RESEARCH TOPIC:

THE EFFECTS OF USING ROLE PLAY IN TEACHING NDEBELE LANGUAGE: A CASE OF SILOBELA, KWEKWE DISTRICT

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION.

BY

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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to Bindura University of Science Education for acceptance, a research entitled: The effects of using role play in teaching Ndebele language.

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Supervisor                                          Signature                                          Date
DECLARATION

I, SIBANDA SIBUSISO, do hereby declare that the work contained in this research study, submitted for the fulfilment of the requirements of the Post Graduate Diploma in Education at Bindura University of Science Education, is my original work, except where it is attributed to other authors or sources. This work has not been submitted for a degree or diploma in this or any other university.

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Name of student                                                          Signature                                  Date
DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my son Fredrick and my husband.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my gratitude to my family for all the support. My gratitude also goes to my supervisor, Ms Zuvalinyenga, for encouraging me and supporting me until the completion of this project.
ABSTRACT

The study assessed the effects of using role play in teaching the Ndebele subject in secondary schools. Primary data was collected using questionnaires, the interview and observation tools. Questionnaires were administered to 15 secondary school teachers. Interviews were held with three Heads of Departments (HODs) who are Ndebele language teachers from 3 different schools. The study found that 88% of the Ndebele teachers have an appreciation of the communicative approach as a teaching methodology. A total of 87% of the respondents established that there is a strong relationship between the communicative approach and role play. The study confirmed that role play is an effective tool of instruction that motivates students to learn by doing rather than being passive recipients of knowledge hence improves the level of understanding of the concepts. The study has also established that role-play has many benefits that include student involvement, student interactivity, motivation where the teacher is the facilitator. In as much as role play is an effective method of teaching, the results, however, reflected that the method is not applicable in teaching other concepts of the Ndebele language such as grammatical structures. The technique is very viable and effective, however, in teaching concepts like literature, comprehension passages and compositions.
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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction
The study interrogates the impact of using role play in the teaching of Ndebele. It is a case study of five schools offering Ndebele as a subject in Kwekwe District. This chapter outlines the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study and research questions. It also presents the significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations, assumptions of the study and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study
The idea of play as a medium of instruction can be traced back to the ancient Greeks. Probably the first role-play session was run when a master teaching a pupil, said to him: “Act as if I am a customer and you are serving me”. The pupil played his role. The master played his role as a would-be-customer. When they discussed their roles afterwards, play was used as a method of instruction (Dorathy and Mahalakshmi, 2011).

The Viennese psychiatrist Moreno was the first to examine role-play in a scientific way. Moreno (1946), cited in Wilkins (1976), created the socio-metric measure, a technique that studies interpersonal attraction and group membership in institutional settings (e.g., reform schools). He used role-play for psychiatric objectives. These plays are known under the names of psychodrama and socio-drama. In psychodrama, the enactment and its emotional and behavioural confrontations are the central activity; discussion and analysis are only minimal.

However, the main elements of the communicative approach usually appear as three steps in classroom teaching; the first being presentation, followed by practices and then production. As one of the effective practices of the communicative approach, role-play emphasizes comprehensive performance of the target language (Liu and Ding, 2006)
Role-play is an effective technique to animate the teaching and learning atmosphere, arouse the interests of learners, and make the language acquisition impressive. Role play is generally very important in teaching language because it gives students an opportunity to practice communicating in different social contexts and in different social roles. In addition, it also allows students to be creative and to put themselves in another person’s place for a while (Dorathy and Mahalaskshmi, 2011). It was therefore, a major assumption of this study that role play can improve learners’ speaking skills in any situation, and helps learners to interact and that for shy learners, role play helps by providing a mask, where learners with difficulty in conversation are liberated. In addition, it is fun and most learners will agree that enjoyment leads to better learning.

1.2 Aims
The study aimed at establishing what effects are associated with using role play in teaching of the Ndebele language among high school language students. It was envisaged that this could help unearth salient problems as well as enlighten educators and responsible authorities on how better learning environments can be created and how higher student academic achievements, anchored on the implementation of role play as crucial teaching strategy, could be arrived at.

1.3 Objectives of the study
The main objectives of the study were to:

- Establish the effects of role play in teaching Ndebele
- Analyse the problems faced by teachers in using role play as a teaching strategy

1.4 Research Questions
The proposed study addresses the following research questions.

- What are the effects of using role-play in teaching Ndebele?
- What are the main challenges in using role-play in teaching the Ndebele language.

1.5 Statement of the problem
Ndebele language students in the Kwekwe Rural District report some challenges when doing their studies in the language and, specifically, these are low self-esteem, low classroom morale, poor participation and lack of confidence; despite some best teaching practices at their disposal by their respective teachers. However, literature has it that children who engage in creative learning through role play learn faster, retain more of what they learn, and are more prone to apply their learning outside the classroom. Therefore the major challenge seems to be coming up with some kind of informed policies on what could be done to improve the performance of learners in light of role play as a teaching strategy. The study therefore sought to establish how role play could come in to aid the teaching and learning of the language.

1.6 Assumptions
Silobela circuit secondary schools student performance is greatly affected by poor teaching strategies that do not involve students in their learning but rather make them passive recipients of knowledge. It was assumed that this led to low self-esteem, low classroom morale, poor participation and lack of confidence amongst students, adversely affecting performance.

1.7 Significance of the study
In view of the foregoing, it is important to investigate the effects of role play in the teaching of the Ndebele language in the circuit. More so, it seems that though staffing problems have been resolved in the area of teaching Ndebele, there could be other important factors determining academic achievements of students in Ndebele. It was envisaged that this research would help in the planning by the schools’ various departments such as the academic board and Languages departments and, most importantly, help in improving students’ academic achievements at both Ordinary and Advanced levels.

Also, the study has the potential to act as a handy manual for effective use of role play as a teaching approach. This will help secondary school teachers. It was the researcher’s intention that the findings of this research could also be applied to other disciplines to achieve good results.
1.8 Limitations of the study
The researcher encountered some constraints in carrying out the study because of the responsibilities and the duties at the work place. The researcher narrowed the research to cut costs such as transport costs and stationary costs since it was self-funded. To overcome these challenges, the sample schools were investigated thoroughly and more students at the few schools were studied.

1.9 Delimitation of the study
The study was confined to five secondary schools in Silobela circuit in Kwekwe district. It was carried out in a specific subject area, which is Ndebele. It concerned itself exclusively with the effectiveness of role play at secondary level and excluded other academic levels.

1.10 Definition of Key terms
Role play- Role play is generally used to refer to a host of concepts including acting, improvisation, simulation, dramatic play, pretend play and socio-drama (Sutcliffe, 2002). This study assumes that role play is central in the learning process.

Communicative teaching – This refers to approaches to teaching that encourage interaction among pupils and between pupils and teachers.

1.11 Chapter Summary
This Chapter focused on the general introduction of the study. Further, the chapter outlined the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study and research questions. It discussed the significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations, assumptions of the study and definition of key terms.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION
This chapter reviews related literature. Its aim is to find out how authorities have dealt with the topic and related problems. The purpose is to assist the researcher to define the position the research will occupy within the body of knowledge accumulated to date on the same issue. The chapter unveils relevant information by other scholars who researched a similar problem such that the research zeros in on where the research for new knowledge ought to concentrate and build a case through the logical and systematic analysis and synthesis of diverse views. Focus is on the concept of role play as a teaching

2.1 EMERGENCE OF ROLE PLAY
The term ‘role’ comes from a rolled-up script that actors used over 2000 years ago in ancient Greece (Blatner, 1995). The actors were said to play the role of someone. Blatner (1995) adds that the concept was modified to help groups address social problems and this approach was then called socio-drama. By the 1940s, role play became a recognized part in the business community. Wilkins (1976) says that role play has been known as a method in education since the late 1980s. In the 1970s role play was widely used as part of behavior therapy for assertion training and social skills training. In the 1980s there was an increasing diverse use of role play in different sectors including in the teaching of history, social studies and literature.

The first notable use of role play as a medium of instruction has been generally traced back to the Greeks as innovators of simulation (Dorathy and Mahalakshmi, 2011). This would obviously suggest that role play has been a useful tool for a long time. The first person, however, to make a serious scientific study of role play is said to be a Viennese psychiatrist known as Moreno in 1946. He designed the method to study interpersonal attraction and group membership in institutional settings (reform schools), (Dorathy and Mahalakshmi, 2011).

2.2 CONTEXTUALISING THE CONCEPT OF ROLE PLAY
A number of definitions have been given by different authorities concerning role play. A few have been picked out for the contextualization of the concept in this study. Yardley-Matweiejczuk (1997), cited in Harman et al (2008) defines role play as a teaching technique that puts students in positions they have never experienced before and allows them to interact, communicate and negotiate with others in certain roles under given circumstances. This clearly shows that in role play, students assume roles they have never experienced and through it they are able to communicate with their fellows in different contexts.

Different researchers use different terms to describe the concept of role play. These include acting, improvisation, simulation, dramatic play, pretend play and socio-drama and in all these, one assumes the part of another as a way of identifying with the characteristics, concepts or life patterns being expressed (Sutcliffe, 2002). This points out that through role play, students are able to encounter and solve day to day life experiences. A common everyday example of this could be ‘playing house’ among children, where they take up roles of mother, father or any character within the family unit.

Liu and Ding (2006) submit that role play manifests in three steps in classroom teaching. These are presentation, practice and production. This means that during the presentation stage the teacher acts as a conductor or facilitator and functions to set the stage. The teacher describes the scenario and the roles available to the students. Role distribution is done in this first stage and the students start their rehearsals. In the second stage the teacher checks if the students understood the content of teaching by questions while in the final stage there is consolidation and utilization of data. The participants make their presentations, providing feedback to the part and afterwards they discuss findings.

2.3 ROLE PLAY IN TEACHING SPEAKING
Research has also focused on role play in teaching speaking. Kayi (2006) argues that one other way of getting students to speak is role play. Students pretend they are in various social contexts and have a variety of social roles to act out in a task. This is also supported by Adnan and Abdullah (2008) who submit that role play is a tried and tested method to develop speaking skills in Malaysia. They carried a research on students learning English as a second language and conclude that the importance of role play this is so because students practice
their spoken language in different situations through a variety of simulated activities. Role play could also be used to develop listening, reading and even writing skills if lessons are developed progressively (Adnan & Abdullah, 2008).

The goal of role play is usually to help develop the speaking skills of students. Rahimy and Safarpour (2012) carried a research on the effects of using role play on Iranian EFL learners’ speaking ability. Learners spoke the Shokouh language. The researchers made a random selection of the participants and divided them into two groups, the control group and the experimental group and came to the conclusion that role play provides an enjoyable environment for learners and also captures the learners’ attention and they tend to be actively involved through participation.

Another interesting research article on role play is by Islam and Islam (2012). The focus of their research was the enhancement of speaking skills through role play on students at Stanford University in Bangladesh. Rayhan (2014) also carried a similar research on using role play to enhance speaking skills at a primary school in Babylon. Both studies concluded that role play is very effective in enhancing the speaking skills of students. The indication from research in general seems to be that role play is very effective in teaching speaking and, therefore, language.

2.4 EFFECTIVENESS OF ROLE PLAY AS A TEACHING METHOD
Role play has over the centuries been a subject of debate, especially with regards to its effectiveness as a tool in teaching language. Modern researchers such as Mottet et al (2006) and Rodgers (2001) are advocating learning that stimulates conversations in the learning process. They advocate hands on minds on learning. It has been noted that effective learning occurs where pupils interact and participate fully and effectively in the learning situation (Landa & Zhou, 2013). The use of role play is one of the identified strategies that are very effective in the teaching-learning process as it creates interest amongst pupils. This strategy is informed by the communicative school of thought, (Xia, 2010; Aliakbari and Jamalvandi, 2010). Role play is the typical social communication activity within a communicative approach.
According to Lidousse (2004), cited in Huang (2008), role play is one of a whole gamut of
communicative techniques which develops fluency in language students and promotes interaction in the classroom, and which increases motivation among students through creation of a positive attitude towards course content. Lidousse (2004) adds that role play also encourages peer learning and sharing of the responsibility of learning between the teacher and the student. Learning from peers through group activities will benefit the students implicitly and explicitly. Role play is therefore, perhaps the most flexible technique in the range of communicative techniques; and with suitable and effective role play exercises, teachers can meet an infinite variety of needs.

Larsen-Freeman (1986) quoted by Krish (2001) also shares the same opinion with Lidouse (2004). Role plays, whether structured or unstructured, are important in the communicative approach because they give learners an opportunity to communicate in different social contexts and in different social roles (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). Role play is, therefore, defined as the projection on real life situations with social activities. This shows that role play provides learners with the opportunity to examine, understand and acquire knowledge that will assist and better facilitate intercultural communication.

Xu Qing (2011) submits that role plays could increase student intercultural awareness and help them develop overall competence. Full performance of activities can create an active classroom atmosphere and can mobilise the enthusiasm of the students. Learners discuss and decide who they will become and what type of character they will portray. This means that role play can be used as an effective tool in teaching literary texts that include novels and plays. Also of paramount importance is that the students should work collaboratively while generating a basic theme and story concept. As concluded by Xu Qing (2011), while learners take part in authentic communication about their group presentations, their ability to speak clearly and effectively with each other also improves.

In line with the above, Graves’s (2008) research among 75 senior students at a high school in Ohio concludes that role play is a mainstay of education that needs to be incorporated into our lesson plans on a regular basis. When a student is actively involved in his or her learning, she or he is more likely to truly connect with the material and remember the concept for a long period of time (Graves, 2008). She believes reading a text book and listening to lectures
do not make learning meaningful. However there are four concepts to consider for learning to be successful; firstly there is prior knowledge about a particular historical context which forms the basis to build upon new concepts (Graves, 2008). Secondly, pupils should be fully involved, the teacher should set a context of the situation and then be the facilitator. This approach should, however, be used with a variety of other methods for best results (Graves, 2008). Basing on such studies, one may assert that role play does indeed play a pivotal role in the acquisition and learning process, making it an effective tool.

Wilkins (1946) studied the effects of using role play in the education sector. He came to the conclusion that role play is an effective technique that enhances understanding and animates the teaching and learning atmosphere as it creates a conducive environment for learning. It does this by arousing interest among students to learn through participation. Fraser, Rintell and Walters (1980) argue that role play is a useful means to study learners’ pragmatic competence. This means the practical use of language is achieved through role play. This is also ascertained by Hymes (1972), as cited by Canale and Swain (1980), discusses the components of communication competence, which components include linguistic competence, socio-linguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. This shows that the primary use of language is communication and these researchers advocate the use of real life situations that necessitate communication.

Further, Blank’s (1985) study on the effects of using role play, case studies and simulation games in teaching agricultural economics comes to the conclusion that using role play ensures that students will be exposed to training of the actual work on the ground, and that is to be performed after their studies. Role play improves student performance when used in appropriate situations (Blank, 1985).

In the learning of Ndebele, students study and criticize different texts in their quest to understand these texts. Bluestein (2002) describes activities that can help readers to understand the characters in a book through role play. By identifying with the characters in the story, students are able to become more deeply involved in the story, thus increasing their comprehension (Bluestein, 2002). The method can be handy in teaching of prose or comprehension passages.
Evidence of the effectiveness of role play has also been presented in Fogg (2001), as cited in Jarvis, Ordell and Troiano (2002). They conclude that role play increases the involvement of students through participation and being actively involved in the learning process. This is supported by Poorman (2002) cited by Jarvis et al (2002) who states that learning "cannot take place when students are passive observers of the teaching-learning process". This clearly shows that involving students in their learning yields better results. She, however, stresses the importance of the understanding of course content before role play. This alludes to the point that when role play is used in a school setting, students extend their knowledge of a subject by researching on a character within a given course of study. The two came to conclude that role play improves interpersonal skills, improves communication skills and enhances communication. On a similar note, Sutcliffe (2002), after studying the effects of using role play in the teaching of economics, notes that the facilitator should encourage individuals while on role play to reflect upon their knowledge of a subject. This shows that prior knowledge of the content of the subject is essential.

Reira, Cibanal and Mora (2010) also carried out a qualitative research at the school of nursing at the University of Alicante. Their study focused on the use of role play in the training of nurses. These came to understand and conclude that role play is an important and effective methodological tool for the teaching/learning process in nursing as it integrates theory and practice and also advocates team work. This way, the student nurse understands better what he or she ought to do after theory, the actual work on the ground to be done is made clear to him or her (Reira, Cibanal & Mora).

Closer home, Landa & Zhou (2013) have carried out a study on the role of interaction in the teaching/learning of Mathematics and Science subjects in Zimbabwe. They argue that for effective teaching the teacher needs to employ interactive teaching techniques to actively involve learners in the process of knowledge acquisition. More interestingly, they note that the teacher and learner roles in the contemporary classroom need not be distinctively outlined as this creates barriers to the acquisition of knowledge. Instead, they conclude, interesting learning activities allow students to work in small groups and therefore interact about course content. This points at the effectiveness of role play as a method of teaching and learning. In
a related study Zhou and Landa (2013) recommend the training of teachers on recent trends in interactive and dialogic instruction, which of course entail significant role playing by students.

However, while the studies by Landa and Zhou (2013) and Zhou and Landa (2013) focused on Zimbabwe, they were both interested in the teaching of Mathematics and Science subjects. A few others have also dealt with the subject of interactive teaching methods. The subject of the effectiveness of role play in the teaching of indigenous Zimbabwean languages has not received adequate, if any, attention. It was the sole focus of this study to assess the effectiveness of teaching a language using role play. Focus was on the Ndebele language.

Basing on the studies discussed above, one may assert that role play indeed does play a pivotal role in the acquisition and learning process, making it an effective tool. The current study was, therefore, based on the major assumption that role play can also be effective in the teaching of Ndebele.

2.5. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed literature related to the study. Several studies focusing on different aspects of role play in the education sector were reviewed. This chapter positioned the study alongside existing research in the field of teaching methodology. The following chapter discussed the methodology and research instruments used in collecting data for this study.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION
The purpose of this chapter is to describe how the researcher carried out the study. The chapter also discusses the research design employed by the study, sampling techniques and procedures, as well as the instruments that were used for data collection.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN
Several researchers have defined research design. Burns and Bush (2006) define a research design as a set of decisions that make up the master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the needed information. The research design has also been defined as a blue print plan on how the legitimate research questions of a study are to be responded to (Saunders et al, 2009; Cooper & Schindler, 2009). The significance of understanding the research lies in matching the research objectives with the appropriate research design; and a host of research decisions may be predetermined. This research design serves as a blueprint of the research and enables the analysis to come up with proposed solutions to the research problem. A research design links the data collected with the conclusions to be arrived at in the study (Rowley, 2002).

This study made use of a qualitative research design, which involved a survey that was administered with structured interview questions and questionnaires. A qualitative research design allows researchers to understand why things and social phenomena are the way they are (Hancock et al, 2007). This is relevant to this study as it focuses on role play, which allows learners to take real life role and estimate reality in their learning of theory. Also, in the spirit of role play, qualitative research employs data collection instruments that facilitate direct contact between researcher and individual participant of the study and between researcher and raw data (Landa, 2015).

The research used a survey as a major research approach. A survey is a data collection tool used to gather information about individuals. It is administered through structured interviews where a researcher asks each participant questions. It can also be administered through
questionnaires. Surveys are standardized to ensure that they have reliability and validity. To achieve validity, the researcher gave the questionnaires to group members and other academics to test their validity before distributing them to the respondents.

Experimentation with surveys presented the researcher with an array of advantages. They allowed the researcher to collect large amounts of data in a relatively short period of time, they are less expensive, can be created and administered easily and can be used to collect a wide range of things including personal facts, attitudes, past behaviors or opinions. Also, numerous questions can be asked about a subject, giving extension flexibility in data analysis.

However, the survey approach has its own shortfalls. Poor survey construction and administration can undermine otherwise well designed studies, (Mathiyzhagan and Nandan, 2010). The answer choices proved on a survey may not be an accurate reflection of how a participant truly feels. Also, while random sampling is generally used to select the participants, response rates can affect the validity of the results of a survey, (Mathiyzhagan and Nandan, 2010). The design also allows the researcher to sample the population under study.

3.2 TARGET POPULATION
A research population is a group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher, (Rayhn, 2014). In this study the researcher gathered data from a total of 15 teachers from 5 different schools in the Silobela circuit. It drew a total of three teachers from each of the five schools.

3.3 SAMPLING
Sampling is a way of selecting a number of individuals for the study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they are selected. Sampling is the process of selecting a few (a sample) from a bigger group (the sampling population) to become the basis for estimating or predicting a fact, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group, (Strydom, Fouche and Delport, 2002). In this research in order to minimise bias the researcher used stratified random sampling technique. Stratified random sampling is when the population is sub-divided into strata and random samples are drawn from each stratum. The
size of each stratum has to be proportional to and representative of the population it has been
drawn from. The researcher took note of the teachers’ various ages, sexes and years of
experience. Convenience sampling was also used. This entails sampling of respondents that
are accessible during the study with minimum effort. This was used especially in selecting
the schools to base the study on. The five schools were selected on the basis of accessibility
and convenience to the writer.

3.4 DATA SOURCES
There are basically two types of data sources used in research, namely primary and secondary
data. The researcher used both types of sources. Primary data is the data collected first hand
by the researcher for the purposes of this research. Primary data was collected from
respondents through questionnaires and interviews. Primary data was used because of its
convenience to collect and also due to the fact that it was up-to-date and gave a balanced
view of the topic under study. Secondary data is the data that was collected by other
researchers for other purposes but related to this study. These included literature review of
textbooks and the internet that provided data that proved to be authentic, reliable and well
accepted in academic circles. Secondary sources helped contextualize this study alongside
existing literature on the subject of role play.

3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS
The study used three research instruments. These are questionnaires, the interview and
observation. Details on how these were employed in this study are outlined below.

3.5.1 QUESTIONNAIRES
The study made use of questionnaires. Questionnaires consist of several structured questions
that participants normally respond to at their own pace. Farrant (1991: 60) argues that
“questionnaires are a set of carefully constructed questions designed to provide systematic
information in particular subjects.” In questionnaires, respondents answer the questions in
written form. In this research both closed and open-ended questions were included in the
questionnaire. In carrying out the study, the researcher noted various advantages of using
questionnaires. They allowed the respondent more time to respond to the questions and hence
improved the quality of the responses. Also, it was relatively easy to convert data solicited
from questionnaires into useful information. The assumption was that respondents were literate and were capable of understanding issues raised and they could also complete the questionnaire with no or minimum assistance.

Although questionnaires were of great importance to this research, it is also imperative to note some of the pitfalls generally inherent in the use of questionnaires. The respondents may not return some questionnaires to the researcher. Also the questionnaire is a rigid instrument because it does not leave room for clarification of some of the items that may not be clear to the respondents. The researcher is not given the chance to probe on some of the interesting or unclear responses that are given in the questionnaire. To complement the questionnaire the interview maybe used, as was the case with this study.

However, as was raised above, some respondents were not able to complete the questionnaires without supervision. Also, others did not return the questionnaires.

3.5.2 INTERVIEWS
The interview technique was also an important instrument for this study. Kahn and Cannell (1987:85) define an interview as a purposeful discussion between two or more people on a subject of common interest. This is a face to face situation whereby the subject responds to questions from the interviewer. However, successful interviews can also be carried over the phone or on Skype. As argued by Haralambos (1980:509), the basic defining characteristic of an interview is that it “consists of the researcher asking the interviewee or respondent a series of structured and unstructured questions”. Interviews need thorough preparations in terms of phraseology and need proper grading from simple to complex. This instrument was selected to enable the researcher to make follow-ups on the subject matter and ask follow-up questions rising from responses to structured questions. A total of 15 teachers participated in the interviews. These were the active participants of the study. Also, the interview generally ensures high response rates, probing and rephrasing of the questions to suit the situation. The other advantages were that the respondents were more willing to talk than write as is the case with questionnaires. Also there was room to clarify questions in the event the participant did not understand some questions. Interviews also enabled the researcher to draw conclusions on non-verbal communication of attitudes and emotions. However, the researcher encountered a
scenario where respondents gave brief statements probably because the researcher’s interviews were rather too long.

3.5.3 OBSERVATIONS
Haralambos (1980:32) asserts that “… the observer takes part to some extent in the activities of those he observes; the participant observes, joins the everyday routines of those he wishes to study and attempts to observe action in its normal, natural context”. This means that one can observe whilst teaching and take note of activities. During observation, the researcher was able to record the non-verbal comments by the pupils. The use of observation also meant that the researcher could take note of the effectiveness of the use of role play in teaching the Ndebele language as a subject. This was a very critical instrument as it allowed the researcher to observe the effects of the role play activities she suggested to Ndebele teachers and those she experimented with herself. A total of 15 lessons were successfully observed during the course of the study. However, due to limited resources as highlighted in chapter 1, a total of 10 of the observed lessons were from one school.

3.6 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS
This highlights the overall procedures in organising, describing and analysing data collected pertaining to the subject of the study. Data was analysed using qualitative analysis techniques. Qualitative research best illustrates the process of understanding to be achieved. This implies the constructivist paradigm which understands that realities are constructed. The constructivist paradigm is interested in the interaction of the researcher with the data and the fact that they develop the analysis mainly based on the participants’ social constructions. Thus, the researcher has an active role and a capacity for social interaction with informants so that data gathered are in a systematic and non-intrusive way. Some of the data was presented in the form of verbal accounts, explanations and descriptions. This was done in cases where the particular answers to the research questions being answered could not be answered in numerical form.

3.6.1 PIE CHARTS
These were used where the researcher compared and constructed the relative size or effect of each variable being shown. Pie charts are effective in summarising and simplifying
information, as in the case of participant’s knowledge of the concept of role play.

3.6.2 TABLES
Tables were employed for the presentation of numerical data. They were used where the particular research question being answered naturally required a numerical answer.

3.6.3 HISTOGRAMS
Histograms were used to compare results obtained from the questionnaires completed by subjects. These are easy to use to interpret and summarize information.

3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY
The chapter discussed the methodology used in the study, the research design and the sampling procedure followed in the study. The research instruments used to collect data were also unraveled in this chapter. An insight into the procedures followed in presenting and analyzing data was also given. The following chapter concerns itself with data presentation and data analysis and interpretation.
CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 INTRODUCTION
This chapter focuses on the presentation, analysis and discussion of data, based on the responses of the Ndebele teachers and students from five high schools in the Silobela circuit in Kwekwe District. The results are clearly presented and discussed under specifically identified key concepts of the research.

4.1 FINDINGS FROM QUESTIONNAIRES
The researcher distributed and administered fifteen questionnaires to Ndebele teachers in five secondary schools in Silobela circuit in Kwekwe District. All the questionnaires were returned even though it was after some hustles with some participants. Effectively, this means that fifteen respondents completed and returned their questionnaires.

4.1.1 Age groups of respondents
It emerged from the questionnaires, as illustrated in fig 4.1 below, that the majority of the respondents (40%) ranged between 31-40 years of age, while 26.6% were in the 41-50 years of age range. Those who were above 50 years constituted only 13.3% while another 20% were participants between 18 and 30 years of age. This shows that most of the Ndebele teachers in the sample were aged between 30 and 40 years, implying that they are young and energetic. It was an assumption of the study that active demonstration of activities by the teacher were central to role play and the older the teacher the fewer the physical activities they could demonstrate, hence the interest in the age groups of teachers. The graph below is a representation of this information.
4.1.2 Gender and qualifications of respondents

The sample comprised of 10 females and 5 males, which shows that most women pursue careers in languages rather than anything else whilst few men are interested in the languages. Further, it was established from the questionnaire that most of the Ndebele teachers are holders of first degrees in Ndebele, but without teacher training. These constituted 33.3%. Those with undergraduate degrees and at the same time hold certificates in education constituted a total of 26.6% while the untrained teachers made 13.3 %. Teachers who hold only a diploma in education certificate constituted 26.6 % of the population as illustrated in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification/ Teacher education</th>
<th>Frequency in percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Untrained teachers</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma in education holders</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree but without education</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The table above indicates that the sample was made up of teachers who are qualified to teach and those who are awaiting training. However, the larger percentages of 53.2% of the sample are qualified teachers versus the 46.8% of teachers without teacher training. Therefore, most of the teachers in the study area have been exposed to appropriate teaching methodology through training. This implies that the majority of the Ndebele teachers have been exposed to role play as a teaching methodology through teacher training programmes.

**4.1.3 Knowledge about communicative approach in teaching.**
While a set of questions generally sought to establish demographic characteristics of Ndebele teachers from the sampled schools in the District, a further set sought to establish specifics such as knowledge of the communicative approach to teaching and learning. Role play falls under what has been termed the communicative approach to teaching. As an approach, this comprises teaching methods that encourage interaction, communication, dialogue and exchange between and among students and their teachers. Analysis of data shows that teachers have a lot of knowledge about what the communicative approach to teaching is. A total of 86.7% of the respondents answered yes whilst 13.3% indicated that they did not know what the communicative approach is in relation to the teaching-learning process. The explanations given by the respondents proved that most of the respondents basically know what the communicative approach as a teaching methodology is about. The prevalent words in their explanations were “communication” and “interaction”, which shows that they have some understanding that in order for learning to take place communication and interaction are central.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree with education</th>
<th>26.6%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.1 Teacher education**  
**Source: Field notes**
As illustrated in the figure above, very few teachers did not know what the communicative approach is all about. What it then suggests is that probably in their teaching practice they are not aware of the importance of interaction amongst students in enhancing learning. The other problem could be that of untrained personnel just bumping into the class without enough knowledge of what their roles are and what role students have in the learning process.

4.1.4 Knowledge of what role play is among teachers

Analysis of responses indicated that 86.66% of the respondents were conversant with role play. Only a small number, which constituted 6.67%, indicated that it was not sure of what constitutes role play. A further 6.67% percent was ignorant of the concept of role play. However, 86.66% of the participants who answered yes gave several explanations on role play. In summary, they stated that in role play students assume the role of another, they act out different scripts, they make presentations and group discussions.
These findings are in line with findings of studies done elsewhere, for example, Ladousse (2004), as cited by Huang (2008), who states that role play promotes interaction in the classroom and also increases motivation. Also, Larsen-Freeman (1986), cited in Krish (2001), says that role plays, whether structured or unstructured, are important in the communicative approach because they give learners an opportunity to practice communication in different social contexts. The responses indicated that those teachers who underwent teacher education, that is, theories of education, are well versed with the concept of role play.

4.1.5 Relationship between communicative approach and role play
Teachers were also asked questions relating to the relationship between the communicative approach and role play. The data shows that 86.66% believe there is greater link between the two approaches to education. However, 6.67% of the sample felt that there was no relationship between the two approaches whilst a further 6.67% were not certain of the relationship that exists between the communicative approach and role play.
As indicated above, there is a strong relationship between, on the one hand, the communicative approach to teaching, and on the other, role play as a teaching-learning approach. This is also ascertained by Jue Xia (2010) who argues that role play promotes interaction in the classroom. The modern educationists advocate a hands-on minds-on approach in the teaching-learning process. The communicative approach has been identified as one of the effective ways of teaching and, through the use of role play students are made to fully participate in their own learning. This, therefore, shows that there is a strong relationship between role play and the communicative approach.
4.1.6 Role- play as an effective tool of instruction

Data relating to the effectiveness of role play revealed that 40% of the respondents strongly concurred that role play was an effective tool of instruction, which enhances understanding amongst students and hence improves results. A total of 33.3% agreed whilst 20% disagreed with the above statement and 6.67% strongly disagreed with the statement, suggesting that there were other teaching approaches that were more effective than role play. However, the majority of the respondents, as illustrated in the table below, were of the opinion that role play is an effective tool of instruction that motivates students to learn. This is ascertained by Poorman (2002) who established that a conducive environment where learners contribute immensely towards their learning and where they are actively involved, especially through role play, yields good results. In summary, those who agreed and those who strongly agreed constitute 73.3%, indicating that the majority of respondents were of the view that role play is an effective tool of instruction that enhances students’ better understanding of the different concepts of language being taught.

Fig 4.5: Role play as an effective tool of instruction
Source: Field notes
Another set of questions in the questionnaire sought to establish the different benefits of role play as a teaching approach. Such benefits, data shows, include that role play is helpful in motivating students to develop interest in the subjects since they learn while at the same time they are entertained. This was mentioned by 60% of the respondents. Also, 80% of the sample suggested that role play was important since it encouraged students to participate fully in their learning. This way the students take the leading role while the teacher is there to facilitate learning. Students learn by doing rather than by being passive recipients of knowledge, which improves the level of understanding of the concepts. A few respondents talked of role play as an enactment of reality and these constituted 33.3% of the total sample. These reasons given included that students should not only learn to benefit academically but also socially in order for them to be able to live and solve problems in their day to day lives. The remaining 53.3% stated that through role play students are made to remember concepts for longer. Further, 20% of the respondents mentioned communication and group work as facilitators of interaction, significantly benefiting students they learn from each other.

4.1.7 Use of role play by teachers in their day to day teaching of Ndebele

It emerged from data gathered, through the questionnaire, that the majority of teachers did not use role play in their teaching. Only 33.3% of the teacher participants said they used role play, and even then, only rarely. However, 66.7% of the participating teachers said they never used role play in their lessons. Of the 33.3% who use role play 13.33% use it once per term and 20% of them once per month. Once per month translates into three times per term at best. No teacher indicated that they used role play on a daily or weekly basis. Generally, this means that teachers do not use role play at all and those who employ it use it ineffectively, which hinders the fruits of role play from being realised.

4.1.8 Challenges of using role play in teaching the Ndebele Language

The respondents indicated that role play was time consuming to prepare for since most of the lessons ran only for 35 minutes and because of the wide curriculum, students are occupied the whole day, resulting in limited time for preparation for each lesson especially bearing in mind that they have to cover the syllabus. Following the departmental policies, there are concepts that should be covered weekly, fortnightly and monthly without fail, leaving little time for other things. Also, taking into account the number of periods they are allocated in the school
time table (ranging from 4-6 periods per week per class), it is very difficult and next to impossible to employ role play often.

The above explanation indicates that the main concern of teachers is to cover the syllabus more than anything else. The students have to cover all concepts in the syllabus while they are at school regardless of their understanding of those concepts. The teachers, therefore, indicated that most often they use traditional methods such as the lecture method to speed up the pace of finishing the syllabus on time.

The other challenge they mentioned was that not all concepts in the Ndebele syllabus can be taught using role play. The examples given include the teaching of grammar, which is very difficult to teach using role play since there is need to explain and show worked examples on the board. In such cases, the teachers advocated the lecture method in conjunction with student research and presentations. What this indicates is that even though role play can be used as an effective tool, it should be used in conjunction with other methods.

4.2 Findings from the Interview
The interviews targeted Heads of Departments (HODs) of the languages departments from the five schools. Of the five HODs only three teach the Ndebele language and hence these were purposively sampled for interviews.

4.2.1 Understanding of Role-Play
All the HODs indicated some understanding of what role-play is. The term proved familiar to the teachers as their explanations included words like drama, and acting out of scripts. The responses further revealed that role-play has a great impact on the teaching and learning process, as it makes learning lively and interesting. They opined that role-play caters for student involvement in their learning than making learning stale and boring. The HODs also generally acknowledged that role-play had many benefits that included student involvement, student interaction and motivation where the teacher is the facilitator.

4.2.2 Use of Role play in these schools
The HODs revealed that since their stay at the respective schools, they had noticed very little use of role-play as a teaching strategy. From what they observed, teachers employed role-play only when students perform dialogues, recite poems and when they act out short stories. Lecture methods were the most used instructional methods by teachers. The reasons for not using role-play included time factor due to the number of lessons allocated per week. Mostly, teachers conducted four lessons per week per class and this affected syllabus completion if role-play was to be used.

Finally, analysis of the data collected through interviews reflected that while role-play is an effective tool of instruction not all concepts in Ndebele could be taught using role-play, for example grammar. The HODs felt that the technique was effective in teaching concepts like literature, comprehension passages, compositions and the language in general. However, research

4.2.3 The effects of role play: insights from observations
As was alluded to in Chapter 1, the researcher routinely sat in during Ndebele lessons to observe the teaching approaches employed by different teachers. This was necessitated by the fact that the views and comments of teachers collected through interviews and questionnaires were not enough to indicate the effects of role play as a teaching approach. At best, data collected through these two instruments showed the gap in the teaching approaches and therefore, the need for role play. So, the researcher randomly suggested role play and associated activities to the teachers and helped plan for role play activities for different classes by working with students. This was envisaged to empirically test for the effects of role play in the teaching and learning process.

Data collected through observation indicates that students generally like playing roles as these keep them entertained. It was also observed that several students who did not usually participate in class began having interest in the subject as they often played roles of their liking, in the process acquiring significant course content in the subject. Analysis indicated that students generally liked taking positions of responsibility, which is offered by role playing in class as they become significant figures in the learning process.
4.3 Chapter Summary

Focus in this chapter was on data presentation, data analysis and discussion of findings. The data was presented with aid of graphs and tables. The following chapter summarises key research findings and outlines conclusions and recommendations of the study.
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction
This summarises key findings of the study. It also draws conclusions based on the findings offers recommendations drawn from the conclusions of the study.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings
The study set out to investigate the effects of using role play in teaching Ndebele. It used a case study of 5 secondary schools in the Silobela Circuit of Kwekwe District. Fifteen (15) Ndebele teachers from these schools were used as the subjects of this research. The methodology employed was the descriptive survey. The study was prompted by the need to help unearth salient problems as well as enlighten educators and responsible authorities on how better learning environments can be created in schools. It also sought to bring about higher student academic achievements anchored on the implementation of role play as a crucial teaching strategy. The study also set out to establish the challenges faced by teachers in using role play as an approach to teaching.

The study established that while teachers are generally aware of what role play in teaching and learning entails, they often do not use this approach as it is considered time consuming and their worry is more to do with completing the syllabus than the methods used. Therefore, the few teachers that use role play due to its enormous advantages and positive impact on the learning of concepts of language, can only use the approach a few times per month due to packed time tables in the curriculum.

Finally, the study established that while role play was effective as a teaching approach and has several advantages associated with it, not all concepts in the Ndebele language could be taught using role-play, for example, language structures. It is effective in teaching concepts like literature, comprehension passages, compositions and the language in general. However, the use of role play is such concepts as listed above, which use a lot of grammar is likely going to improve the acquisition of grammatical concepts of the language among role players.
5.2 Conclusions

It can, therefore, be concluded from the findings presented above that indeed role play is an effective tool of instruction in teaching Ndebele. Survey results clearly concur with the available theoretical frameworks on the subject matter. However, it should be noted that not all concepts can be taught using role play, for instance, grammar but in literature, compositions and the language in general role play can be used for the benefit of both teachers and the student. This therefore, shows that role play should be used in conjunction with other teaching approaches to achieve best results.

Teachers are facing a number of challenges in using role play for teaching. Firstly, there is the issue of time, which does not permit teachers to prepare role play activities for their lessons often. The second issue is that not all concepts in Ndebele can be taught using role play. For instance, in grammar where concentration is on the structure of words rather than the form, role play hardly plays a role. Also, teachers are guided by the syllabus and so the major concern is to cover the syllabus on time while students are at school in order for them to be able to write their exams and pass. Therefore, teachers do not prioritize teaching methodology over time constraints. Because of the problems mentioned above a few teachers use role play rarely, while the majority does not use it at all.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following alternatives for the successful use of role play in the teaching of Ndebele:

- Teachers should come up with, and participate in, proper role play activities for effective teaching/learning
- School heads and Heads of Departments should allocate adequate and equal class time for all the subjects taught at their schools
- The regional and district offices of the Ministry of Education should reinforce and make it a point that schools follow the departmental policies and the subject be allocated enough time.
- It is also recommended that workshops be organized to conscientise teachers on effective teaching strategies such as role play.
In carrying out her study, only secondary schools in Silobela Circuit were used, further research could be carried on more schools and on more language subjects.
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APPENDIX A: Questionnaire and Interview Guide

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

My name is Sibusiso Sibanda and I am studying a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) at Bindura University of Science Education. I am carrying out a research study on “the effectiveness of using role-play in teaching the Ndebele language”. The information provided will be used strictly for the academic purposes only.

Please answer the following questions by ticking the appropriate boxes or by filling in the blank boxes provided. Do not write your name on this questionnaire.

1. May you specify your age.
   
   18-30 [ ]  31-40 [ ]  41-50 [ ]  Above 50 [ ]

2. Indicate your gender.
   
   Male [ ]  Female [ ]

3. Qualifications / Teacher education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Tick</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma in Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree with Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree without Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. How long have you been in the teaching field?

Less than 1 year [ ]
1-5 years [ ]
5-10 years [ ]
Above 10 years [ ]

5. Do you understand what is meant by communicative approach in teaching?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yes briefly explain

Do you understand what is meant by role play?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yes briefly explain

6. There is a strong relationship between communicative approach and role play.

True [ ] False [ ] Not sure [ ]

7. Role play is an effective tool of instruction that enhances understanding amongst students.
8. What do you consider to be the most important benefit of using role play as a teaching technique in Ndebele.

Explain the reason why

9. Do you employ role play in your day to day teaching?
   Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes how often?
   Daily ☐ Monthly ☐
   Weekly ☐ Once per term ☐

10. What are the challenges you face as a Ndebele teacher that hinder you from using a role play?
11. Can one use role play technique per se and achieve the expected results?
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INTERVIEWEES

1. Can you briefly explain what you understand by the term role play.
2. In your own opinion how do you think role impacts on teaching and learning process?
3. What are some of the benefits to both the teacher and the students of using role play?
4. What do you consider to be the role of a teacher in the class? What of students?
5. Can you comment generally on the use of role play in the past years/months you have been at this school?
6. What are your recommendations?
7. Is it possible to use role play in teaching all concepts covered in Ndebele as a subject, explain?