2020. 'Pedagogical knowledge in English language teaching: A lifelong-learning, complex-system perspective'. London Review of Education, 18 (1): 107–125. https://doi.org/10.18546/LRE.18.1.08

23. Demirezen, M. 2014. Cognitive-code theory and foreign language learning relations. International online journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET), 1(5). 309-317.

24. ECZ. 2014. Examination Performance Review. Literature and Languages. Lusaka: ECZ

25. ECZ. 2008. Examiners Report on the 2007 Joint School Certificate and Examination. Lusaka: ECZ

26. ECZ. 2015. Examination Performance Review. Literature and Languages. Lusaka: ECZ

27. ECZ. 2019. Examination Performance Review. Literature and Languages. Lusaka: ECZ

28. ECZ. 2020. Examination Performance Review. Literature and Languages. Lusaka: ECZ

29. Fisher, W.R. 1985. Human communication as narration: Toward a philosophy of reason, value, and action. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.

30. Gass, S. M. & Reed, D.2011. English language teaching: A case study of test development in Greece. In A.D. Houwer& A. Wilton(Eds.). English in Europe Today: Sociocultural and educational perspectives. (pp. 31-50). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

31. Geert, B.2001. English as a lingual franca of Europe. A Dutch Perspective', Lingua-eStile,36(2) 357.

32. Georgieva, M. 2010. EFL: From 'You sound like Dickens' to international English. In M. Saxena & T. Comoniyi(Eds.).Contending with globalization in world Englishes. (pp. 113-136). Bristol, Buffalo, and Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

33. Gnutzmann, C. 2005. English language teaching in Germany: A reflection of the national and universal importance of English. InG.Braine (Ed.).Teaching English to the world: History, curriculum, and practice. (pp. 23-33). Mahwah, New Jersey and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

34. Goh, H. & Luan, T. K. 2003. Reflections of EFL students through email: An exploratory study. In L. G. Ling, L. Ho, J. E. L. Meyer, C. Varaprasad, & C. Young (Eds.). Teaching English to students from

China. (pp. 54-72). Singapore: Singapore University Press.

35. Hair, J.F., Celsi, M.W., Money, A.H., Samouel, P and Page, M.J. 2011. Essentials of business research methods. (2nd Ed.). New York: Sharpe.

36. Hamed, T.2016. Sampling Methods in Research Methodology; How to Choose a Sampling Technique for Research. SSRN Electronic Journal, 5(2)18-27.

37. Hammersley, M. 2013. What is Qualitative Research? London and NewYork: Bloomsbury

38. Hang, P. T. T. 2009. Impacts of Vietnam's social context on learners' attitudes towards foreign languages and English language learning: Implications for teaching and learning. The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly, 11(4), 169-188.

39. Harmer, J.1994.The practice of English language teaching.London, UK: Longman.

40. Harmer, J. 1994. The practice of English language teaching.London, UK: Longman.

41. Hedge, T. 2000. Teaching and learning in the language classroom. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

42. Hymes, D.H.1966. Two types of Linguistic Relativity. In Bright W. Sociolinguistics. The Hague: Mouton pp 114-158

43. Islam, R. 2017. Investigating Factors that Contribute to Effective Teaching-Learning Practices: EFL/ESL classroom Context. English Language Teaching,10 (4)15-21.

44. Kasonde, N. S.2013. Writing a research proposal in Educational Research. Lusaka: University of Zambi

45. Keith, B. 2001. Norms of Global English' , Angelicana-Turkuensia, no.23, pp. 1-14

46. Kiger , E. M., & Varpio ,L. 2020. Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131, Medical Teache

47. Kirkgoz, Y. 2005. English language teaching in Turkey: Challenges for the 21st century. In G. Braine (Ed.). Teaching English to the world: History, curriculum, and practice. (pp. 103-113). Mahwah, New Jersey and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers

48. Kombo, D.K & Tromp, D.L.A. 2006. Proposal and Thesis Writing: An Introduction, Nairobi: Paulines Africa

49. Lortie, D. 1975. Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

50. Lungu, E.C.2006. The Effectiveness of Communicative Approaches and Traditional Methods on Reading and Writing Achievement in English in Grade Eight in Selected Zambia Basic Schools. Unpublished PhD Thesis. The University of Zambia.

51. Manchishi, P. 2004. The status of Indigenous Languages in Institutions of Learning in Zambia. Past, Present and Future. The African Symposium Vol.4 No. 1.

52. Manchishi, P. C. & Masaiti, G.2011. The University of Zambia Pre-Service Teacher Education Programme: Is it Responsive to Schools and Communities" Aspirations? European Journal of Educational Studies, 3(2),311- 324.

53. Manchishi, P.C & Mwanza, D.S .2016. Teacher Preparation at The University of Zambia. International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Education,3(11), 88-100.

