

Implementation of the Communicative Approach Techniques by Teachers of French in Secondary Schools in Kabwe District, Central Province, Zambia

Elias Amsini Mukayi and Peter Chomba Manchishi
The University of Zambia

ABSTRACT

French has been taught in Zambia as a Foreign Language even before independence. Manchishi and Chishiba (2016) indicate that French was introduced in African schools, as a subject, in the educational system of the then Northern Rhodesia in 1953. At that time, French was offered at Munali Boys Secondary School, in Lusaka and Chipembi Girls in Chisamba. In 1964, when Zambia obtained its Political Independence from Britain, the teaching of French spread to 12 other secondary schools. The French Language Syllabus for Secondary Schools recommends that teachers of French use Communicative Language Teaching in their teaching to enable the learners develop Communicative Competence (MESVTEE, 2013). The study explored the implementation of CLT in Government Secondary Schools of Kabwe District. The purpose of the study was to establish how teachers of French as a Foreign Language in Kabwe District were implementing the Communicative Language Teaching Approach, as recommended by the Syllabus and the extent of the implementation. The objective of the study was to assess teachers' understanding of CLT, The study employed a descriptive design under qualitative approach. The study participants comprised of 14 teachers, 3 subjects specialists and 178 pupils who were purposively sampled. Data was collected through interview guides, naturalistic observation schedules and Focus Group Discussions guide and analyzed using thematic analysis. The study findings revealed that teachers had very little ideas that CLT aims at making learners attain communicative competence. Bordering on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made. Among them, the need for the trainers of teachers of French to be practical and not theoretical in their training. The study recommended that teachers of French be sensitized on the need to implement the recommended approach. The sensitization will act as a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to remind them of the pedagogical requirements of the syllabus and also that monitoring of teachers by standard officers should be effectively done and there should be increased funding to schools, the French Section in particular so that equipment and materials to support CLT is procured.

Key words: Communicative Approach, Communicative Competence, French as Foreign Language, Teachers, Understanding, Application, Challenges, Kabwe

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

It is a common truism that the teaching of language has been a dynamic field of education where a number of changes have taken place and implemented over time Whong, (2011). These changes in teaching approaches and methods have been necessitated by a demand for the most suitable approaches for language teaching. At any given moment in the past, when linguists and teachers realized that particular theories of language and language learning were not meeting the needs of a society, they initiated a search for a new approach that would solve the problem. Howatt, (1984).

Stem (1992) affirms that Communicative Language Teaching with its emphasis on meaning and communication and its characteristic of learner- centeredness, has served as the dominant approach to French as a Foreign Language teaching for a long time. This approach has been used to teach French in many countries in the world. For example, some of the African countries in which the approach has been found useful are Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and Nigeria. Mamadou, (2011).

Lane, (2000) states that Communicative competence is one of the key aspects of life amongst human beings. Mwelwa and Mwanza (2020) explained that the goal of communicative language teaching is developing communicative competence in learners which include grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. To achieve competence in using French as a Foreign Language, the teaching has witnessed a lot of methodological changes starting from the Grammar- Translation method to the Communicative method which is currently found to be one of the most effective and most commonly used in the teaching of FFL for effective communication in the world. It could therefore be argued that any breach on the requirements for the application of the method, could possibly lead to negative outcomes on the part of the learners.

The French language teaching development introduced different innovations in terms of methods and approaches. It was within this perspective that the Ministry of Education (MOE) adopted the first generation Audio-visual method 'Voix et Images de France', a method which was already in use at that time in several countries, for example Ghana and Nigeria. But soon this method was decried for using a mechanical approach to teaching especially imparting parrot-like and impermanent language skills and neglecting the learner's potential participation in the learning task Obura, (1982).

According to Mulwa (2007), the rejection of this first generation Audio-visual method gave way to 'Pierre et Seydou', (translated: "Peter and Seydou"), another second generation Audio- Visual method of French teaching, which saw the introduction of reading and writing skills in the second month of the first year of secondary education. This method was, however, not any better in ensuring communicative competence on all the skills in FFL learning classes.

Despite all these developments, the learners of French continued to suffer a communication crisis in French. Many could conjugate verbs correctly and

show a fairly good aptitude for grammar and syntax. However, this was not matched with any corresponding degree of communicative competence across all skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. With this method, learners could memorize disjointed sentences in French, as well as pronounce them with the correct French accent, due to the emphasis on phonetic correction and the repetitive aspects of the method, (Rivers 1982). However, the learners remained unable to hold a discourse of any value with speakers of French. This is the reason behind the introduction of the Communicative Approach as a teaching method of French as a Foreign Language.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There have been changes in the approaches toward the teaching of French as a foreign Language in Zambian schools. The changes have been necessitated by the desire to move from traditional approach to one that promotes real-life communication. The French Language Syllabus for Secondary Schools states that teachers of French use CLT in their teaching to enable the learners develop communicative competence (MESVTEE, 2013). However, results from some studies showed that teachers were not implementing CLT (Chishipula , 2016). This being the case, using Kabwe District Secondary Schools as a case study, the researcher wanted to establish if teachers were familiar with CLT in the Teaching of French as Foreign Language. In a question form, “Were teachers of French familiar with CLT in Kabwe District ?

1.3 Study Objective

The objective of the study was to establish familiarity by teachers with the Communicative Approach

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviewed was in accordance with the three main objectives of the study which was to establish the familiarity by teachers of French with Communicative Approach techniques.

2.1 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach

CLT Approach is derived from a multidisciplinary perspective that includes, at least, Linguistics, Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology and Educational Research. According to Savignon (1991) CLT is a recent and widely used hybrid approach to language teaching, essentially viewed as progressive rather than traditional. It has no single authority or text on it, or any single model that is universally acceptable as authoritative Richards and Rodgers, (1986). However, Howatt (1984) distinguishes between a ‘strong’ and a ‘weak’ version of CLT. The weak version stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their language for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider programme of language teaching. The ‘stronger’ version

of communicative teaching, on the other hand, advances the claim that language is acquired through communication so that it is not merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself. The former could be described as “learning to use a language; the latter entails using English to learn it” Howatt, (1984).

By and large, CLT traces its roots from the functional view of Language as proposed by Wilkins (1972). It “starts from a theory of language as communication.” Richards & Rodgers, (1986). The goal of language teaching in CLT is to develop what Hymes (1972) referred to as ‘Communicative competence.’

2.2 The Nature of Communicative competence

Communicative competence is a term coined by Hymes (1972), to explain the degree of linguistic ability of a language learner in the process of language acquisition and use. Today this type of communicative competence has led to discovery of three other types involving assessment of sociolinguistic appropriateness, maintenance of coherent discourse and adjustment to interactional demands. These latter forms of communicative competence were incorporated into the CLT.

According to Richards, (2006), Communicative competence in Foreign Language learning involves the following abilities, on the part of the teacher and the learner;

- (a) Knowing how to apply language for a variety of purposes and functions
- (b) Being able to vary use of language depending on setting and participants
- (c) Having the ability to produce and understand different types of texts
- (d) Being able to maintain communication even when limited in one’s knowledge of language.

In this definition Richards seems to imply that all the four skills of language learning have to be taken into consideration, in using the communicative approach to teach French Language. Furthermore, one has to have acquired enough ability in lexis, syntax, phonology and semantics in order for him have communicative competence.

In addition to the above, a learner has to be able to know the kind of language to use when in a variety of settings, that is ability to choose correct language for formal and informal situations, especially in speech. Conversely, the learner should be able to differentiate when language is used formally, and the underlying meaning in terms of seriousness, urgency et cetera. He should also be able to appreciate when informal language is used with the underlying tones involving casualness, humour et cetera.

2.3 Teachers’ Understanding of CLT

Studies have been conducted to assess teachers’ understanding of CLT. Among them is the study by Vongxay (2013) who conducted a qualitative research to explore the understandings and attitudes of English teachers in Lao Higher Educational Institution in New Zealand. According to his report, most of the

interviewees appeared to have a superficial understanding of CLT. For them, CLT meant an interaction among students in the classroom activities while teachers acted as facilitators, assistants and consultants who guide students. These teachers also reported that communication activities only refer to speaking and listening tasks and none of them mentioned that communicative activities could be in forms of writing, reading as well as the involvement of sentence structure, which was the key element of communicative competence.

Another study by Singh and Li (2004) found that most teachers and students in an English-major college in China reported that CLT is concerned with teaching only speaking and listening without grammatical competence. As a result, both teachers and students in their research put the stress on speaking and listening skills. In relation to this, Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) conducted the research on the views and practices of CLT by Japanese Second Language in-service teachers. These teachers reported that for them CLT means group work and pair work that only related to speaking. Most of the teachers in the study understood that there was no grammar involved in communicative activities while some teachers in this research project did not directly mention grammar usage in the communicative activities. To support this result, Li (1998) also found that Korean Secondary School English Teachers defined communicative activities as group work and pair work which only focused on speaking and there was no grammar involvement. These findings are also similar to Gamal and Debra (2001) findings that Egyptian teachers perceived communicative tasks as speaking activities. The teachers did not refer to the involvement of sentence structure, which is also one of the key elements of communicative competence.

Sakui (2004) in the study of language teaching in Japan reported that teachers found it very difficult to define CLT. However, even though the wording varied, the overriding themes included the aspect that there has to be a need for communication, self-expression, exchanging opinions in English, understanding English utterance, not worrying too much about grammar, guessing from contexts and general comprehension. The study also revealed that teachers reported that CLT applies to all four skills, with the exception of one teacher who stated that CLT applies to conversational skills only. According to these interpretations, Sakui (2004) reported that there was congruence between these teachers' understandings and the course of study that the goal of CLT is to exchange messages in English, with little attention paid to linguistic forms. The interview further revealed that most teachers thought they needed to teach grammar before giving learners opportunities to use and apply the target linguistic forms in communicative tasks. These data show that teachers' understanding of CLT is more semantic than conceptual. In defining CLT, they reported lists of features but their definition lacked the coherence of a methodology incorporating goals, planning and tasks. In contrast, their philosophy of their teaching revealed a conceptual Schema in which grammar instruction serves to build knowledge about language and CLT consisted primarily of fluency building and grammar manipulation activities. The teachers' practices were much closer to Audio-lingual in that the goal was the correct production of sentences.

Mwelwa and Mwanza (2020) intended to establish the strategies which teachers of English were using to develop communicative competence. One of the findings was that some teachers lacked correct understanding of the method while others held misconceptions of the method. They found that the way teachers understood or misunderstood CL had serious implication for classroom application of the method. That is the reason why Mwanza (2017) argued that teachers' misconceptions of methods of language teaching often lead to lack of application or misapplication of the method. Thus, Mwanza (2017) states that there is need for teachers to have a clear understanding of the method of teaching for them to teach and use the method as expected.

Like the earlier reviewed studies, many pertinent issues were brought out about teachers' understanding of CLT. It would be of great importance also to see how Zambian Secondary School Teachers of French using Kabwe District as a case study understand CLT since no meaningful research has been done in this area so far.

2.4 Implementation of the CLT by Teachers

The implementation of CLT is a complicated issue involving various factors. The findings by Sakui (2004) on the extent of the implementation of CLT reveals that in actual classroom teaching, grammar instruction was central, and far more applied than CLT. Teachers spent most of the class time involved in teacher-fronted grammar explanations, chorus reading, and vocabulary presentations. Students attended to teachers' explanations, learnt to translate at the sentence level, read the textbook aloud in choral reading, copied vocabulary items in their notebooks, and engaged in sentence manipulation exercises. CLT activities, in which meanings are negotiated, seemed to play a much smaller role. Generally, in the observed class periods taught by Japanese teachers, if any time at all was spent on CLT it was a maximum of five minutes out of 50.

One exception to this pattern occurred when CLT teaching was implemented once a week and the goal of the class was oral communication. Team-teaching instruction was carried out using English, adopting different communicative activities such as information gap, game activities, question and answer, role plays and dramas. In most of these activities, teachers initially presented the target grammar features. The communicative activities were designed so that students comprehended and produced target grammatical items correctly, usually at the sentence level, through oral interaction tasks. These practices mostly resembled Audiolingual practices.

The introduction of The Communicative Approach as a method for the teaching of FFL in Zambian Secondary schools, was met with both enthusiasm and awe, at the same time, by teachers of French and the French teaching fraternity. Many teachers had never had prior knowledge of this method although by then it had been in use in quite a number of countries for some time, for example Turkey, United States, and Spain Mamadou, (2011).

In Zambia, studies reviewed included those undertaken by various individuals among them Munakaampe (2005), Chishipula (2016) and Zulu (2016). In 2005 a study titled, 'A Critical Appraisal of the Communicative Approach in Selected Lusaka Basic Schools' was conducted by Munakaampe. The purpose of this study was to establish the level of implementation of the communicative approach to English language teaching and the possible constraints expressed by the teachers. Munakaampe's study is different from this study in that it was concerned with the teaching process at primary level. This study on the other hand was concerned with the teaching of communicative competence in the teaching of French Language.

Chishipula (2016) did a study in Chongwe District on the Factors Hindering Teachers of English Language from Implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach. Her study was aimed at exploring the extent to which CLT was absent in English Language lessons showed that CLT to a large extent was absent in all the lessons observed. Structural lessons dominated and these were explicitly taught outside meaningful language tasks. All the lessons were organised around teacher centred, whole class pedagogical activities without any noticeable form of communicative activities and CLT instructional procedures. The study also showed that the text based course books used in the schools under study to teach English Language were pedagogical in nature and no authentic materials were used in all the lessons observed. It is also worth noting that Chishipula highlighted some factors hindering the implementation of the CLT in a class such as inadequate pre-service training, insufficient funding to support CLT, large classes, negative attitude of the teacher toward CLT, from based examinations and pupils' low English proficiency to be among other factors hindering teachers from implementing CLT. However, this study had emphasized on the challenges faced by teachers of English in the implementation of the communicative approach while giving little attention on the prescribed pedagogical techniques used in the Communicative approach and in other languages such as French.

Zulu (2016) did another study on the implementation of Communicative Language Testing in Zambia. He highlighted that communicative approach to language teaching recommended in Zambian schools entails that communicative techniques should be used in testing the learners. This is so because the techniques used in testing learners' and the teaching approach should be in tandem. The findings revealed that teachers were not using communicative testing techniques because they were not familiar with them. The study by Zulu showed that teachers of language mostly test linguistic and not communicative competence. This entails that learners would be able to produce less to no language at all because most of the questions that teachers ask are of multiple choice especially for comprehension and structure. This eventually means that the tests given are not about real-life communication.

2.5 Challenges in the Use of Communicative Language Teaching

The National policies and school curricular have recommended that CLT be used in the teaching of French as a Foreign Language. This does not mean that the

implementation of CLT has been easy sailing. Researchers and scholars have pointed out that the implementation of CLT has encountered problems and resistance Chang, (2010); Liao, (2000). The research studies have reported a lack of CLT activities in FFL classrooms. The instructions are still predominantly based on traditional approaches. Most of the factors hindering teachers from implementing CLT relate directly to the teachers, pupils and the educational system as well as to the learning environment.

According to Drame (2004), Foreign Language teachers in Senegal accept the CLT as a better method for achieving communicative competence, more than other more grammar-based traditional approaches. The teachers had problems grasping and applying fully, all the requirements of CLT, due to what Drame calls poor activity design. The teachers' poor working conditions did not help matters either, and this tended to exacerbate the already poor use of the CLT, leading to teachers' blending of CLT with traditional methods, as they doubted the success of their learners in national examinations. As has already been stated, the challenges with which teachers of French language may be faced, in Zambia, in the implementation of CLT have not been researched. This is one of the reasons why this study is crucial to the FFL teaching fraternity, in Zambia.

In Uganda, according to Kangethe, (2006), learners' participation in the FFL class is reduced to listening, reading class textbooks aloud or silently, answering the teachers' questions or doing exercises from the textbooks. This is one of the weaknesses of teaching FFL in schools today in Zambia as well. However, Kangethe does not suggest activities that the teacher may lead learners into, in the way of developing communicative competence among them. This study has tried to establish these other activities, as well as how they are carried out inside the classroom by both teachers and learners of FFL, and to what degree they are effective in helping the learners to develop their communicative competence, as well as what impediments may lie in the path to achieving this goal.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive design under qualitative approach. The study participants comprised of 14 teachers, 3 subjects specialists and 178 pupils who were purposively sampled. Data was collected through interview guides, naturalistic observation schedules and Focus Group Discussions guide and analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic Analysis was employed after the data collection exercise where field notes were arranged according to the Themes in relation to the set objectives. Processing of data included coding and a descriptive analysis.

4.0 FINDINGS

In an interview, all the teachers under study were asked to define Communicative Language Teaching in their own terms. From the definitions above, what was so notable was the fact that none of the respondents could give a comprehensive explanation of CLT. An explanation that would take into consideration the language

and learning theories of CLT, the classroom activities as well as the roles of both the teacher and pupil.

Nevertheless, some respondents showed some understanding of CLT practice to include communication principle and meaningfulness principle even though their definitions were generally mere descriptions of isolated principles or tenets associated with CLT. What was clear from their definitions was that they had scanty ideas that the ultimate goal of CLT in language teaching is for learners to gain communicative competence. However, it was noted that their understanding of communicative competence was very misleading and because of that, their definitions gave rise to several misconceptions.

A close look at the teachers' definitions shows that a few respondents gave definitions which suggested that CLT is all about teaching of oral communication skills or rather listening and speaking only.

The study also revealed a lot of misconceptions. The misconception identified came from respondents who regarded CLT as an approach were all learners' errors are tolerated. The study also reviewed that teachers had a notion that CLT teachers should always use group or pair work to teach the learners. Arising from the respondents' definitions is the misconception that CLT is a method of language teaching. Five (5) respondents in their definitions referred to CLT as a method even when it was clearly stated in the question that it is an approach.

Some of the teacher's responses include:

- (i) It is an approach particularly used in foreign and second language. It Emphasizes that the goal of learning language is to produce a learner who is able to use language effectively in any given situation. A situation where teaching of language follows real life experience/situation
- (ii) CLT is a Method that helps learners to easily communicate according to the learning situation for communication
- (iii) CLT is an Method that helps learners to easily communicate according to the learning situation for communication
- (iv) CLT is a method used to teach oral skills so that pupils become fluent speakers of the French Language.”
- (v) CLT is a method, which promotes the emphasis to communication without necessarily looking at the rules of grammar.

4.2. Findings from Standards Officer and Curriculum Specialists

The subject specialists were asked in an interview to find out their understanding on CLT. The following are their views: **Participant A:**

CLT is an approach of language teaching that emphasizes interaction as both the means of the ultimate goal of study. The learners in CLT learn and practice the target language through interaction with one another and the tutor/teacher.

Learners converse about their experiences inside and outside class for a purpose other than the realm of traditional grammar/language learning. Here, language skills in all type are promoted in all types of situations.

Participant B had this to say:

this is a teaching approach, which involves the teaching of a language in this case French based on the use of the target language

Participant C on the other hand had this to say:

CLT is a method, which promotes the emphasis to communication without necessarily looking at the rules of grammar.

From the definitions above, it is clear to state that one of the three respondents had a fairly good understanding of what Communicative Language Teaching is all about. Participant A had well defined CLT as an Approach while Participant C defines it as a method and Participant B looks at CLT as an approach but her definition is not sufficiently inclusive as it lacks key components.

5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion is guided by the objectives of the study, which were: Teachers Familiarity with the CLT in French Language. Alsaghiar (2018) describes CLT is a foreign language teaching approach that strives to promote students' ability to use the foreign language for communicative purposes such as introducing and expressing themselves, communicating in public places, exchanging information with others, and understanding formal and informal use of a foreign language. In other words, it aims at teaching students the use of the foreign language for everyday life. It is considered a teaching approach rather than a method because it provides a set of principles that the instructor follows to create a communicative and interactive classroom environment to allow students use and practice the foreign language in the classroom (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), rather than dictating specific procedures to follow.

Similarly, Richards and Rodgers (1986) look at Communicative Language Teaching as an approach rather than a method. For these theorists the CLT is a philosophy of teaching based on the communicative use of the language. In addition, many linguists have advocated the CLT approach as it promotes functional concepts and especially communicative competence, a term that creates an interdependence when talking about a communicative language approach, rather than grammatical structures, as central to teaching. This study recorded diverse responses from the fourteen (14) teachers interviewed. It was highlighted in the previous chapter that none of the teachers under study gave comprehensive accounts of the CLT.

Teachers were asked to define, in their own words what CLT was, as an approach for teaching FFL. This study shows that the majority of teachers had no idea about the description of Communicative approach of teaching French. Out of these numbers of teachers, 8 of those could not define the Communicative approach. Two of trained teachers indicated that they had not been teaching French and were not conversant with this approach and so were unable to give a definition.

In general, it can be concluded that the definitions given by most teachers fell short of what the CLT really is. The majority definitions were, in reality, bits of what the CLT is. Some indeed did not understand the difference between some more traditional methods such as Situational Language Teaching (SLT) on the one hand, and the CLT, which is eclectic in nature, on the other.

The findings of the study are in agreement with Chishipula (2016) whose study aimed at assessing teachers' understanding of CLT revealed that teachers had scanty ideas that CLT aims at making learners attain communicative competence. When teachers cannot define the approach they are using and why they use it as opposed to another approach, then it follows that they would find it difficult to choose, select, adapt and apply content, method and techniques appropriately for effective learning, much more so when the subject is foreign language teaching.

Similarly, the findings of the study are consistent with the findings of several other studies. Sukui (2004) in the study of language teaching in Japan reported that when teachers were asked to define CLT in their own words, they often said it was a difficult task. He revealed that even though the wording varied, the overriding themes included the aspect that there has to be need for Communication, self-expression, exchanging opinions in English, understanding of English utterances, not worrying too much about grammar, guessing from context and general comprehension. The study reported that teachers' understanding of CLT was more semantic than conceptual. He reported that teachers' definitions lacked the coherence of a methodology incorporating goals, planning and tasks.

As earlier stated, five (5) respondents defined CLT as an approach that focuses on the teaching of oral communication skills or listening and speaking only. It is of course true that CLT requires active learning and not passive reception of knowledge and therefore, interactive activities or gap tasks such as role plays, debates are encouraged (Richards & Rodgers, 1996). However, this does not mean that other skills are not taught. In fact, CLT is characterised by an integrated skills approach where a single activity or set of activities make use of all four skills: speaking listening, reading and writing. "The more traditional practice of teaching each skill separately does not sit well with an approach which mimic real life interaction' Whong, (2011).

Two (02) teachers understood CLT as an approach that does not involve the teaching of grammar. (1996) also identified this misconception as well as Mapako and Nyota (2012). What is fact is that, CLT places emphasis on meaning but that does not mean the structural aspect of language should not be taught. Explicit teaching of language or structures as suggested by Whong (2011) should occur in the context of use and not outside meaningful tasks. As a matter of fact, Canale and Swain (1980) identify four dimensions of communicative competence and grammatical competence is one of them. It is an essential part of being communicatively competence.

Concluding on this objective, the study showed that some teachers defined CLT as an approach where teachers use group work or pair work. Mapako and Nyota (2012) and Thompson (1996) also reported this misconception. The emphasis

on learning from others through interaction makes the use of group work very common in CLT. It does not mean therefore that group work should be used in virtually every lesson. In the same vein, Savignon (2002) acknowledges the importance of group task in providing increased opportunity and motivation for communication but warns that group or pair work may be inappropriate in some contexts. These findings have implications for teacher training and preparation. There is need for teacher training to be refocus so that teachers of French are adequately prepared to teach French using CLT. The fact that they could not explain what CLT meant imply that they were not properly trained. Thus, teacher educators and teacher training institutions should ensure that teachers are exposed the theories and practicalities of CLT. Those who already serving as teachers will need workshops and seminars including CPDs to build capacity of teachers to effectively apply the CLT in class. This is so because adequate and appropriate teacher preparation is key to the success of the teacher (Manchishi and Mwanza, 2018,; Kombe and Mwanza, 2019,; Mwanza, 2016,; Mumba and Mwanza, 2020). While teacher preparation is important, the government and education authorities at different levels need to supply adequate teaching and learning materials because as Mwanza (2020) observed, lack of teaching material is also a common problem in Zambian schools which affects teaching.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The fundamental principle of CLT is to enable learners to understand and use the target language for communication. Two basic assumptions underlying this approach to language learning are that the core of language learning is the development of communicative competence and that the starting point for language learning is not grammatical rules but context, function, meaning and the appropriate use of the language. Richards and Rogers (1986:71). The objective of the study sought to establish teachers' familiarity with the Communicative Approach. The teachers were asked to define Communicative Approach, state the characteristics of communicative language teaching, and differentiate communicative teaching from other approaches. Additionally, other questions that sought to establish their understanding of communicative language teaching were asked. The findings revealed that most teachers could not give a detailed account of what communicative Approach is. However, the study showed that fifty-one percent of the respondents (51%) had misconceptions about CLT. Generally, the misconceptions derive from the point of view where some teachers believe that CLT is all about teaching oral communication skills and has nothing to do with the teaching of grammar. The study also showed that Thirty-five (35.71%) of the respondents had difficulties in defining CLT some even claimed that they had forgotten what they learnt about CLT. During interviews and discussions, both SESO and CDC French specialists acknowledged the fact that the French Syllabus recommend the use of CLT but they expressed ignorance on whether teachers are fully aware of this approach. The implication of these findings is that there is a challenge in terms of the communicative techniques being used if we are to develop communicative competences.

REFERENCES

- Chishiba and Manchishi (2016). The Language Strategy in the Zambian Educational System from 1924 to 2014. *International Journal of Languages and Literature*. Vol. 4 No 1 pp 54-59.
- Bachman, L.F. (1990). *Fundamental Considerations in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Curriculum Development Centre. (2013). *Senior Secondary French Language Syllabus*. Lusaka: CDC. (MESVTEE, 2013).
- Canale, M. (1983). 'From Communicative Competence to Communicative language Pedagogy'. In Richards and Schmidt, *Language and Communication*, London: Longman.
- Chishipula, J. (2016). 'Factors hindering the teachers of English from implementing Communicative Language Teaching approach, A Case of selected secondary schools in Chongwe District', Masters' Dissertation, University of Zambia.
- Chang, M. (2011). EFL teachers' attitudes towards communicative language teaching in Taiwanese College. *Asian EFL Journal of Professional Teaching Articles*, 53, 17 –34.
- Drame, M. (2004). *Communicative Grammar Teaching in a Foreign Language context*, Liens, Nouvelle Serie. Dakar
- Gamal, G and Debra, M. (2001). The communicative approach in Egypt: exploring the secrets of pyramids. *TEFL Web Journal*, 1 (2). 63 – 75.
- Hymes, C. (1972). On Communicative Competence. In J. Pride & J, Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics*, (pp.269-295). Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Hadley, A. O. (2001). *Teaching Language in Context*, (3rd Ed.). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Li, D. (1998). It's always more difficult than you plan and imagine: teachers' perceived difficulties in introducing the communicative approach in South Korea. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(4), 677-703
- Kangethe, F.I (2006) *Research on French Teaching in Eastern Africa*. USIU, p. 71, p52.
- Lane, R. (2000) *Cognitive Development in English Language Teaching*.
- Kombe, C and Mwanza D.S (2019). The 2014 Zambian Revised Literacy Policy in Primary Schools: Were Teachers Prepared to Implement It? *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*. 6 (8): 115-131.
- Manchishi PC and Mwanza DS (2018). Reforming School Experience in Pre-Service Teacher Preparation for Quality Teacher Graduates. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Language and Social Sciences Education*. 1 (2). 1-26.
- Mapako, F.P. (2012). Secondary school teachers' conception of communicative Language Teaching: A case for Masvingo District Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*,
- Medard. P. (1990). *Aspects of Methodology in the didactics of French as a foreign Language*. University de Rouen.

- Mulwa H.M (2007) *Communicative Approach: Implementation and implication for French Pedagogy*. Unpublished Material. University of Kampala
- Munakaampe, Y. (2005). *A Critical Appraisal of the Communicative Approach in selected Lusaka Basic Schools*. Lusaka: University of Zambia.
- Mwelwa, W & Mwanza, D.S. (2020). Analysing Teaching Strategies Teachers use to Develop Communicative Competence in Secondary School English Language Learners. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*. 7 (3) : 43-54.
- Mwanza, D. S. (2016). *A Critical Reflection on Eclecticism in the Teaching of English Grammar at selected Zambian Secondary Schools*. A Doctoral Thesis. University of the Western Cape.
- Mwanza DS (2017). The Eclectic Approach to Language Teaching: Its Conceptualisation and Misconceptions. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*. 4 (2): 53-67.
- Mwanza DS (2017) The Eclectic Method to language Teaching: Clarifications and Conceptual Extensions. *Journal of Lexicography and Terminology*. 1 (2). 1-24.
- Mwanza, D.S. (2020). In search of High Literacy Levels in Zambian Primary Schools: Does Duration of Mother Tongue Instruction before Transitioning into a Second Language Matter?. *International Journal of Education and Research*. 8 (2): 119-134.
- Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education. (2013). *Zambia Education Curriculum Framework*. Lusaka: CDC..
- Obura, (1982). *Attitudes and Motivation, Language and Learning strategies and achievement in French in Kenya: A correlation analysis and experiment*, Ph. D. thesis; Kenyatta University.
- Owuondo, E., (2011). *Instructional Methods for Composition Writing in French at the Secondary School level in schools in Nairobi, Kenya*. Masters Thesis pp 1-4, Kenyatta University.
- Richards.J. (Ed) (2010). *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. Cambridge University Press
- Richards. J and Rodgers. T. (1986). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching: A Description and Analysis*. Cambridge: University Press
- Richard, J.C, & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (2nd ed). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sakui, K. (2004). Wearing two pairs of shoes: Language teaching in Japan. *ELT Journal*. 58 (2);1 – 9
- Sato, K & Kleinsasser, R. (1999). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): Practical Understandings. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83, 494-517.
- Savignon, S. (2002). *Communicative Language Teaching: Linguistic Theory and Classroom Practice*. Mary Jane Peluso. Retrieved from www.yale.edu/yopbooks/pdf/0300091567.pdf.
- Savignon, S.J. (1991). Communicative Language teaching: State of the art. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25 (2) 261– 277.

- Sing, M. & Li, L. (2004). Communicative Language Teaching in China: Misconceptions, Applications and Perceptions. Retrieved from [http://www.aare.ed.au/05pap/Jin0 .pdf](http://www.aare.ed.au/05pap/Jin0.pdf).
- Sidhu, S.K. (1984). *Methodology of Research in Education*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers PVT.
- Stem, H. (1992) *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*, Oxford University Press
- Swain, M. (1985). A critical Look at the Communicative Approach (1). *ELT Journal*, 39 (1) 2-12
- Vongxay, H. (2013). *The Implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in an English Department in a Lao Higher Educational Institutions: A case study*. New Zealand: United Institution of Technology.
- Weimann, A.G. (1996). *Communicative Language Teaching in Ciskeian Secondary Schools: PHD Thesis*. University of South Africa.
- Whong, M. (2011). *Language Teaching; Linguistic Theory in Practice*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh
- Zulu, M, P. (2017). "Teachers' Application of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach in selected secondary schools of Mufulira District", Unpublished Master's Dissertation, University of Zambia, Lusaka, Zambia