54. Manchishi, P.C & Mwanza, S.D.2013. The University of Zambia School Teaching Experience: Is it Effective? Excellence in Higher Education (2013): 61-77.

55. Ministry of Education.1977. Educational Reform: Proposals and Recommendations. Lusaka: Government of the Republic of Zambia Printer.

56. Mkandawire, S. 2010. Challenges of curriculum implementation in learning institutions. Available at: https://sitwe.wordpress.com/2010/12/03/challenges-ofcurriculumimplementation-in-learning-institutions/ [Accessed 24/09/2021].

57. Morrow, K. 1977. Authentic texts in esp. In S. Holden (Ed.), English for specific purposes (pp. 13-15). London, UK: Modern English Publications.

58. Msabila, D.T., & Nalaila, S.G. 2013.Research Proposal and Dissertation Writing: Principles and Practice. Dar es Salaam: Nyambari Nyamgwine Publishers.

59. Mubita, E.S & Mwanza D.S .2020. Factors Contributing to Poor Performance in Literature in English. International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education, 7 (3), 55-65.

60. Mubita, S.E., & Mwanza, D.S.2020. Factors Contributing to Pupils' Poor Performance in Literature in English. International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education, 7(3),55-65.

61. Mugenda, O. and Mugenda, A. 2012. Research methods Laba Graphics Services, Nairobi.

62. Mulenga, I.M.2015. English Language Teacher Education Curriculum Designing: A Mixed Methods Analysis of the Programme at the University of Zambia. PhD Thesis: University of Zambia.

63. Mumba, C. 2019. Teachers Implementation of the Text-Based Integrated Approach to Grade 11 pupils in Teaching English in Selected Secondary Schools in Luanshya district. Unpublished Masters Dissertation. Lusaka. The University of Zambia.

64. Musonda, P.M., & Mwanza , S. M .2021. Contesting English Hegemony in Zambian Education System: Causes and Effects. International Journal on Studies in English Literature, 9(4),1-15.

65. Mwanza, C.2017. Teacher Involvement in Curriculum Development in Zambia: a Role Analysis of Selected Secondary Schools in Lusaka District. Unpublished Masters Dissertation. University of Zambia: Lusaka

66. Mwanza, D.S. 2016. A Critical Reflection on Eclecticism in the Teaching of English Grammar at Selected Zambian Secondary Schools. Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Western Cape, South Africa.

67. Mwanza, J.2000. Hands-on Social Research Hand-Book for Students of Social Sciences. Unza press. Lusaka.

68. Mwelwa , W. , & Mwanza ,D .2020. Analysing Teaching Strategies Teachers use to Develop Communicative Competence in Secondary School English Language Learners. International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education, 7, (3), 43-54

69. Ng'ona, R.2016. Factors Contributing to poor performance in English Composition writing among grade 12 pupils in Kabwe District Zambia. The unpublished Master's Thesis University of Zambia. Lusaka.

70. Nhapulo, M. A. 2013. Teacher and learner beliefs and expectations about English language teaching and learning at a Mozambican university.Afrika focus, 26(2), 81-109.

71. Nyimbiri, F. 2017. The use of Learner-Centred Techniques in the Teaching of English Language in Lundazi. Unpublished Masters Dissertation. Lusaka. University of Zambia

72. Oxford reference.2021. Dictionary of Media and Communication. Oxford university press Ozturk, G. and Gurburz. 2017. Re-defining Language Teacher Cognition through a data driven model: The case of three EFL teachers. Cogent Education

73. Peacock, M. 1997. The effect of authentic material on the motivation of EFL learners. ELT Journal, 51(2), 144-156.http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/51.2.144.

74. Phiri, J. 2021. Influence of Teacher Cognition in the Teaching and Testing of English Grammar in Selected Secondary Schools of Luanshya District, Zambia. Unpublished Masters Dissertation. Lusaka. University of Zambia

75. Richards J.C and Rodgers, T.S.2006. Approaches and Methods in English Language Teaching. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press Riessman, C. K. 2008. Narrative methods for the human sciences. Los Angeles, Calif.: Sage Publications.

76. Sikaindo, P.2017. Methodologies used in teaching oral communication skills in secondary schools in Lusaka Urban, Zambia. Unpublished Masters' Thesis. University of Zambia, Lusaka.

77. Tolupe, O.2021. Strengths and Limitations of Transformational Generative Grammar. University of Lagos

78. Tomlinson, B. 1998. Materials development in language teaching. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press

79. Tudor, I. 2001. The Dynamics of the Language Classroom. Cambridge: CUP.

80. Wakumelo, M.N.2013. A critical analysis of Zambia's language-in-education policy. Challenges and lessons learned. 'In H.Mcllwraith(ed). Multilingual Education in Africa: Lessons from the Juba Language in Education Conference, British Council.

81. Yin, R. K. 2003. Case study research: design and methods (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE