

TEACHING CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF ENGLISH SECOND  
LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE  
OHANGWENA REGION, NAMIBIA

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## **Abstract**

The study investigated the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers (ESL) in Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region (Namibia), as well as the strategies used by the teachers in order to cope with their specific teaching challenges in the study area. Furthermore, the study surveyed the views of the ESL teachers on the measures that could be used to minimise the teaching challenges they are facing in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia. The study used the mixed methods research design to collect data from a sample of 60 ESL teachers currently teaching in the Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region. The research participants were selected using the purposive sampling method. Data were collected using questionnaires, focus group discussions and observations. The study found that ESL teachers in Ohangwena Region encounter challenges such as lack of resources for teaching and learning ESL (55% of the participants agreed and 25% strongly agreed), overcrowded classes (45% of the participants agreed and 25% of them strongly agreed), absenteeism by learners (60% agreed and 10% of them strongly agreed), lack of parental involvement (60% of the teacher participants agreed), learners' lack of motivation, learner's poor attitude, lack of advisory services, lack of refresher workshop, and learners' lack of exposure to English language programs. In terms of strategies used by the ESL teachers to cope with their specific teaching challenges in the study area, the study found that the teachers mostly motivate their learners, improvise and use different sources when teaching ESL, use learner centered teaching methods, use team work, and made communication in ESL compulsory for the learners to help them develop their vocabulary. On the measure that could be used to minimise the teaching challenges that ESL teachers face in the study area, the participants highlighted the need for the provision of adequate resources such as ESL textbooks and more classrooms to accommodate all learners, involving parents in their children's education, reducing the number of teacher-learner ratio in the classrooms, organising capacity building workshops for ESL teachers, and changing the medium of instruction for junior primary grades from Oshikwanyama to English language. The study recommended that the government should improve the ESL resources of the Senior Secondary Schools in

Ohangwena Region, reduce overcrowded classrooms, provide refresher workshops and support from advisory services to ESL teachers, and provide well-equipped libraries to increase the learners' exposure to English language. In addition, the study recommended that English language should be used as a medium of communication both inside and outside the classroom to increase exposure and vocabulary of the learners.

**Key words:** English Second Language, coping strategy, challenges, classroom, teachers

### **List of Publication**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
List of Publication .....	iii
List of Tables .....	viii
List of Figures.....	ix
List of Abbreviations and/or Acronyms.....	xi
Acknowledgements.....	xii
Dedications.....	xiv
Declarations .....	xv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	4
1.3 Aim of the Study.....	5
1.4 Research Questions .....	5
1.5 Significance of the Study .....	6
1.6 Limitation of the Study.....	7
1.7 Delimitation of the Study.....	7
1.8 Definition of Terms:.....	7
1.9 Summary .....	10
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	11
2.1 Theoretical Framework.....	11
2.2 Origin of English Second Language .....	14
2.2.1 English Second Language Teachers .....	15
2.2.2 Importance of Second Language Teaching.....	16
2.2.3 World Views on Teaching English Second Language.....	19
2.3 Background of English Second Language in Namibia .....	22
2.3.1 The State of English Second Language Teaching in Namibia.....	24
2.4 Challenges of Teaching English Second Language .....	27
2.4.1 Shortage of Teaching and Learning Materials .....	28

2.4.2 Overcrowded Classrooms .....	31
2.4.3 Limited Classroom Practice of English Language .....	34
2.4.4 Lack of Context in Methodologies and Use of Unfamiliar Words.....	35
2.4.5 Teacher’s Attitude .....	36
2.4.6 Learner’s Attitude Towards ESL .....	39
2.4.7 Inappropriate and Limited Teaching Methodologies, Strategies and Approaches.....	40
2.4.8 Effects of Learner Background .....	41
2.4.9 Lack of Vocabulary .....	42
2.4.10 Lack of English Exposure .....	43
2.4.11 Linguistic Problems.....	44
2.4.12 Lack of Motivation .....	45
2.4.13 English Language Assessment.....	46
<b>2.5 Coping Strategies on Challenges of Teaching ESL.....</b>	<b>47</b>
2.5.1 Motivating Learners.....	47
2.5.2 Learner-Centered Teaching Approach .....	48
2.5.3 Group Work.....	49
<b>2.6 Measures for Mitigating English Language Teaching Challenges.....</b>	<b>50</b>
2.6.1 Attitude Reform.....	51
2.6.2 Different Teaching Methods and Techniques Application.....	51
2.6.3 Assisting Learners According to their Individual Difference .....	51
2.6.4 Teaching Facilities Improvement.....	52
2.6.5 Learners’ Level Match.....	53
2.6.6 Classroom Management .....	53
2.6.7 Word Consciousness and Word Selection.....	54
<b>2.7 Summary .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>3.1 Research Design .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>3.2 Population of the Study .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>3.3 Sample and Sampling Method.....</b>	<b>59</b>
3.3.1 Inclusion Criteria .....	60

3.3.2 Exclusion Criteria.....	60
<b>3.4 Research Instruments .....</b>	<b>61</b>
3.4.1 Survey Questionnaire.....	61
3.4.2 Focus Group Discussion.....	62
3.4.3 Observation.....	63
<b>3.5 Data Collection Procedure .....</b>	<b>64</b>
3.5.1 Questionnaires .....	64
3.5.2 Focus Group.....	65
3.5.3 Observations .....	66
<b>3.6 Data Analysis .....</b>	<b>67</b>
3.6.1 Qualitative Data Analysis.....	67
3.6.2 Quantitative Data Analysis.....	68
<b>3.7 Ethical Considerations.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>3.8 Pilot Study.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>3.9 Reliability and Validity.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>3.10 Trustworthiness.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>3.11 Summary.....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Study Participants .....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>4.2 Challenges Faced by English Second Language Teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region.....</b>	<b>79</b>
4.2.1 Lack of Resources for Teaching and Learning ESL .....	80
4.2.2 Overcrowded Classrooms .....	82
4.2.3 Absenteeism of Learners.....	85
4.2.4 Lack of Parental Involvement .....	87
4.2.5 Lack of Refresher Workshops.....	89
4.2.6 Lack of Support from Advisory Services by Subject Education Officer .....	91
4.2.7 Lack of Motivation .....	93
4.2.8 Learners' Poor Attitude Towards English Second Language.....	94
4.2.9 Lack of Exposure to English Language.....	95

<b>4.3 Coping Strategies Applied by the English Second Language Teachers to Cope with their Teaching Challenges .....</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>4.4 Mitigation Strategies to Minimise the Teaching Challenges Faced by English Second Language Teachers in the Study Area .....</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>4.5 Summary .....</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>5.1 Summary of the Study .....</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>5.2 Conclusions .....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>5.3 Recommendations .....</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Appendix A: Ethical Clearance Certificate .....</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>Appendix B: Research Permission Letter .....</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>Appendix C: Director of Education Permission Letter .....</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>Appendix D: Informed Consent Form. ....</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>Appendix E: Questionnaire .....</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE TEACHERS.....</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>Appendix F: Focus Group Discussion Guide .....</b>	<b>159</b>
<b>APPENDIX G: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE GUIDE.....</b>	<b>162</b>

**List of Tables**

Table 2.1: Objectives for spelling in the syllabus-----27

Table 4.1: Age distribution of participants-----70

Table 4.2: Participants’ years of teaching experience -----72

Table 4.3: Participants’ responses on the class sizes in in the study area -----77

Table 4.4: Coping strategies as suggested by focus group discussions ----- 92

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Proportion of learners who learn foreign language-----	19
Figure 4.1: Distribution of the study participant by gender -----	69
Figure 4.2: Highest educational qualification of the participants-----	71
Figure 4.3: Job positions held by the participants -----	73
Figure 4.4 Participants' responses on the lack of English language resources in the study area-----	75
Figure 4.5: Challenge of overcrowded classrooms in the study area-----	76
Figure 4.6: Participants' responses on the absenteeism of learners in the study area ----	79
Figure 4.7: Participants' responses on lack of parental involvement-----	82
Figure 4.8: Participants' responses on the lack of refresher workshops -----	83
Figure 4.9: Participants' responses on the lack of support from advisory services-----	85
Figure 4.10: Learners' lack of motivation -----	86
Figure 4.11: Learners' poor attitude towards ESL tasks -----	88
Figure 4.12: Figure 4.12: Lack of exposure to English -----	89
Figure 4.13: Frequency of coping Strategies used by the English Second Language teachers-----	91

Figure 4.14: Participants' indication of the mitigation strategies to minimise ESL teaching challenges in the study area -----98

Figure 4.15: Focus groups' suggestions on mitigation strategies to minimise the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in the study area-----99

## **List of Abbreviations and/or Acronyms**

DNEA	Directorate of National Examination and Assessment
ESL	English Second Language
EFL	English as a foreign language
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESOL	English to speakers of other languages
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
MoEAC	Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture
NIED	National Institute for Education Development
NPC	National Population Commission
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SSS	Senior secondary school
SSSORN	Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region of Namibia
SWAPO	South-west African People's Organization
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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## **Dedications**

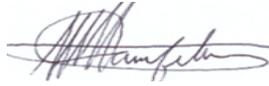
The study is dedicated to my late father Erastus Hidinua Haufiku and my mother Klaudia Ndiyaamwa Hafyenanye. Furthermore, I dedicate this study to my precious God who make this journey possible, as well as to my children to take example and follow dad's footsteps.

## **Declarations**

I, Isidor Haufiku, hereby declare that this study is my own work and is a true reflection of my research, and that this work, or any part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution. No part of this thesis may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by means (e.g. electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the prior permission of the author, or The University of Namibia in that behalf.

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October 2022

**Name of Student**

**Signature**

**Date**

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

This study investigated the teaching challenges experienced by English Second Language (ESL) teachers in teaching ESL as well as the coping strategies employed by ESL teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region of Namibia. Immediately after Namibia's independence in 1990, the government introduced English as the official language of communication in the country and hence, recognised it as the medium of instruction in schools. According to the Education Management Information system (EMIS) (2015), the adoption of the language policy was taken into consideration considering the fact that Namibia is a multilingual country with fourteen official languages. The most widely spoken languages in Namibia are Oshiwambo by 49% of the population, Khoekhoegowab by 11%, Afrikaans by 10%, Rukwangali by 9% and Otjiherero by 9% (Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN), 2020). In Ohangwena Region, the study area in particular, Oshiwambo dialect constitutes the dominant mother tongue, and there is very little background of English language in most homes. However, the introduction of English as the medium of instruction had been a challenge to teachers in classroom practice as noted by (Kisting 2011). The challenges faced by ESL teachers are diverse; some of which have direct effects on the overall teaching and learning process in secondary schools (Simasiku, 2016). These challenges could emanate from the education system itself, the teachers and the learners themselves.

English Second Language is taught from Grade 4 at primary schools, while on approval by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (MoEAC), junior secondary and Senior

Secondary Schools have options to teach English as a first or second language in all public schools in Namibia (NIED, 2016). However, most private schools in the country teach English from earlier grades such as pre-school and English First Language at secondary schools (Simasiku, 2016). English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools, especially in the government schools have been facing serious teaching challenges in Namibia, and around the Sub-Saharan Africa (Ngololo and Nielsen, 2017). Teaching English Second Language is a complex task, especially when it is done in areas where there is little background to English as a language (Selim & Tasneen, 2016). The authors revealed that English Second Language teachers face daunting teaching challenges in real classroom situation in Africa and around the world, despite their possible adequate training and innovativeness. However, Mundy (2008) cited by Khan (2016) opined that most of these challenges are contextual, and hence differ from place to place. The teaching challenges that ESL teachers experience can be learners related, school related or curriculum related challenges (Deocampo, 2020).

In their submission, Hamid and Honan (2018) noted that most teachers encounter challenges in teaching English Second Language because of lack of proper and adequate teaching approaches and techniques, teaching unmotivated learners, lack of resources, demanding workload, overcrowded classes and psychological problems. Elsewhere in Asia, Alhija (2015) noted that teaching ESL is characterised by numerous challenges which are related to the learners' attitude as well as the curriculum itself. Similarly, Akcan (2016) observed that the teaching challenges experienced by ESL teachers in Arabic countries mainly involved motivating learners and adopting English as communicative language in class. On the other hand, Aduwa-Ogiegbaen & Iyamu

(2006) conducted a study on teaching challenges experienced by ESL in Nigerian public schools and established that lack of instructional technologies and demotivating teaching environments were the greatest challenges encountered by ESL. In Namibia, most ESL teachers are apparently ill-equipped to teach English language as a school subject. Fatiloro (2015) also adds that the lack of absolute commitment and attitudes to comprehend English language on the part of both teachers and learners can affect ESL teachers' efficiency.

When teachers encounter challenges especially in teaching ESL, they tend to develop coping strategies to mitigate the challenges they face. In their study, Aduwa-Ogiegbaen & Iyamu (2006) noted that some of the coping strategies that ESL teachers might develop include motivating learners and the teacher being resourceful. However, Alhija (2015) noted that many factors such as means of coping and strategies, personality traits and characteristics of the environment can interactively affect a teacher's perception of the degree to which situations are challenging. Admiraal, Korthagen and Wubbles (2000) supported by Fatiloro (2015) opined that teachers use different means of coping strategies that include cognitive, emotional and behavioral strategies to adapt to their challenging situations. As a result, the coping strategy can either be positive or negative depending on how the individual assesses the challenge.

Evidence from literature showed that the teacher is the most critical personnel in an educational system, particularly in areas that bother on what goes on in the classroom (Mundy 2008 cited by Shishavan, 2010). Thus, teachers of the English Second Language face real teaching challenges in their efforts to mediate teaching and learning of the subject, especially in Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region, it is

pertinent to investigate the teaching challenges they encounter as well as the coping strategies used and devise helpful mitigation measures.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The English Second Language (ESL) teachers in Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) in the Ohangwena Region of Namibia appeared to be experiencing unconfirmed specific teaching challenges as the learners taught by these teachers continued to perform poorly in the Grade 12 Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary level examination ESL in recent years. Between 2015 to 2020, the percentage of passes of Grade 12 learners who obtained the priority symbols (A to D) in ESL are 9.8% (2015), 8.6% (2016), 10.1% (2017), 14.4% (2018), 12.4% (2019), and 14.2% (2020) (Management information system, 2020).

According to Khan (2018), the teachers constitute the primary focal point in a poor learning outcome. Hamid and Honan (2018) argue that in most countries, English Second Language teachers face daunting challenges when it comes to teaching second language learners. Teaching English language even becomes more complicated when the learners environment has limited or no exposure to English as a language (Tang, 2020). This is particularly a major problem in Ohangwena Region – the study area as the dominant language spoken in most households is the Oshiwambo, with very little exposure to English language. It is more worrisome that despite the perceived teaching challenges faced by the teachers of the ESL in SSS in the Ohangwena Region, there is no documented study carried out to provide evidence-based data on the problem and the teachers' coping strategies, which could provide helpful information in devising mitigation measures. While there are published studies on the views of educators about

the teaching challenges of ESL teachers in other countries, there is a literature gap on researches carried out in Namibia that documented teaching challenges faced by ESL teachers and the coping strategies they employed to deal with their specific challenges.

As teachers constitute the primary focal point in a poor learning outcome, the researcher found it pertinent to investigate the teaching challenges of the English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region, as well as their coping strategies and then suggest helpful intervention strategies.

### **1.3 Aim of the Study**

The main aim of the study was to investigate the teaching challenges faced by the English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region, Namibia, as well as to establish the strategies used by these teachers to cope with their specific teaching challenges in the study area.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions

1. What are the teaching challenges of English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region, Namibia?
2. What are the strategies used by English Second Language teachers in order to cope with their specific teaching challenges in Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region, Namibia?

3. What are the views of the English Second Language teachers on measures that could be used to minimise the teaching challenges they are facing in Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region, Namibia?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study has important implications for both teachers and learner's education, curriculum design and implementation as well as policy change. The significance of this study can be understood in two dimensions, namely; the theoretical contribution and practical contribution

At the theoretical level, the study contributed a baseline data of the teaching challenges and coping strategies of English Second Language (ESL) teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region of Namibia to the current global literature in the field of the research. Thus, the research findings added to the growing literature on ESL teaching challenges experienced by ESL teachers from the Namibian's perspective.

At the practical level, the study would avail educational stakeholders with research data on teaching challenges of English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region and how the teachers have been coping with such challenges. Such information is necessary for planning and implementing mitigation measures by the government and other stakeholders with a view to overcoming the identified challenges. The study might therefore, be useful to teachers, education managers, scholars and other researchers as a credible reference source of documented literature.

## **1.6 Limitation of the Study**

It was envisaged that some respondents may not return the questionnaires. To minimise this, the researcher encouraged the respondents to complete the questionnaires while in office and the researcher personally collected the questionnaires within three days of administration.

Also, the researcher assumed that some respondents may not respond to certain questions for reasons known to them. The respondents may feel that the researcher wants to spy on them that they are failing to deliver on their job. To minimise these envisaged challenges during that data collection, the researcher educated the respondents on the potential benefits of the study, hence, the need for them to provide honest and complete responses.

## **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

The study is delimited to teaching challenges and coping strategies of English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region of Namibia only. Thus, the findings of the study may not be generalised to all the Senior Secondary Schools in other Regions of Namibia.

## **1.8 Definition of Terms:**

**Coping** – In this study, coping represent the teacher’s action, response and reaction to challenges they encounter in teaching English Second Language. Coping is a complex and organized chain of behaviors involving cognitive appraisal, action impulse, patterned somatic responses and reaction or physiological aspects of a particular emotion (Folkman & Lazarus, 1991). Folkman and Lazarus took into consideration the psycho-

physiological aspects of emotion as a way of coping that take place after the appraisal of a stressful event.

**Teaching challenge** – In this study, a teaching challenge is a problem or hardship that hampers teachers from successfully teaching a subject. A challenge literally means an invitation or a call to action. Challenges vary in scope and complexity (Caffarel, 2016). Although teaching challenges differ in several key ways, they share the same basic structure. The basic structure of a teaching challenge has the problem, process, product and criteria. The problem is the task, question, or issue that needs to be addressed or solved. The process is the approach, method, or procedure English Second Language teachers will use to solve the problem. The product is the solution, outcome, or demonstration of solving the problem. The criteria are the guidelines, rules, and standards for evaluating success. In this study however, teaching challenge represents the difficulties that ESL teachers encounter in teaching the subject.

**Vocabulary** – In this study, oral vocabulary is viewed as the set of words which the learners know the meanings while speaking or reading orally. On the other hand, the print vocabulary consists of words which the learners know the meanings when they write or read silently. Sight-word vocabularies entails the immediate recognition of words by learners (Alhija, 2015); meaning-vocabularies which represent the words understood by learners; listening-vocabularies which are concerned with learners' understanding of the heard and spoken words, and academic vocabularies that reflect the content-specific words or learners' understating of the oral and print words (Antonacci & O'Callaghan, 2011). Hiebert and Kamil (2015) further define vocabulary as the knowledge that the learners gained about the meanings of words. They argued that

words come in two types, oral and print, and the knowledge, too, comes in two main types: receptive (understand or recognize) and productive (write or speak).

**Second language** - For the purpose of this study, second language means a language that is learned after the first language or mother tongue and used for certain purposes such as education. In this context, English language is a second language that the students learn at school.

**Language acquisition** - For the purpose of this study, language acquisition refers to the tendency of an individual to learn a particular spoken or written word willingly or unwillingly (.).

**Literacy** - For the purpose of this study, literacy means the ability to read and write with understanding in any language (UNESCO 2015).

**Reading proficiency** - For the purpose of this study, reading proficiency refers to the act of being skillful or competent in reading .

**Official language** - For the purpose of this study, official language refers to a language that is recognized by law and given a special legal status in a country, state and other territories for official business, government functions, commerce and industry and in education.

**Learner** - For the purpose of this study, a learner means a person who is learning a subject or skill (Mahn & John, 2012).

## **1.9 Summary**

The chapter presented the background to the study, highlighting how Namibia adopted English as the official language and medium of instructions in schools. Furthermore, the chapter presented the problem statement and the aim of the study as well as the three research questions that the study sought to answer. Limitations and delimitations of the study were also discussed. The chapter concluded by giving definitions of major terms.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

Teaching English Second Language is a complex task, especially when it is done in areas where there is little background to English as a language (Iipinge, 2016). This chapter reviews the theoretical framework of the study which is based on the transactional model of stress and coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) cited by Mahn and John -Steiner (2012). The chapter also reviews related literature about challenges encountered by English teachers as well as possible strategies to mitigate the challenges being encountered by English Second Language teachers.

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework used in this study is the transactional model of stressors by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). The transactional model of stressors suggests that specific types of situations or stressors result in positive or negative perceptions (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984 as cited by Mahn & John-Steiner, 2012). Depending on the nature of stressors, an individual can view the stressors as either positive or negative because of the potential reward or threat that may result. Therefore, in this model, there is a challenge (that is, stressors that have potential threat outcomes). In addition to simply perceiving a stressor as a challenge or hindrance, the theory also suggests that individuals' coping strategies differ based on the type of the stressor (Bahrani & Soltani, 2012). According to Vygotsky as cited by Mahn and John-Steiner (2012), practical problem like teaching challenges in education is solved by the application of psychological theory. Therefore, the transactional theory of stressors and coping is relevant to this study, which focused on the teaching challenges and coping strategies of English Second Language teachers.

The early conceptualisations of work stress indicate that there is an inverted U-shaped relationship that exists between the amount of stress and performance (Cummins, 2017). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) as cited by Davila (2019) argued that the conceptualization of stress is valid although simply examining stress on a single continuum could not adequately explain why some individuals were more predisposed to stress than others and why some individuals were more tolerant of particular stressors. A further examination of the transactional model of stressors and coping reveals that stress can be categorized in terms of eustress and distress based on amount; however, there has been recent support for a distinction based on type of stressor instead of amount of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984 as cited by Davila (2019)).

The transactional model of stressors and coping has distinct advantages when compared to the single continuum theory such as having potential to accommodate for individual differences in appraisal. In keeping with this transactional model, stress will be defined as the psychological response to a situation or stimuli whereby an individual appraises the situation or stressor as exceeding their capabilities or resources. Stressors appraised as having no potential personal growth, the attainment of goals, or rewards are categorised as “hindrances” or threat (Dewaele, & Al-Saraj, 2015). With regard to the categorisation of work-related stressors, Erdener and Knoepfel, (2018) found that workers tend to view job overload, time pressures, and level of responsibility as challenges while politics in organisations, red tape, and lack of job security are viewed as hindrances. Prashanti and Bhavani (2016) categorised school-related stressors on the basis of critical incidences; however, similar situations emerged as challenge and hindrance stressors in an academic setting. Ambiguity of work, hassles, and teacher

favoritism were identified as hindrance stressors, while amount of work and time pressures were considered as challenge stressors.

The transactional theory of stressors attempts to describe the universality of stressor appraisals as either hindrance or challenging. According to this model, an individual analyses the extent of threat to his or her wellbeing that would have been triggered by a potential stressful event. As stated by Prashanti and Bhavani (2016), when an individual view an event as threatening or challenging, there is a secondary analysis process which assesses the individual's ability and resources to handle the threat or challenge. According to Prashanti and Bhavani (2016), an individual develops coping responses after cognitive appraisal of the stressor. Therefore, the resultant psycho-physiological experience (stress outcome) of a potentially stressful event depends on the effectiveness of one's cognitive appraisals and coping processes. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) as cited by Graves (2016), opined that the stress outcomes provide feedback to the cognitive appraisal stages for further actions if there is need. The transactional model of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) is conceptualised on the primary appraisal, secondary appraisal and coping strategies that form a relationship between stressor and the individual's stress outcomes.

According to Folkman and Lazarus (1991), coping is not a simple process but an organised and complex connected chain of behaviors involving cognitive appraisal, action impulse, patterned somatic responses, and reaction physiological aspects of a particular emotion. ESL teachers therefore develop a chain of behaviours in their attempt to cope with the challenges in teaching ESL. This is more practical because the psycho-physiological aspects of emotion are triggered by appraisal stressors.

Generally, teaching English Second Language could be very demanding, especially in rural areas; thus, it could become stressful or challenging to the teachers. In this regard, the transactional theory can be used in this study to analyse how the English Second Language teachers are coping with their specific teaching challenges in Ohangwena region. Studies by renowned researchers such as Fatiloro (2015); Lowe and Gayle (2017); and Harris (2011) revealed that the effects of stress in the form of psychophysiological distress can result in a worker developing coping behavior. For example, Hamid and Honan (2018) established that affectivity was greatly connected to coping orientation while both Khan and Khan (2016) and Kamwendo (2014) found that affectivity can either be positive or negative, and regulates the choice of coping strategy when an individual is faced with a stressful or challenging situation.

The transactional theory argues that individuals develop different types of coping strategies, in terms of emotional, cognitive and behavioral when they encounter a challenging situation or stressful event. Thus, this theory is relevant to the study as the research seeks to investigate the teaching challenges and coping strategies of ESL teachers in SSS in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia. As professional colleagues teaching in the same school environment, teachers may experience similar challenges at any stage, but individual teacher varies in what he or she brings to that stage and therefore how he/she copes and progresses through the challenges.

## **2.2 Origin of English Second Language**

According to Khassawneh (2011) English Second Language (ESL) is a traditional term that denotes the study of English language by non-native speakers of English language. Gunderson (2009) defines ESL as English for speakers of other languages. In other

words, English Second Language is English designed for those whose primary language is not the English. Mc Arthur (2002) and Kadenge and Mugari (2015) allude that the terms ESL, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) are used interchangeably and they were assumed to mean the same thing in many countries. According to Kadenge and Mugari (2015), the terms ESL, EFL and ESOL emerged after the Second World War, and in Britain no distinction was seriously made between ESL and EFL, both being subsumed under English Language Teaching (ELT) to foreign and non-native speakers. Namibia uses the term ESL; and English is used as a second language because the country is a multilingual society with a variety of dialects, depending on ethnic origins. The principal groups are the Ovambo, Kavango, Herero, Damara, mixed race (Coloured and Rehoboth Baster), White Namibians (Afrikaner, German, British and Portuguese), Nama, Zambezi people (Lozi), San, and Tswana (National Population Commission (NPC), 2001).

### **2.2.1 English Second Language Teachers**

English Second Language (ESL) teachers are educators that work with non- native speakers to help them learn to speak, read, understand, and write English (Mahmoud (2018). These educators may work in public or private schools, language academies, or teach private lessons from their homes or the homes of learners. In Namibia, ESL teachers are native /indigenous people from different Namibian tribes who also learnt English Second Language during their formal education. An ESL teacher's duty and responsibility is to teach and provide guidance to learners who are learning English Second Language. ESL teachers use real-life contexts to help learners grasp the complexities of the language. Mahmoud (2018) complemented by Fatiloro (2015)

postulate that ESL teachers must be adaptable, creative, and sensitive to the cultural differences expected when working with learners from different culture. They added that ESL teachers also act as mentors, advisors, and liaisons to learners and families who are just getting established in the English language environment. Mahmoud (2018), Pande (2013) and Mai and Iwashita (2012) state that an ESL teacher's duty is to plan and deliver lessons and assess learners on their progress, strengths, and weaknesses using a flexible teaching style that adapts to varied learner needs. Maleki ,Mollae and Khosravi (2014) add that excellent communication skills are also important.

Besides instructing learners in the subject of English, Fatiloro (2015) opined that the ESL teachers' roles are to prepare lesson plans, complete related paperwork, and stay informed with changing teaching methods and standards. Mai and Iwashita (2012) argue that because of the increasing use of technology in the classroom, ESL teachers need proficiency in computers and various classroom technologies. Thus, ESL teachers need to be qualified, both in contents and pedagogies to teach English Second Language. In this regard, Mawere (2012) emphasised that prospective ESL teachers must complete a state-approved teacher preparation program to ensure efficiency during teaching and learning.

### **2.2.2 Importance of Second Language Teaching**

English Second Language plays a very crucial role in Namibia and the world at large. A research carried out by Kelly (2017) found that the percentage of learners learning a foreign language in school across European countries is at a median of 92%. The research found that foreign language was a very important trait for success in today's job

economy. Kelly (2017) and Kepe, Foncha and Maruma (2017) agree that language learning can benefit success in school, future careers, and even overall brain development and intelligence as well as creates more positive attitudes and less prejudice toward people who are different. From a study carried out by Maddock and Maroun (2018), university students came up with the reasons why it is important for learners to learn ESL. For example, at the Auburn University, 20 reasons given for studying ESL are:

1. Learners tend to develop analytical skills when they study a foreign language.
2. Learning ESL increase the chances of an employee to get employment at the international stage.
3. Dealing with ESL exposes students to other cultures, thus students gain more understanding of their own and foreign cultures.
4. Learning ESL enhances creativity of students.
5. Graduates who are fluent in speaking ESL have more opportunities and have better communication skills which might have been acquired during the learning process.
6. Travelling to other international destinations is much easier and more pleasant when the student has studied ESL.
7. Skills like problem solving, dealing with abstract concepts, are increased when you study a foreign language.

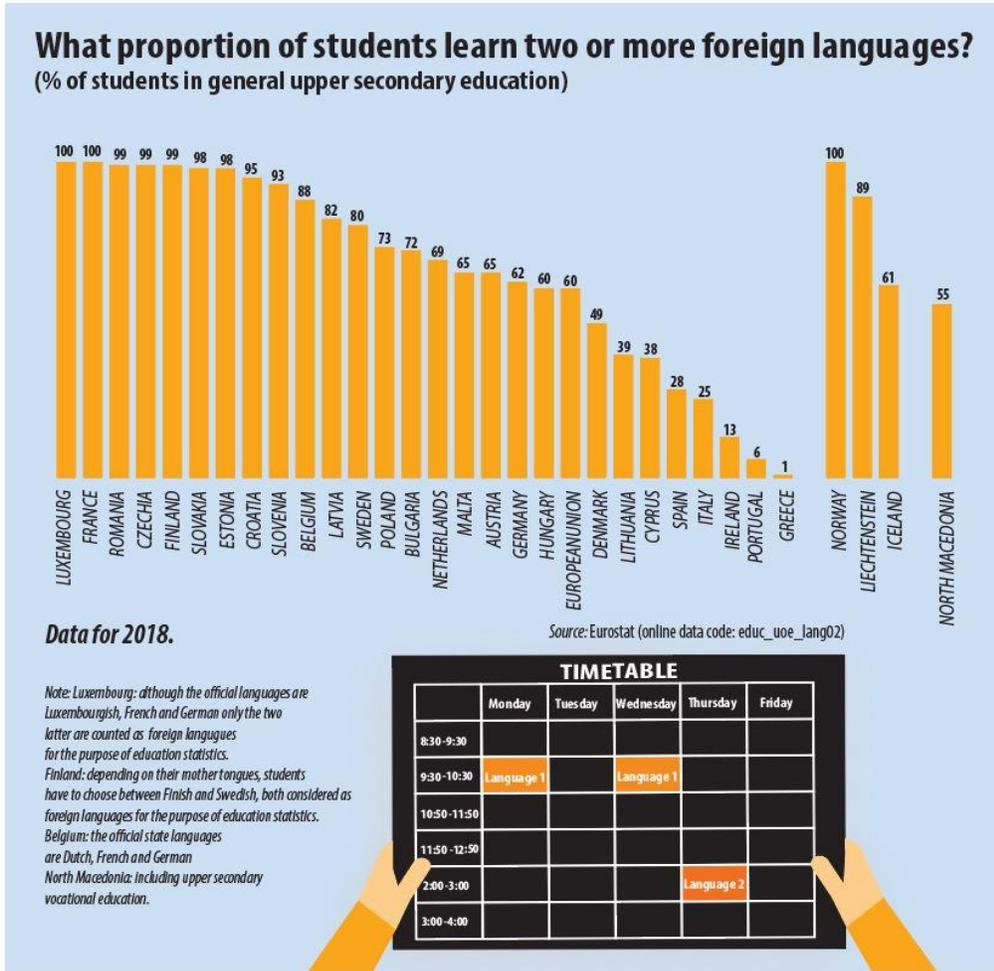
8. Foreign language study enhances one's opportunities in government, business, medicine, law, technology, military, industry, marketing, etc.
9. A second language improves your skills and grades in school subjects.
10. Four out of five new jobs in the US are created as a result of foreign trade.
11. Foreign languages provide a competitive edge in career choices when one is able to communicate in a second language.
12. Foreign language study enhances listening skills and memory.
13. One participates more effectively and responsibly in a multi-cultural world if one knows another language.
14. Graduates are more marketable in the global economy if they have other foreign languages that they have studied.
15. Foreign language study offers a sense of the past - culturally and linguistically.
16. Foreign languages expand one's world view and limit the barriers between people- barriers cause distrust and fear.
17. Foreign language study leads to an appreciation of cultural diversity.
18. As immigration increases, we need to prepare for changes in the American society.
19. One is at a distinct advantage in the global market if one is as bilingual as possible.

20. Foreign languages is good for students who wants to pursue fashion, art, music, dance, cuisine, film, philosophy and science.

In Namibia, English Second Language also plays fundamental roles in different facets of people's lives. Harris (2011) alludes that learning language can benefit success in school; future carriers and even overall brain development and intelligence as well as providing a competitive edge in career choices. Maddock and Maroun (2018) state that four out of five new jobs in the US are created as a result of foreign trade. Thus, foreign language study enhances one's opportunities in government, business, medicine, law, technology, military, industry, marketing, etc.

### **2.2.3 World Views on Teaching English Second Language**

Second language teaching is viewed differently in Africa and the Western countries. In as much as people differ from the way they view English Second Language, research has however, shown that people from various countries across the world value English Second Language as noted by Maddock and Maroun (2018). Research has shown that English language has come to be recognised as the most and major international language of communication. A research carried out by Graves (2016) applauds that in the majority of EU Member States, more than three fifths of all upper secondary students were learning two or more foreign languages in 2018; by contrast, this only reached 12.5 % in Ireland, 5.8 % in Portugal and 1.0 % in Greece. All or nearly all (99-100 %) primary school pupils in Cyprus, Malta, Austria and Spain learnt English as a foreign language in 2018. It also reveals that in 2018, 96 % of students in upper secondary education in the EU-27 learnt English as a foreign language (Figure 2.1 below).



[ec.europa.eu/eurostat](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

Figure 2.1: Proportion of learners who learn foreign language

Source: Graves (2016)

According to Gray (2013) cited in Coşkun (2016), in countries like Denmark, France, Holland, and Switzerland, second language is not generally offered in the public elementary schools, while in England, German, Luxemburg, Norway and Sweden, it is only offered to some extent. They cited lack of qualified teachers as one hindrance and they also said that European countries realized that for a foreign language study to be of great value, it must be pursued assiduously over a long period of years.

Many African countries value English as a second language. Mojapelo (2016) asserts that English is the present-day language of communication in most African countries. He says about twenty-six African nations and millions of Africans use English as an official language. Mojapelo (2016) argues that the circumstances that have led to the establishment of English, an outside language, as a second language in so many countries of Africa are not education and commerce alone but quite clearly; it is the legacy of colonialism that has made English language so indispensable in these countries. Crystal (1997) cited by Mojapelo (2016) argues that the retention of the colonial language is a conscious decision and may be assumed to be the result of deliberate language policy and language planning. Prashanti and Bhavani, (2016) assert that there are multiple factors why non-native speakers opt to study English Second Language. Selim, and Tasneen (2016) say among the factors which support the use of English as an official language are the following, the lack of a single indigenous language that is widely accepted by the respective populations; here English language is neutral vis-à-vis mutually competing native languages and hence, helps to promote national unity, the usefulness of English in science and technology as opposed to the underdeveloped vocabularies of the vernaculars as well as the availability of school books in English. Given the fact that Africa relies on the Western countries for many things, most Africans value second language for communication purposes. However, second language is not effectively taught because of a variety of reasons. Gramley (2016) says only about 1% of the population of countries which introduced English as an official language can speak the language fluently. Simasiku (2016) argued that although people in Sub-Saharan Africa value second languages like English, French, Portuguese, Afrikaans and others, education conducted through a European language is associated

with low school achievement. The authors added that although English is used as medium of communication between different dialects, teachers and learners may often not be fluent enough to use the language as a medium of instruction and they switch between two languages in the plenary classroom and more commonly, learners talk in the African language when working in groups. Hence, teachers in Africa tend to generate their own creative bilingual practice.

### **2.3 Background of English Second Language in Namibia**

English Second Language is a serious business ever since Namibia gained her independence when English was made an official language and medium of communication. According to Harris (2011), Namibia had been linguistically and politically isolated before and after its political independence. Immediately after Namibia's independence in 1990, with the 1990 constitution of the independent Namibia, English was introduced as the only official language of the country. At first, this decision appears to be surprising to many observers because Namibia had never been a British colony and English had no strong and direct historical roots in the country (Buschfeld & Schroder 2019). The then new Namibian government deemed it necessary to introduce English as the official medium of instruction since it is the language of wider communication and it was hoped that it would unite the Namibian people with multi-lingual tribes (Ipinge, 2016). According to Kamwendo (2014), the idea was to redress the linguistic and political isolation. Given this context, the Namibian government started to train and hire English language teachers to teach English Second Language to learners in a bid to close the isolation gap. The teachers of English Second Language were sourced from both local and international communities. Most of the

English Second Language teachers were and are still hired from Namibia's neighboring countries like Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe (Iiping, 2016).

In Namibia, English is being used in everyday life in the education sector as well as in other professions, hence, English is taught as a second language in Namibian public primary and Secondary Schools. In Namibia's formal education system, English language is the medium of instruction beginning in grade 4 although, Namibia is a multilingual country with fourteen written languages that are used in schools (Education Management Information System (EMIS), 2015). The school curriculum which was updated in 2020 entails that learners are taught in their mother tongues from grade 1 to 3 while grade four and above is taught using English language as the medium of instruction (EMIS, 2020).

As a subject, English is taught either as first language or as second language, with most government schools opting for English Second Language. However, teaching English Second Language has had many challenges. The main reason for learning English language during the colonial era was to create a servant class who has acquired reading and writing skills only Yilmaz (2011). However, the focus of teaching English Second Language has shifted to training learners to be able to practice English in everyday life. In this regard, the Communicative Approach has been introduced in the teaching of English Second Language (Iiping, 2016), which was resisted by most ESL teachers. Selim and Tasneem (2016) argued that most teachers of English Second Language resisted the change because they were not ready for change. In fact, the authors held that the ESL teachers who resisted the change did not see the need for teaching spoken and listening skills.

### **2.3.1 The State of English Second Language Teaching in Namibia**

It can be argued that the formal teaching of English Second Language in Namibia started after the country gained her Independence in 1990. According to Murray (2007), immediately after Namibia's independence in 1990, the government introduced English as the official language of communication in the country and hence, recognised it as the medium of instruction in schools. However, Murray (2007) noted that after gaining independence, the Namibian government took the decision of adopting English as the official language without adequate preparation in terms of human resource.

According to Ngololo & Nielsen(2017) most ESL teachers in Namibia who came from different countries and ethnic groups did not grow up in cultures where they were immersed in English speaking. Nhan, and Lai (2012) argued that the poor language background of such ESL teachers made learners to become handicapped and the deficits become cumulative as the learner's progress with their school life. In as much as English language teaching has evolved, the situation of teaching English Second Language in the classroom has remained stagnant (Iiping, 2016). Most teachers seem comfortable with the traditional methods and materials of teaching English Second Language. Thus, despite the huge investments made by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture as well as the National Institute for Education Development (NIED) to improve teaching and learning of English Second Language in Namibia, the outcomes have not lived up to the desired results. Salauddin and Rahman (2018) carried out an investigation of how teachers conduct their English language classes and found out that teachers were using traditional methods to teach English language without employing any other technique.

The English language syllabus in Namibia's schools spells out the specific skills and information that must be taught, how the teachers should teach those skills, and the standards by which learners' works should be evaluated. The syllabus notes the important role that language and literacy play in education: "language, literacy, and communication are regarded as inherent facets of human development and forms the basis of lifelong learning" (NIED 2016, p.1). The syllabus also makes it clear that English language is an important language for the learners to master in the interest of the 'multi-lingual and multicultural' society that they live in.

Furthermore, the syllabus recognises that English language is not the mother tongue of the learners, but emphasised that "it has the same potential as any other language to act as a catalyst for personal growth and to assist in the development of broad general knowledge, positive attitudes, critical thinking abilities, moral values and aesthetic sensibilities" (NIED 2016, p.1). The syllabus encourages teachers to foster a connection between cultural identities and the English Second Language classroom (NIED, 2016). In addition to using the learner-centered teaching method to teach English Second Language, the syllabus stressed that the classroom must demonstrate a language-rich environment. Teachers are also encouraged to make learners aware of the usefulness of current information technology (i.e. computers) in the learning of English Second Language. The syllabus spells out that in order to assure that the English classes are centered on the learners and their experiences, there is no longer an English textbook assigned by the syllabus. Rather, teachers are encouraged to create their own lesson modules based on topics relevant to their learners. The teachers must seek relevant texts

and make these available to the learners, as well as designing assignments and activities for specific topics.

For example, Table 2.1 presents the skills learners are supposed to master in each grade regarding spelling and punctuation. The grade 10 learners must exercise increase in ‘accuracy’ in spelling and punctuation while the grade 11 learners ‘accuracy’ spelling accuracy and usage of punctuation (Ipinge, 2016). These terms are not further elaborated upon, so the definition of what could be considered reasonably accurate, increasingly accurate or mostly accurate is left up to the individual teacher.

Table 2.1: Objectives for spelling in the syllabus

	at the end of ..., learners should be able to:	
	Grade 10	Grade 11
1. Use spelling and punctuation correctly and properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exercise increase in spelling accuracy and use of punctuation</li> <li>- students should be able to use generalizations when spelling difficult words</li> <li>- Use different resources to confirm word spelling</li> <li>- Use different punctuation marks effectively and in a correct way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exercise spelling accuracy and punctuation usage.</li> <li>- Demonstrate enough confidence in using different resources to confirm spelling of difficult and words that are not used often.</li> <li>- Use a variety of punctuation marks effectively and correctly</li> </ul>

Source: NEID (2016)

In as much as the Namibian curriculum set the required standards in teaching and learning of English Second Language (ESL), the ESL teachers in Namibia and the rest of Africa encounter serious and numerous teaching challenges both outside and inside the classroom (Maddock & Maroun, 2018). There are many prevailing conditions which pose a challenge to the teacher hence, impeding learning. Thus the challenges are presented in the following section.

#### **2.4 Challenges of Teaching English Second Language**

English Second Language (ESL) teachers have been and are still facing challenges during teaching. According to Ahmed (2015), people communicate and learn a language mainly to express a person's needs, feelings, ideas, thoughts and necessities. The process of teaching English Second Language does not rest solely on the teacher but is affected by many other factors; some of which are outside the teacher's personal control. In this regard, the challenges of teaching English Second Language can be classified into challenges on the part of the learners, challenges on the part of the teachers, challenges on the part of the textbooks, challenges on the part of teaching methods and challenges on the part of the curriculum (Kelly, 2018).

Most importantly during the process of teaching ESL, the teacher has to interact with the learner. Khan and Khan (2016) concurred that the learner has to play his or her part by assuming the responsibility for learning English language in order to achieve the desired teaching and learning outcomes. Therefore, there is a need for mutual efforts by

both the teacher and learner in order to create a conducive environment that enhances positive teaching and learning outcomes.

#### **2.4.1 Shortage of Teaching and Learning Materials**

The environment for teaching ESL depends on affective factors, which consequently, determine the proficiency of learners (Kadenge, & Mugari, 2015; Khan & Rahman, 2013; Mule 2011). Various factors play a role in creating an optimal affective environment for ESL teaching and learning to take place effectively and in these, ESL materials are critical component. Garton and Graves (2014); Hamid and Honan (2018) concurred that the extent to which the ESL materials are compatible with the needs of the learners determine if the materials are of relevance to learners, and hence, are good teaching materials. The teacher has to be availed with relevant textbooks while the teacher creates tasks that motivates learners in the classroom. Therefore, there is need for the teacher to use ESL materials that enhance both affective and cognitive development of the learners (Harris, 2011). ESL materials that are closely linked to the teacher's attitude and learner's attitude towards the language learning have a greater chance of creating an affective learning environment and yield successful results (Hamid & Honan, 2018; Javid, *et al.*, 2012).

Availability of reading and printed material plays an important role in the teaching of English language. The English language teachers have to stimulate the learning environment through a variety of reality experiences, which helps to arouse imaginations from the learners' perspective. Limited access to resources attributed to the large enrolments in schools, key among them being textbooks is one big challenges that ESL teachers face during teaching and learning (Khan & Rahman, 2013). According to

Garton *et al.*, (2014) and Kadenge and Mugari (2015), most English language teachers' encounter the challenge of limited resources, especially in developing countries and other non-speaking English countries where the government prescribe the textbooks to use but might not be very useful. Furthermore, the appropriate textbooks might not be easily available for use in the classroom. Kamwendo (2014) concurred that lack of appropriate textbooks is a big hindrance to English Second Language teaching and this is further compounded by the huge number of learners in a class, which means more resources are needed. Another challenge emanates from limited equipment and facilities, thereby hampering the effective teaching of English Second Language. For example, Pande (2013) argues that teaching English Second Language can be enhanced through practicing all the four skills which are reading, speaking, listening and writing. In this regard, there is need for resources such as teaching aids, and a well-equipped language laboratory to enable teachers to effectively teach the required skills in English Second Language. Anyienda (2017) posits that the high pupil/textbook ratio is a major challenge to effective teaching and learning of ESL because pupils heavily rely on text books. Therefore, in a constrained textbook environment, it is difficult for ESL teachers to implement effective teaching. In addition, Garton (2014) and Ajibola (2010) concurred that lack of appropriate textbooks and other learning resources is a big hindrance to English language teaching. Harris, (2011), Brozak, (2016), Rizi, Siddiqui, Moghaddam and Mukherjee (2014) noted that ESL teachers face problems of teaching learners who have no access to English audio-visual aids (e.g., listening to or watching English news or programs on television), English newspapers and magazines. This scenario may constitute a major challenge in most Namibian schools, especially those in the rural areas as in the Ohangwena Region.

Furthermore, the language textbooks prescribed by the Ministry of Education play a critical role in the teaching and learning of English Second Language. In Namibia, the NIED recommends the English Second Language textbooks that teachers can use and these guides the teachers on how they should teach. The teachers also use the recommended textbooks to evaluate the learners formatively and summative. Jahangard (2017), Harris, (2011), and Brozak, (2016) observed that some recommended textbooks lack quality tasks that the learners can use to practice in developing the skills and competencies needed. In addition, some textbooks have boring tasks which fail to inspire learners to have a purpose for doing the tasks. MaGrath (2012) concurred that the prescribed textbooks for English Second Language in South Africa do not emphasize on the learners' aural and oral skills.

Erdener and Knoeppel (2018) argued that the textbook for second and foreign language should also contain information about the culture of the language they are written for, but in most cases, the English Second Language textbooks have limited content about the culture of English countries. Such a problem of not including the foreign language culture, is much likely to happen where the native culture is completely different from the target one (Dahmardeh, 2019).

Coşkun (2016) as cited in Tsiplakides, (2019), Harris, (2011), and Chen (2019) are of the opinion that prescribed textbooks should constitute an effective resource for self-directed learning and for presentation of material, a source of ideas and activities, a reference source for learners, a syllabus where they reflect pre-determined learning objectives, and support for less experienced teachers who may be lacking in confidence.

Admiraal , Korthagen and Wubbles (2000) as cited in Akasha (2013) summarised the inadequacies of English Second Language textbooks as being not aspiring, incoherent and boring; unattractive, wrong and inappropriate pictures, poor coordination between the time allocated to activities and size of the content, as well as poor quality tasks. In fact, some textbooks do not contain standard questions in line with the syllabus. In a study conducted by Akasha (2013) on the evaluation of English teaching in secondary schools in India, it was reported that there was a mismatch between textbooks and other materials and curricular expectations, heavy workload and large classes and inadequate question papers.

#### **2.4.2 Overcrowded Classrooms**

According to Candarli and Yuksel (2012), a classroom is considered to be overcrowded when the total number of learners in the classroom exceeds the effective classroom management capability of the teacher. Kucukler and Kodal (2019) concurred that if the total number of learners in the classroom exceeds 25, it becomes overcrowded and makes it difficult for the teacher to engage literary texts through conversation and writing. Overcrowding happens when the number of learners is more than the capacity of the classroom. In Namibia, overcrowded classrooms are classrooms which have more than 30 learners at senior secondary phase (NIED, 2016).

Botes, Dewaele and Greiff (2020), Davila (2019), and May (2018) noted that teaching ESL in an overcrowded classroom is stressful, overwhelming and discouraging. When a classroom is overcrowded, it poses various challenges to the teacher, even to the most productive teachers. Davila (2019) noted that learners tend to learn effectively when the

teacher can offer one on one instruction or small group discussions. However, this becomes a challenge when the classroom is overcrowded.

Other related constrains due to overcrowded classroom include inadequate learning resources such as textbooks, noisy and unsafe classroom, poorly ventilated classrooms, overstretched water and sanitation facilities and these could impede effective ESL teaching and learning. According to Botes *et al.* (2020), the challenges of handling large classes compounded by the acute shortage of teachers puts a strain on the teachers' ability to provide quality English language teaching in classes with unproportioned teacher–learner ratio. Botes *et al* (2020) highlighted that teaching English Second Language in most African countries is associated with a problem of overcrowded classes which have direct bearing on the teaching and learning outcomes. Carson and Kashihara (2012) agreed that classes in Cameroon are overcrowded which makes it difficult for the English teacher to give individual attention to the learners. Baker and Westrup (2000) concurred that teaching in overcrowded classes have problems of learners sitting too close to one another leaving little to no space for the teacher to maneuver around and monitoring the learners. In overcrowded classrooms, it is near impossible to establish an interaction that is enough with every learner due to the number of learners in the classroom (May, 2018). Other challenges that the teacher might encounter in overcrowded classes include checking the written work or class exercise, marking comprehension, managing the class and checking attendance (Carson & Kashihara, 2012; Davila, 2019).

May (2018) as well as Dordinejad and Ahmadaba (2014) noted that in overcrowded classes, slow learners fall further behind while unhealthy and average learners will even

struggle more. Such learners need more attention from the teacher and minimal distractions to maximize their learning potential. Since it is difficult to provide timely feedback on learners' works in overcrowded classes, slow learners are likely to fail to achieve greater scholastic achievement, fail to have greater inspiration and develop English speaking eloquence (Carson & Kashihara, 2012). Overcrowded classes are likely to have many dropouts, poor results and non-completion while their teachers are likely not able to assess the work of the learners and provide helpful feedback continuously.

Harris (2011), Brozak (2016) and Maleki, Mollaei and Khosravi (2014) argued that classroom management in overcrowded classes is a challenging task. Classroom management involves all the activities undertaken by the teacher to organize the learner's space, time and materials for effective teaching and learning to take place. Some learners take advantage of the large classes to sneak out of the classroom without the teacher noticing. Leah (2018), Botes *et al.*, (2020), and Jordan and Gray (2019) stated that overcrowded classes are characterized by high absenteeism of learners and noisy environment. When learners are making noise in overcrowded classes, it is difficult for the teacher to control them.

Overcrowded classrooms are also characterised by a poor setting. According to Leah, (2018), the general setting of the classroom plays a critical role in enhancing effective teaching. When there are too many desks and chairs in the classroom, it is difficult for the teacher to move around to check the works of the learners and engaging in interactive tasks with learners. Maleki, Mollaei and Khosravi (2014),

is of the opinion that cheating is rampant in overcrowded classes since the teacher cannot be everywhere while learners find it difficult to concentrate on lesson activities. Therefore, it is critical to create classroom that promote active engagement and enhance teacher-learner interaction.

### **2.4.3 Limited Classroom Practice of English Language**

Although English language has been declared as medium of communication in most English Second Language speaking nations, most of these nations do not commit themselves to speaking the language frequently. Hence there are numerous challenges that teachers face in and out of the classroom. Core among them is the limited classroom language opportunity for the learners to practice the language. In most cases, the learners' only opportunity to use English language is limited to the daily 35-min English lesson (Carson & Kashihara, 2012; Bote *et al.* 2020). Furthermore, these learners are not given ample opportunities to practice the English language in the classroom when learning other subjects because of switching from one language to the other. Teachers of other subjects keep changing the language of instruction from English to their Mother tongues either because they are incompetent in English language or in order to have the learners understand the subject matter (Chen, 2019; Coşkun, 2016). This situation results in minimal exposure to the language (Abdi & Hardman, 2007, cited in Brown, 2017). Given that language learning requires a lot of exposure as postulated by Cummins (2017), the teacher of English Second Language is left with the sole burden of helping learners develop competence in English within a 35-min lesson because the language outside the classroom and at home is majorly the local language. Furthermore, Garton *et al.* (2014) cited by Cummins (2017) lamented the low performance of learners noting

that there is clear ignorance of most basic elements of logical English language usage because most learners lacked exposure at the early age. In the Namibian context, this is obvious because even though English language has been declared a medium of instruction from senior primary onwards, the local languages dominate the communication inside and outside the classroom. According to Dewaele and Al-Saraj (2015), this lack of exposure by English Second Language learners and the constant switch by other teachers from English language to the indigenous language make the teaching and learning of English Second Language so difficult and complicated.

#### **2.4.4 Lack of Context in Methodologies and Use of Unfamiliar Words**

Most English Second Language (ESL) teachers experience a lot of teaching and learning challenges since some of the textbooks and other teaching resources did not contextualise their media or expressions for the best understanding by learners (Kodero, 2011). These observations corroborate those of Anyienda (2017) in a study done in Kenya which pointed out that using an unfamiliar language as a medium of instruction is a major impediment to learning ESL. This becomes more challenging because English language curriculum does not afford learners the chance to learn English language from the perspective of their familiar home language. For instance, there are some comprehension passages which use illustrations that learners found difficult to relate to their home experiences. For example, in English comprehension passages which used the English expressions, “as white as snow”, this expression may be difficult for learners to relate to since there is no experience of snow in the Namibia context.

### **2.4.5 Teacher's Attitude**

The teacher's attitude and approach also affect the teaching and learning of English Second Language. For example, selective teacher's attention in class creates feelings of discrimination and may affect learners' interest in the subject (Anyienda, 2017). The major challenge is even in

grades in examinations. Therefore, the teachers strive to prepare the learners to pass the examinations without focusing on the skills needed for the learners to become proficient in English language (Subramanian, 2015).

Kelly (2017) indicated that most teachers teach learners to cope with examinations in order to protect their reputation as good teachers. In our present education system, teachers' performance is measured by the pass rate of their learners. Therefore, the teachers try to protect their reputation on national examinations by teaching learners for examination purpose only without teaching all the skills for English communication (Murray, 2007). According to Jahangard (2017), and Hosseini (2017), teachers in South Africa try to save themselves from embarrassment and shame by shaping their teaching practices based on the competencies tested on national examinations.

In Namibia in particular, English Second Language teachers tend to focus on teaching the textbook prescribed by the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) or the examination board. As a result, the expectations of the learners' performances influence the teacher's curricular and instructional knowledge (Ghorbani, 2019).

Pande (2013) conducted a study in Madhya Pradesh about problems and difficulties of English language teaching at secondary level with the objectives of understanding the

significance of English language in the all-round development of children; diagnosing the causes of deterioration in the standard of language of learners of Higher Secondary school classes; understanding and identifying the 'practical difficulties of teachers in teaching languages; and suggesting means of improvement of the standard of language of learners. Using the research instruments of questionnaire, interview, observation, the study established that about 66 % of the English language teachers found difficulties in teaching prose - the main problems related to explanation, paraphrasing and meaning of words; More than 50% of the teachers preferred to use translation method; 25% of the teachers used the direct method; while 32% of them encouraged learners to develop reading ability. The report further showed that 60% of the English language teachers felt that the facilities for general reading were inadequate; in teaching poetry more than 60% of the teachers' experience difficulty in developing appreciation, and 10% of them find difficulty in paraphrasing poems and the meaning of words.

Bhattacharyya (2016) conducted a study on the challenges of teaching English Second Language (ESL) in the Secondary Schools at Greater Shillong in India with the study focusing on qualifications of the teachers as well as equipment used by ESL teachers in Secondary Schools of Greater Shillong. The study revealed that although most of the teachers were graduates, few teachers had furthered their studies to postgraduates (Bhattacharyya, 2016). Furthermore, the study established that only 30.36% of ESL teachers had been trained by teacher training universities and such teachers were teaching mainly in the secondary schools in towns and cities while the rural secondary schools were having the professionally untrained teachers. If ESL teachers are not professionally qualified enough to teach the subject, learners tend to struggle with the

subject. This situation may share similar characteristic with the study area although, it is not clear if the ESL teachers in the Ohangwena region are professionally qualified to teach the subject

With regard to the work load, most of the teachers were teaching English language and another subject (Bhattacharyya, 2016). The teachers were also expected to perform other duties such as invigilating examinations, planning lessons, correcting learners' works, utilizing the tiffin time and off periods for correction of learners' works, as well as performing any other duties assigned to them, including making themselves accessible to learners beyond class hours (Bhattacharyya, 2016). However, it is not certain if the workload of ESL teachers in the study of Bhattacharyya, (2016) are similar to the workload of teachers in Namibia, especially Ohangwena region - the study area.

In the study of Bhattacharyya (2016), it was established that most teachers were using the direct method with limited use of mother tongue while few teachers were teaching ESL without using the mother tongue. On the other hand, some teachers were using the translation method where the rural-urban variation is negligible. The findings of Bhattacharyya (2016) are in line with the findings of Walia (2011) who established that the teaching method employed by most teachers did not meet the professional and pedagogic effectiveness given that teachers were using one-way, detrimental to learners' participation and resulting in classroom anxiety for the learners. If teachers are using wrong teaching methods, certain concepts may not be properly taught and the grammar rules may not be emphasized correctly.

#### **2.4.6 Learner's Attitude Towards ESL**

According to Pande (2013), most learners have a misconception that English language is the most difficult subject. Fatiloro (2015) concurred that most learners learning English Second Language have a negative attitude which hinders their progression in learning the language. For example, some learners are afraid or lack the confidence to speak English language in the classroom, especially in the presence of other brilliant learners. Anyienda (2017) argued that even when brilliant learners are subjected to repetitive low-level content, they will be bored and find the lesson unattractive. These psychological issues can have a negative effect on the learning of English Second Language.

Learner's attitude and motivation are critical in the teaching and learning of English Second Language, and they could determine the success or failure of a learner. Hamid and Honan (2018) argued that learner's motivation is a significant variable that determines if the learner is going to succeed as well as the speed of learning English Second Language. Thus, learners' negative attitude toward English Second Language may pose a great barrier for effective teaching of the subject. This negative attitude emanates from the fact that learners have limited competence in the English language, and this prevents them from actively participating in classroom activities (Akasha, 2013; Al-Khairi, 2013; Bahrani, & Soltani, 2012).

Given that English is either a second or third language to some learners, most of them have difficulties in comprehending its structures. A research conducted by Kadenge and Mugari (2015) reveals that English lessons have minimal learner participation because learners do not have the necessary competence which was not developed during their formative years. This minimal learner participation can be linked to the learners'

negative attitude toward the subject which eventually leads to significant levels of underperformance in the English language. Therefore, the English Second Language teacher struggles to help learners achieve the expected proficiency. It is only when this attitude is changed that substantial learning will take place. In addition, some learners lack the motivation or purpose of learning English language. Some learners view English Second Language as a subject that should be passed and do not see the value of English language as a means of communication in the wider society. Khan and Khan (2016) highlighted that some learners view English Second Language subject as a duty that have to be completed even if they don't want to do so.

#### **2.4.7 Inappropriate and Limited Teaching Methodologies, Strategies and Approaches**

A wide literature sources have identified that lack of a variety of teaching methods, techniques, knowledge, expertise and approaches for teaching English language is also a hindrance to ESL teachers (Garton 2014; Fatiloro, 2015; Anyianda 2017).

The English Second Language teacher does not only focus on teaching and developing the learners' language skills which include speaking, listening and reading but the teacher also has to encourage learners to develop the right enthusiasm and positive attitude towards English. Derakhshan (2015) and Khan and Khan (2016) explained that the teacher should show deep understanding of what he/she is teaching, and explain the benefits of learning English language especially for future use. Therefore, teachers of English Second Language must not only teach learners to develop personal abilities but also academic abilities. Another challenge in English Second Language teaching emanates from the teacher's failure to give learners individual attention. Fatiloro (2015)

and Anyianda (2017) note the demand of inclusive learning as a challenge faced by ESL teachers since it compromises individual attention because of the diverse needs of the learners' vis-a-vis the teacher's workload. Some of these challenges may and may not apply to the ESL teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region – the study area. However, a detailed investigation into the ESL teaching challenges is needed to establish the situation in the study area.

#### **2.4.8 Effects of Learner Background**

The importance of English language as the lingua franca in the modern world in creating and establishing foreign relation cannot be overemphasized in Namibia. Kelly (2017) conducted a study in India about the challenges of teaching English as a foreign/second language and established that Indian learners have access to English audio-visual aids such as watching English TV news and programs, English newspapers and magazines and that the learners find English textbooks interesting. These enhance and motivate the learners to speak and learn English language.

An investigation conducted by Dasgupta (2015) about usage of vocabulary in English by high school learners in non-English medium schools of Meghalaya found that socio-economic background had a great impact on vocabulary development of learners. The author indicates that learners from the high income socio-economic group had richer vocabulary than learners coming from the lower income and marginalized group. This implies that teachers need to prepare vocabulary lists carefully, taking into consideration the different socio-economic backgrounds of learners and communicational practices in schools.

Tabatabaei and Hosseini, (2014) explained that most learners have no idea, and do not give enough attention to how to deal with the task of learning English Second Language. According to Dickinson and Carver (2020), learners who have self-directed learning have a better chance of mastering English Second Language. The learner becomes receptive to the learning process in a self-directed learning by reducing the barrier between the learner and the teacher, and in most cases, feelings of nervousness, frustration, and alienation decrease (Brown, 2013; Schumann, 2015). Studies on the characteristics of good language learners (Naiman *et al.*, 2018; suggest that efficient learners consciously monitor their performances, analyze them, and develop a repertoire of efficient learning strategies. Akbari (2014) concurred those learners who have strategies in learning English Second Language have a higher chance of succeeding.

Teachers find it as a challenge to teach learners who believe that English language is a subject which consists of a list of words and a set of grammatical rules which ought to be remembered and distinguishable skills to be attained rather than a set of integrated skills and subskills (Oxford, 2017). Dooly (2018) noted that some learners view English language as a generic subject; therefore, the effort they put into learning this subject is less compared to the subjects they consider as special such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Accounting.

#### **2.4.9 Lack of Vocabulary**

Proficiency in English language depends on the knowledge of its vocabulary possessed by the second language learners and even the native speakers. According to McKeown (2019), vocabulary can be described as “a rich and fast-moving endeavor” which has implications for numerous learners in a number of academic contexts. Although,

developing English vocabulary is vital, it poses several problems, especially, to non-native learners of English language. Learners with a low vocabulary knowledge show weak academic performance in different courses related to the language skills, linguistics, literature, and translation at the university level (Hoa & Mai, 2016). According to Hossain, Nessa and Kafi (2015), most learners, especially in the remote areas lack the vocabulary which enhances a learner's ability to learn English language. Hossain, Nessa and Kafi (2015) argued that most learners lack vocabulary because they believe that there is no need for mastering vocabulary since it is not common and they do not use it in their everyday life. Gray (2013) noted that learners for English Second Language are hindered by the poor background knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, and this made the task of teaching the concepts challenging to the ESL teachers. Kepe *et al.*, (2017) claim that sociocultural background also affects ESL teaching to the South African learners who attend English language classes mainly to pass the subject. This situation is likely to put extra burden on the ESL teachers as they strive to mediate ESL teaching and learnings in their schools.

#### **2.4.10 Lack of English Exposure**

Khan and Khan (2016) argued that learners are demotivated by lack of English language purpose. When a learner does not perceive the purpose for learning English language, the learner will not invest extra effort in learning the subject, and this hampers effective teaching. Khan and Khan (2016) further highlighted that teachers encounter a serious challenge to motivate learners to be enthusiastic in using English language since the learners lack the exposure.

The lack of English language exposure also hampers the opportunity for learners to use rich English vocabulary. Kamwendo (2014) argues that the lack of English purposes demotivates learners to practice English especially if they fail to understand some English words due to learners 'insufficient background knowledge of English language. Thus, it becomes difficult for the teachers to motivate learners to be enthusiastic in learning English language as a subject.

#### **2.4.11 Linguistic Problems.**

According to Altamini and Rashind (2019), challenges of teaching English as a language subject can be categorized into morphology, inaccuracies in the pronunciation, syntax and spelling. Khan (2017) concurred that the real challenge in teaching English language lies with the learners' poor pronunciation of words while some learners struggle with intonation. Altamini and Rashind (2019), (2019) further highlighted that learners are not able to express themselves correctly in English language, and this made the ESL teacher's task more difficult. Furthermore, teachers encounter challenges in the issue of the mother tongue which has serious negative impact on effective teaching of the English language (Fatiloro, 2015). Pande (2013) further explained that if the teacher and learner speak using their mother tongue, they can subconsciously use their local language in the midst of a sentence and can affect the teaching of pronunciation, intonation and stress.

In a study conducted by Heng (2014) about linguistic and communicative abilities of high school teachers in relation to their classroom functions, focusing on the adequacy of speaking and writing abilities of students as well as the competence in grammar, the study found that teachers were competent enough to make grammatical corrections

although some teachers failed short on the stylistic competence. Some teachers are more concerned with sentence level accuracy but fails to take into account the contextual constraints.

#### **2.4.12 Lack of Motivation**

Teaching English language as a school subject has many different features. A teacher does not only teach and pay attention to learners' language skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, but also helps, facilitates, and encourages learners to have enthusiasm, good attitude, and motivation towards English language. Furthermore, teachers have to understand what learners learn, how and why such learning influences them, and how lessons could be beneficial for them in the future (Derakhshan, 2015). Hence, language teaching requires teachers to teach learners to develop both academic and personal abilities.

A study conducted by Maddock and Maroun (2018), which focuses on the differences in challenges experienced by male and the female ESL teachers revealed insignificant differences in learners' attentiveness in class whether the teacher was a male or a female. Furthermore, the study revealed that the level of motivation was similar in both male and female ESL teachers' classes. This implies that the gender of ESL teacher does impact on the level of attentiveness and motivation of learners. Maddock and Maroun (2018) assert that learners' low concentration in classroom causes challenges in comprehending knowledge transferred by the teacher. Mahn and John-Steiner (2012) added that teaching goals are not always achieved one hundred percent because some learners do not concentrate in classroom.

### **2.4.13 English Language Assessment**

Most parents and school administrators have a belief that a good school always produce high grades on the national examinations (Khan, 2016). Teachers are aware that their work is measured using the results of the learners on the national examination, therefore, they focus on teaching for examination rather than English language development as whole package. Tekin (2010) as cited by Van Wyk and Mostert (2016) highlighted that teachers rarely use the formative assessment even though they are encouraged to do so.

Sometimes, teachers focus on learners' performance in examinations rather than their performance in real life situation. Yilmaz (2011) also concurred that due to the popularity of the summative test and discrete point test, teachers do not pay attention to skill and knowledge development of English Second Language learners. As a result, the washback effect of testing might hinder the adaptation of instruction to support learners' learning.

Sharma (2015) investigated the various theoretical and practical aspects of teaching English language in India, focusing on teaching language skills, methods used by teachers in teaching and assessment methods used by the teachers. The study established that traditional methods of teaching English in India were not compatible with learners' language needs. Teachers therefore, need to establish the teaching needs of their students and align those needs to their teaching methods. Van Wyk and Mostert (2016) concurred that teachers need to evaluate if teaching methods are catering for the needs of the diverse learners.

## **2.5 Coping Strategies on Challenges of Teaching ESL.**

Literature reviewed indicated that teachers use various coping strategies to handle the challenges they encounter in teaching ESL. Some of these coping strategies include motivating learners, using learner-centered teaching method and using group work.

### **2.5.1 Motivating Learners**

Scholars such as Bahrani and Soltani (2012) and Khan (2011) argued that a successful ESL teacher often motivates his or her learners to work harder in ESL learning and achieve better performance. Given the difficulties associated with learning ESL, learners need to be encouraged to give their maximum efforts in learning the subject (Khan, 2011). Ahmed (2015) also supports the same views emphasising that ESL teachers need to play the role of a motivator if they are to cope with the challenge of learners' negative attitude towards ESL. Motivation of learners plays a vital role especially when learners have a poor English language background and lack adequate exposure to English language activities. In this regard, the use of motivation by the ESL teachers might be very helpful in encouraging the learners towards hard work and better performances. Akcan (2016) is of the opinion that motivation is the 'heart of language teaching'. Thus, motivation has a significant effect on effort that the learners put into learning ESL.

Al-bdeerat, Alqarraleh, and Altakhaineh (2020) argued that most teachers are aware of the importance of motivation in teaching ESL but struggle to accomplish the goal of motivating learners. Al-bdeerat, et al., (2020) thus recommend that ESL teachers can motivate ESL learners by triggering their interest in the subject. This can be achieved through making learning ESL personal, that is, connecting language to something personal in the lives of the learners. Coşkun (2016) concurred that ESL teachers can

motivate learners through integrating current music, and movies to create a relevant class culture. Kini and Podolsky (2016) offered a different dimension to motivating learners in teaching ESL by suggesting that ESL teachers can integrate fun activities and technology. Games and fun activities can also help to reduce anxiety among learners and boost genuine communication within a meaningful context. However, the use of technology might be a challenge in rural schools where there is no electricity and relevant equipment to use.

### **2.5.2 Learner-Centered Teaching Approach**

Literature reports showed that ESL teachers often use the learner-centered teaching approach as coping strategy to deal with their teaching challenges. For example, according to Manasreh (2011), the learner-centered teaching approach tends to view language acquisition as a process of acquiring skills rather than a body of language. Learners should be viewed as active agents in the teaching-learning process of ESL. When a teacher assumes a learner-centered teaching approach in ESL lesson, the teacher would be promoting inductive learning and consequently, learners are not taught grammatical rules directly, but are left to discover or induce the rules from their experience of using the second language (Karabuža, & Ilin, 2019).

As noted by Kini and Podolsky (2016), the learner-centered teaching approach provides a practical and viable alternative to the traditional teacher-centered teaching approach to activate learners, and assist them (learners) to deduce or find out for themselves the grammar rules. However, Fatiloro (2015) had a different view and suggests that in handling English language teaching problems, teachers must use a variety of teaching methods to enhance better understanding. Pande (2013) highlighted that ESL teachers

needs to be versatile in applying different methods, particularly in matching the method and teaching topic so as to establish effective teaching processes. When teaching ESL, the teacher needs to be flexible with the teaching methods as different situations requires different teaching methods.

### **2.5.3 Group Work**

Literature reports revealed that learners can be placed in groups where they work together on a task given by the teacher as a way of dealing with ESL teaching challenges. Kini and Podolsky (2016) noted that in teaching ESL, group work provides opportunities for all learners to speak in English and improve their communication skills. Murphey *et al.* (2014) and Chen (2019) were of the opinion that learners can assist each other and provide resources by using a reciprocal exchange of ideas to create a group that is motivated. Carson and Kashihara (2012) further assert that group work provides the teacher with free time to monitor individual learner as they participate in their assigned groups.

Koşar and Bedir (2014) highlighted that teaching ESL involves a transformative process where the learners can play important role. For example, Chen (2019), and Crawford *et al.*, (2019) suggest that interaction among learners is critical for language development. When learners are put into groups, fast learners will act as learner-teachers to create a learning platform that can aid their learning skills in ESL. Furthermore, the effectiveness of English language teaching will to a large extent, depend on the environment that the teacher creates in the classroom to promote intimacy and collaboration among the learners.

## **2.6 Measures for Mitigating English Language Teaching Challenges**

To achieve effective ESL teaching and learning outcomes, the teacher factor is always the most important consideration in the educational setting. Jordarn *et al.*, (2019), Pande, (2013) and King (2013) posit that it is necessary to employ teaching tools that can facilitate teaching and learning of English language. Furthermore, Fatiloro (2015), Dewaele and Al-Saraj (2015), and Crawford, *et al.*, (2019) note that teaching English language needs equipment, particularly for those who teach in the environment where English exposure is limited. Chen (2019) and Pande (2013) highlight that through applying various methods, approaches and techniques, particularly in matching the method and teaching topic, it will help ESL teachers to establish an effective teaching process. English language teachers should be concerned with helping learners to learn how to learn (self-directed learning) as an effective way of learning English language and to achieve autonomy in their education (Akbari & Tahririan, 2009; Akbari, 2014; Tabatabaei & Hosseini, 2014). In this era of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), the technology-assisted pedagogy helps in teaching in innovative and effective ways (Scheerens, 2010; Bai 2019). Boakye and Ampiah (2017), conducted a study by following some teachers participants through their preserve programme to their first year of English language teaching and noted that when facing challenges in their teaching, the participants developed various strategies. According to these authors, such strategies include learning from their learners, getting proper knowledge of their learners and families by using assignments, and sustaining their motivation to teach by focusing on good experiences such as learner accomplishments and commendations from parents while devising individual methods to manage stressful challenges and frustrations (Boakye & Ampiah, 2017).

### **2.6.1 Attitude Reform**

English language teaching and learning must be analysed in order to deal with the associated challenges, and this must include attitude reformation (Fatiloro, 2015). According to Fatiloro (2015), both teachers and learners should make absolute commitments to comprehend English. In addition, Pande (2013), Javid, Farooq and Gulzar (2012), and Khassawneh, (2011) propose that one way to reform attitude towards English language is to clearly define the place of English in education system and policy. Ahmad and Jussof (2009) also asserted that in order to embody an effective English language teaching, teachers have to ask learners to understand native language.

### **2.6.2 Different Teaching Methods and Techniques Application.**

There are numerous methods of English language teaching that can be implemented. Fatiloro (2015) argues that “in handling English language teaching problems, teachers must use a variety of methods for teaching English language” (p. 29). In addition, Pande (2013) also believes that through applying various methods, particularly in matching the method and teaching topic, it will help teachers to establish an effective teaching process. Additionally, teachers should apply various techniques in language teaching because it will enable them to create suitable condition for learners in learning English as well as help learners to deal with their learning challenges (Javid, *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, learners can be helped in their language learning when teachers understand what best teaching methods or technique meet the need of learners.

### **2.6.3 Assisting Learners According to their Individual Difference**

For effective teaching and learning of English Second Language, there is also need to attend to individual learner’s learning needs. Pande (2013) talks of the zone of proximal

development and scaffolding. According to Vygotsky (1978), the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is “the distance between the actual developmental level and the potential development peers” (p. 86). According to Pande (2013) scaffolding is when “an adult or ‘expert’ helps somebody who is less adult or less expert” (p. 89). As a teacher, it is crucial to understand where learners are in their language learning experience based on their ZPDs. In Namibia, since most learners have no sound background in English language, they need individual assistance or guidance from the teacher or peers who are more knowledgeable in some particular ESL concepts. According to Pande (2013), teachers need to identify the Zone of Proximal Development of their learners and scaffold them.

#### **2.6.4 Teaching Facilities Improvement**

English language teaching will not achieve its objectives if the teaching tools are not improved to respond to the current ESL teaching and learning needs. Hence, special effort should be made to ensure that ESL teachers are provided with the proper teaching facilities, including space, books, and teaching aids (Pande, 2013).

Alkhairy (2013) is of the opinion that the condition of teaching facilities has an effect on the learner’s attitude towards learning any subject including ESL. It is not only the learner’s attitude that is affected by the teaching facilities but the ESL teachers can be negatively affected if the facilities are not up to standard. Javid, *et al.*, (2012) claims that ESL teachers can get frustrated if they teach ESL in dilapidated building or in facilities that are not properly equipped.

### **2.6.5 Learners' Level Match**

Since learners' educational background in English language, personality, goals, age, and learning style are different, it is imperative to come up with helpful ideas to deal with such multilevel class. There are several ways to handle such issue, beginning from the lesson planning which should contain leveled tasks (Javid, *et al.*, 2012). Roberts (2007) and Alkhairy (2013) add that teacher's own version of textbook can be used to develop leveled task since it is considered effective when it covers various tasks for learners whose ability levels are different. It is also suggested by Pande (2013) that teachers should be patient in teaching learners with different abilities and striving for matching level with learners. Since the English language level of learners in a classroom might be uneven, teachers have to provide appropriate tasks for meeting and improving learners' language level.

### **2.6.6 Classroom Management**

Based on the Virginia Department of Education (2006), understanding English language and creating exposure for learners can be done through managing classroom. For instance, "designing a classroom which expresses cultural diversity, considering seating positions for cooperative learning activity, building a classroom library containing age-appropriate books with various reading levels" (p. 19). These are important ways of managing classroom in order to get learners familiar with and using target language.

According to Javid, *et al.*, (2012), classroom management involves the ability of the teacher to organize the class. The teacher has to use different gestures, voice and eyes in managing the classroom. Graves (2016) also claims that classroom management entails arrangements of desks, giving attention to individual learners and how the teacher use

the board. The way teachers arrange learners in class influence how learners interact in the ESL. When learners are paired in groups, they develop a sense of belonging thereby helping slow learners who are shy to participate in the ESL lesson (Nisar, Mahmood and Doger (2017).

### **2.6.7 Word Consciousness and Word Selection**

In vocabulary instruction, the words selected for the purpose of teaching learners are very crucial for learners' understanding and application in their everyday conversation. Teachers often struggle with determining what vocabulary words to introduce to the learners. Graves (2016) stressed that the traditional focus on individual word knowledge should be shifted to the development of word consciousness. Winters (2009) According to Phillips, Foote, and Harper (2018), in order for learners to fully comprehend a word, it needs to be contextualised and practiced in multiple situations and in other subject areas. The authors argue that it is important to select words that learners can connect to words that they already know or will be learning. Additionally, Shakin (2017) recommends that new vocabulary should be embedded in units of study. She claims that to facilitate this process, it makes sense for teachers to select words from the current unit or curriculum.

In order to involve the learners more fully in their vocabulary development, Phillips, Foote, and Harper (2018), also suggest that the learners themselves be made to select their own words based on the degree of difficulty of the words in their reading assignments. Similarly, Shakin (2017) claims that adolescent's personal interests should be used to enhance their vocabulary as they develop independence' and a personal responsibility for their learning of new words. According to Shakin (2017), adolescents should become more involved in the process of developing their own vocabularies and

understand how their increased word knowledge affects their learning in all subject areas. In addition, learners should also be able to communicate the meanings of the new words that they learn to their peers.

Swerling-Spear (2005) also states that learners should be given time to develop their vocabularies through their independent reading. To foster word consciousness, Swerling-Spear (2005) recommends that teachers should provide learners access to books that will interest them and sufficient time to read independently. Like Shakin (2017), Swerling-Spear (2005) believes that new word knowledge should be shared with other learners. Swerling-Spear (2005) however, cautions against the practice of requiring learners to keep vocabulary journals. She argues that this interferes with a learner developing a fascination with words. Instead, she states that once learners find a particular word engaging, this interest can translate into further word study. Learners will be self-motivated to discover the meaning of new words as they become curious and interested in new words.

Baumann, Ware, and Edwards (2017) studied the effects of using a comprehensive vocabulary instructional program on vocabulary acquisition by learners. In the program, learners were exposed to different vocabulary opportunities and providing learners with opportunities to learn specific words. The authors established that reading aloud frequently, and providing time for learners to independently read the texts they found interesting as well as facilitating literature circles were effective in vocabulary acquisition by learners. Additionally, studies by Baumann, Ware, and Edwards (2017), Winters (2009), show that a comprehensive vocabulary program includes teaching individual words through direct vocabulary instruction, fostering word consciousness,

exposing learners to a variety of language experiences, and teaching learners word-learning strategies. In a related study, Winters (2009) proposed teaching learners using word consciousness through word play, reading aloud and other activities designed to stimulate learners interest in words. Thus, increasing learners' vocabulary knowledge requires a balanced approach. as approaching vocabulary instruction through one approach does not guarantee that learners are learning new words. For example, while learners have opportunities to learn words through wide reading, "contextual reading does not automatically result in word learning. Therefore, it is important that ESL teachers use a combination of vocabulary instruction approaches in their classroom.

## **2.7 Summary**

This chapter reviewed the theoretical framework that guides the study, and is based on the transactional model of stress and coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). The chapter also reviewed related literature about challenges encountered by English Second Language teachers, with major challenges highlighted in the literature being overcrowded classes, lack of motivation, learners' background of the learners and teaching methods employed by teachers. The chapter also reviewed literature on reported strategies that could mitigate the teaching challenges encountered by English Second Language teachers.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

Chapter three presents the methodology that the study employed to collect data. It presents the research design, the population of the study, sample and sampling method used as well as the procedure used to collect data and how the data were analysed. Also presented in this chapter is the research ethical consideration.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The present study used the convergent parallel mixed-methods research design to explore the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, the strategies used by the teachers to cope with such challenges and measures that could be used to minimise identified challenges.

The mixed methods research design was deemed suitable because the inherent qualitative and quantitative designs complement different data about teaching challenges and coping strategies of English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region. Thus, by employing the triangulation mixed methods research design meant that the research concurrently, but separately, collected and analysed quantitative and qualitative data in an attempt to answer the research questions. The intent in using this design was to bring together the differing strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative methods (sample size, trends, generalisation) (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Clark, 2011; Howe, 2012; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Maxcy, 2003; Morgan, 2014; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2019). Furthermore, incorporating both the quantitative and qualitative approaches increased the validity and reliability of the study as explained by Creswell (2014).

Wisdom and Creswell (2013) argued that mixed methods research approach offers a variety of benefits such as reflecting participants' point of view by giving a voice to study participants and ensuring that the study findings are grounded in quantitative and qualitative approaches. In addition, mixed methods have great flexibility and are adaptable to many study designs, such as observational studies and randomised trials, to elucidate more information than can be obtained in only quantitative or qualitative research approach. Furthermore, the mixed methods research design also mirrors the way individuals naturally collect information by integrating quantitative and qualitative data (Howe,2012; Maxcy, 2003; Morgan, 2014; Ormerod, 2016). This means that the study integrated quantitative data with qualitative data to provide a comprehensive finding on the teaching challenges of English Second Language teachers as well as their coping strategies.

However, the researcher was aware of the limitations of the mixed research methods studies such as complex to plan and conduct. In this regard, the researcher carefully planned the research, describing all aspects of the research, including the study sample for qualitative and quantitative portions; timing (the sequence of qualitative and quantitative portions); and the plan for integrating data as recommended by Maxcy (2003) and Morgan (2014).

### **3.2 Population of the Study**

Gray (2013) defines population as the total number of people, organisations, subjects or occurrence with well-defined characteristics from which a sample is drawn. Creswell and Creswell (2018) concurred with Ormerod (2016) that study populations can be categorised into two namely, target population and accessible population. These authors

noted that target population refers to the total number of participants that the study may draw its sample from. On the other hand, accessible population is the actual population where the study can choose its participants from (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Ormerod, 2016). In this study, the target population is the same as the accessible population.

The population of this study consisted of 78 English Second Language teachers currently teaching in the eleven Senior Secondary Schools in Ohangwena Region, Namibia. The population size was determined from the Ohangwena Region Education Directorate's records of the English Second Language teachers currently teaching in the Senior Secondary Schools in the region.

### **3.3 Sample and Sampling Method**

The sample of the study consisted of 60 English Second Language (ESL) teachers selected using the purposive sampling technique from the ESL teachers' population currently teaching in the study area. This sampling approach was deemed suitable because it enables the researcher to select participants that are considered to be information-rich for the purpose of answering the research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). All the 60 participants completed the survey questionnaires intended to gather the quantitative data. Furthermore, the researcher used the expert purposive sampling method to select a subsample of 33 participants (made up of 3 ESL teachers from each school) to participate in the focus group discussions intended to gather in-depth qualitative data on the research questions. The expert purposive sampling method enabled the researcher to select participants who met the inclusion criteria as described under section 3.4.1 below.

The samples were reasonably large as Creswell and Creswell (2018) states that the size of the sample should neither be too large nor too small but should fulfil the requirements of efficiency, reliability and flexibility. Qualitative analyses typically require a smaller sample size than quantitative analyses. Gray (2013) echoes that a qualitative sample sizes should not be too large but only be large enough to obtain enough data to sufficiently describe the phenomenon of interest (data saturation) and address the research questions. Creswell and Creswell (2018) alludes that the first and foremost characteristic of quantitative research is the large sample size that is large enough to conduct research and to achieve valid conclusions or statistical significance.

### **3.3.1 Inclusion Criteria**

De Vos *et al.* (2015) explained that purposive sampling participants must be done according to a pre-determined criterion that suits the research focus. Thus, the inclusion criteria for this study was that a participant should be currently teaching English Second Language (ESL) as a subject at a secondary school in the Ohangwena Region. To complete the survey questionnaires in the quantitative study, all the English Second Language teachers teaching in the study area were considered suitable regardless of their years of experience in teaching. However, in the focus group discussions which was to gather data for qualitative study, only English Second Language teachers with at least, two years of experience in teaching ESL in the study area were considered suitable and selected.

### **3.3.2 Exclusion Criteria**

The exclusion criteria in this study was that ESL teachers who have less than two years of experience in teaching ESL at the time of data were not sampled to participate in the

focus group discussions. This is because this category of ESL teachers was considered not to be information-rich, and hence, may not provide honest responses to the probing questions during data collection.

### **3.4 Research Instruments**

In this study the researcher used survey questionnaires, focus group discussions and observations as instruments to collect data. Creswell and Creswell (2018) concurred with Morgan (2014) that a research instrument is a tool used to collect data related to one's subject of investigation. The researcher used the survey questionnaire (closed ended/structured) and observations to collect quantitative data on the teaching challenges of the ESL teachers while the focus group discussion was used to collect qualitative data on the strategies that the ESL teachers used to cope with their identified teaching challenges as well as their views on the measures that could be used to mitigate the challenges.

#### **3.4.1 Survey Questionnaire**

A survey questionnaire is a form of inquiry document, which contains a systematically compiled and well organised series of questions intended to elicit information which will provide insight into the nature of the problem under study (Creswell & Clark 2011; Maxcy 2003; Annum, 2017;).

In this study, the survey questionnaire consisted of structured or closed-end questions and unstructured or open-ended questions. According to Annum (2017), structured or closed-end questions are probing questions in which some control or guidance is given for the answer. These questions basically require the respondent to provide short

answers, a 'yes' or 'no' response, or multiple choice options from which the respondent selects the answer closest to their own opinions. On the other hand, Annum (2017) describes unstructured or open-ended questions as the types of questions which require respondents to provide free or unhindered responses in the respondents' own words. Creswell and Creswell (2018) add that open-ended questions permit respondents to provide in-depth responses or answers and express themselves freely without any restriction.

The questionnaire consists of four sections, A to D. Section A collected participants' demographics data, Section B consisted of probing structured questions with a five-point Likert scale (1= Disagree, 2 = Strongly disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4= Agree, 5 = Strongly agree) that gathered data on the teaching challenges faced by the English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Section C contained open-ended questions that gathered information on the teachers' coping strategies with some perceived teaching challenges while section D contained open-ended questions that sought information on the mitigation measures which the participants feel could be used to address the teaching challenges.

### **3.4.2 Focus Group Discussion**

Focus group discussions enable a socially oriented research method, and captures real-life data in a social setting (Heinonen and Spearman 2015). In this study, the focus group discussions explored participants' views on the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in the study area, strategies that the teachers used to cope with such challenges, and the possible mitigation measures which the participants feel could be implemented to address the teaching challenges. There are 11 focus groups,

with each group made up of 3 participants who had at least, two years' experience in teaching English Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in the study area. The researcher served as the moderator during each focus group discussion.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Ponterotto, Mathew and Raughley (2013) explained that using focus group discussions gives further insights into data obtained from one on one interviews and questionnaires. Thus, focus group discussion can be used to confirm the information or data gathered through the questionnaires and one on one interviews (Ponterotto *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, focus group discussions are highly flexible and tend to have high face validity as noted by Creswell and Creswell (2018). This implies that focus group discussions measures what it is intended to measure, and generates quick results (Desimone,2019;; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2010; Ponterotto *et al.* 2013). Group dynamics often bring out aspects of the topic or reveal information about the subject that may not have been anticipated by the researcher or emerged from individual interviews.

### **3.4.3 Observation**

Observational study involves monitoring and noting conditions as they exist in the field in quantitative researches as opposed to constructing an experimental design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Observational studies are conducted with the consent of the human subjects under study (using certain subjects as informants) or without it (covert observation) (Greene & Hall, 2010; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In other words, it is a process of closely observing or monitoring something or someone so that one can give a statement based on the fact as seen, heard, or noticed. In this study, the researcher used a prepared observation guide to personally observe and identify the English Second

Language (ESL) teachers' teaching challenges related to classroom population, learner-teacher ratio in the ESL classrooms, relevant library resources to support efficient teaching and learning of ESL in the study area, ESL laboratories, school attendance by learners and the teachers' work environment were also observed.

The observations enabled the researcher to study the behaviour of ESL teachers in their natural set up and data is not distorted (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Furthermore, during observations the participants behave in the desired natural manner and do not get influenced by what the observer wants to identify.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection involves the procedure of collecting, measuring and analysing accurate insights to answer research questions using standard validated techniques (Bhat 2020). The author echoes that in most cases, data collection is the primary and most important step for research, irrespective of the field of research. The approach of data collection is different for different fields of study, depending on the required information. (Bhat 2020). In this study, the data were collected using three different procedures according to the instruments.

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

The questionnaires contain both open-ended and close-ended questions to elicit information on English Second Language teacher's teaching challenges, coping strategies and possible mitigation measures. Before distributing the questionnaire, the researcher further explained the purpose of the study and clarified issues raised

including ethical considerations to the satisfaction of the participants to ensure that they fill in the questionnaires freely without fear of intimidation and fear of the unknown.

Thereafter, the researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the participants and requested to collect the questionnaires back after three days. This was done to ensure a high return rate (Sarantakos, 2005). The researcher made a follow up through phone calls to humbly remind participants not to forget to fill the questionnaires. The researcher further encouraged the participants to complete the questionnaires in their offices to minimise losses. The researcher personally collected the completed questionnaires from the participants.

### **3.5.2 Focus Group**

The study used 11 different focus groups with each group made up of 3 participants (3 English Second Language teachers with two or more years of teaching experience in the subject). There was only one focus group per school. The researcher was the moderator during each focus group discussion.

The focus group discussion was guided by prepared questions which sought participants' views on the teaching challenges faced by ESL teachers in the Ohangwena Region, the coping strategies used by the teachers and the mitigation measures they thought could be implemented to address the identified challenges. At the beginning of each focus group discussion, the researcher explained to the respondents the purpose of the study and why they had been chosen to participate in the focus group discussion after they had completed the questionnaires. Thereafter, face to face discussions were administered. The researcher sought and obtained the permission of the participants to record the

discussions and a voice recorder was used. The researcher made additional notes on his written notes by jotting down all observations he made during all each discussion session, such as the nature of participation in the group, surprises of the session, as well as the date, where and when the session was held. This was done to avoid mixing up the focus group discussions.

The researcher asked one question at a time and gave respondents adequate time to respond. The researcher asked further probing questions for continued conversation and clarity of information. He listened attentively and talked very little and avoided leading questions to avoid researcher influence. All the focus group discussions were recorded using an audio recorder and each session lasted for about 40 minutes.

### **3.5.3 Observations**

The researcher personally conducted observation to observe and identify the English Second Language teachers' teaching challenges related to classroom population, learner-teacher ratio in the English classrooms, library resources to support efficient teaching and learning of English Second Language in the study area, school attendance by learners as well as the teachers' work environment. The researcher was guided by a prepared check list for the observation.

After having sought and obtained permission from the school head and having explained the purpose of the research to the participants, the researcher observed classroom population to check and assess learner-teacher ratio. He also checked the school library to note the availability of English Second Language resources for teaching and learning the subject in each school in the study area. In addition, the researcher obtained the

record of the English Second Language teachers' qualifications from the principal's office. The researcher also checked if the teaching environment in classrooms was conducive to English Second Language teaching. He also observed if there was relevant media and displays that reinforce English Second Language learning. School attendance by learners and the teachers was also observed using the check in check out registers at the schools.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

Desimone (2019), Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), as well as Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2010) explained that data analysis in mixed methods research design involves analysing both qualitative and quantitative data using appropriate methods respectively. Data analysis is the process of evaluating data using analytical or statistical tools to discover useful information (Cresswell and Cresswell 2014). The purpose of data analysis is to transform raw data gathered from the field, and discover useful information for decision-making. The data analysis was performed based on the qualitative and quantitative data gathered respectively. The analysed data were presented in the form of bar charts, pie graphs, and tables and discussed according to the research questions.

#### **3.6.1 Qualitative Data Analysis**

The study employed the thematic analysis method by Creswell (2014) in analysing the qualitative data. According to Creswell (2014), the fundamental element in analysing qualitative data is by combining similar codes to form a major idea or themes in the data base. In analysing the qualitative data, the first step involves transcribing the focus group discussions, scanning material, sorting and arranging data. The second step

involves reading notes to deduce useful information from the transcript, and taking down all the main points. Texts were classified into emerging themes and each theme was given a code that is in line with the meaning of the research questions. Finally, the researcher generated broader themes to reduce the codes' list into smaller manageable themes according to the research questions.

### **3.6.2 Quantitative Data Analysis**

The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics to establish the mean (numerical average of a set of values), and percentage (used to express how a value or group of respondents within the data relates to a larger group of respondents) (Desimone 2019;; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004; Leech and Onwuegbuzie 2010; Ponterotto et al. 2013).

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics are the moral principles guiding research, from its inception through to completion and publication of results and they form an integral part of research (David and Resnik , 2020). Cohen (2007) echoes that ethical dimensions of the research need to be borne in mind in every research activity. Creswell and Creswell (2018) suggest three important issues that every researcher should address: Protecting participants from harm, ensuring confidentiality of research data and trustworthiness of subjects. According to David and Resnik (2020), research ethics play a crucial role ranging from protecting the integrity of the institution, the study subjects as well as that of the researcher.

Thus, the researcher first sought and obtained the research Ethical Clearance Certificate from the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Committee in order to conduct the

study. Then, permissions were sought and obtained from the Director of Education, Ohangwena Region and the principals of the schools where the participants (English Second Language teachers) are teaching. In order to ensure autonomy of the study participants, they were provided with complete information sheet detailing the aims of the study, potential risks, and the rights of the participants to enable them to decide on their own whether to enroll as participants. Thus, the researcher obtained signed informed consents from the participants to voluntarily participate in the study and they were assured of their rights to withdraw from the study at any point they feel uncomfortable to continue without any consequences. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that the participants remained anonymous by using pseudo names to identify participants and their schools throughout the study. To prevent unauthorised access to the research data, hard copies of the completed research instruments were safely kept in a box with a security lock accessible to only the researcher, while soft copies were saved in a password-protected personal computer. The researcher also acknowledged incorporations of any person's work from the literature as well as avoided manipulation of data. The researcher sought and obtained participants' permission to record the focus group discussions using an audio recorder.

### **3.8 Pilot Study**

Prior to data collection in the main study, the focus group discussion questions and questionnaire instrument were piloted (tested) at one Senior Secondary School in the Omusati Region. The choice of the pilot school from Omusati region was because participants in the main study were selected across all the eleven Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a pilot

study is a mini-study that is carried out before conducting the main study and participants in the pilot study are not included in the main study. The pilot study was conducted to identify weakness in planning as well as weakness with the instruments (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### **3.9 Reliability and Validity**

According to Cohen (2002), research validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concepts under discussion. He further defines reliability as the extent to which other researchers would arrive at similar results if they studied the same case using exactly the same procedures as those used by the first researcher. According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004), the basis for reliability and validity of a research is its trustworthiness. The term “trustworthiness” refers to the way in which the researcher persuades the audience that the findings in the study are worth paying attention to and that the research is of high quality (Creswell, 2014).

Thus, the researcher submitted the research instruments to the supervisors who checked the content validity and approved the instruments. The researcher also submitted the research instruments to a subject specialist at the University of Namibia who checked the content validity.

Reliability of the study instruments was achieved through test-retest method where participants from the school which participated in the pilot study completed the questionnaire and also took part in the focus group discussion. The procedure was repeated after two weeks at the same school. Data gathered from the pilot studies were

analysed and the spearman rank-order correlation was used to establish the correlation coefficient. A Cronbach's alpha was used to check for consistency in each research question to determine the reliability. Each research question gave the following results after the internal consistence test:

Table 3.1: Cronbach's alpha for research questions.

Research question	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
What are the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia?	15	0.725
What are the strategies used by the English Second Language teachers in order to cope with their specific teaching challenges in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region Namibia?	12	0.762
What are the views of the English Second Language teachers on the measures that could be used to minimise the teaching challenges they are facing in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia?	9	0.84

The results presented in the Table 3.1 above show that the internal consistence test performed on the research questions gave a Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.70 for all

the research questions. According to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2018), a study should thrive to achieve an internal consistence of greater than 0.65. Therefore, the study satisfied the internal consistence reliability for every research question and the instruments were considered reliable.

### **3.10 Trustworthiness**

Creswell and Creswell (2018) explained that qualitative studies deal with trustworthiness which is the degree of confidence in data interpretation.

- Credibility deals with reliability of the information provided in an investigation (Creswell & Creswell (2018). Credibility of the study was ensured through using reliable literature sources that has been accredited and peer reviewed.
- Confirmability deals with the extent to which the results are consistent with those of other studies (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Confirmability was ensured by comparing the results of the study with similar studies to establish if the results are in line with those of other studies.
- Dependability measure the extent to which the investigation can be repeated and get similar findings. The research instruments were piloted prior to the actual study to attain dependability.
- Transferability deals with the extent to which the findings can be generalised to other setting, when the concepts are similar. In this study, transferability will be achieved by using a sample that is a true representative of the entire population.

### **3.11 Summary**

This chapter outlined the research methods used in gathering data about the teaching challenges and coping strategies of English second language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia. The mixed-methods research design was used in the study. The research employed questionnaires, focus group discussions and observations as research instruments. Furthermore, the chapter discussed how the data were collected and analyzed. Reliability and validity of the study was discussed. The chapter also discussed the research ethics.

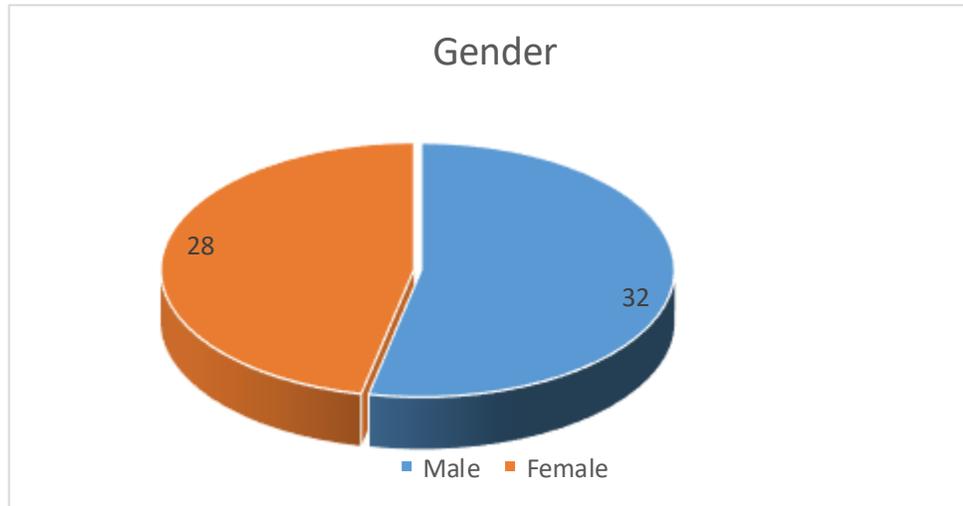
## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents the background information on the participants, findings on the challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in Ohangwena Region, and the coping strategies used by the English Second Language teachers. The findings of this study were obtained based on three research questions and data were collected using questionnaire, observation and focus group discussion. The analysed data are presented in the form of bar charts, pie graphs, and tables and discussed according to the following research questions:

- What are the teaching challenges faced by the English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia?
- What are the strategies used by the English Second Language teachers in order to cope with their specific teaching challenges in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region Namibia?
- What are the views of the English Second Language teachers on the measure that could be used to minimise the teaching challenges they are facing in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia?

### **4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Study Participants**

The participants comprised of English second language teachers currently teaching in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia. They include 32 (53.3%) male and 28 (46.7%) female English Second Language teachers. The figure on the following page shows the distribution of the study participants by gender:



**Figure 4.1: Distribution of the study participant by gender**

The participants' distribution by gender suggests that the study area has a largely equal representation of male and female genders among the English Second Language teachers. This will enable a gender-balanced view of the teaching challenges of English Second Language teachers in the study area.

With regard to age distribution of the participants (Table 4.1 on page 71), 25 (41.6%) of the participants were in the age category of less than 30 years, 27 (45%) were between the age of 31 and 40 years and 6 (10%) were between the age of 41 and 50 years while only 2 (3.3%) were between the age of 51 and 60 years. None of the participants were above 60 years of age. According to Ipinge (2016), teachers in Namibia retire from service at the age of 60 years. Thus all the study participants are still within the active year categories and hence, might share useful information on the teaching challenges faced by the English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the

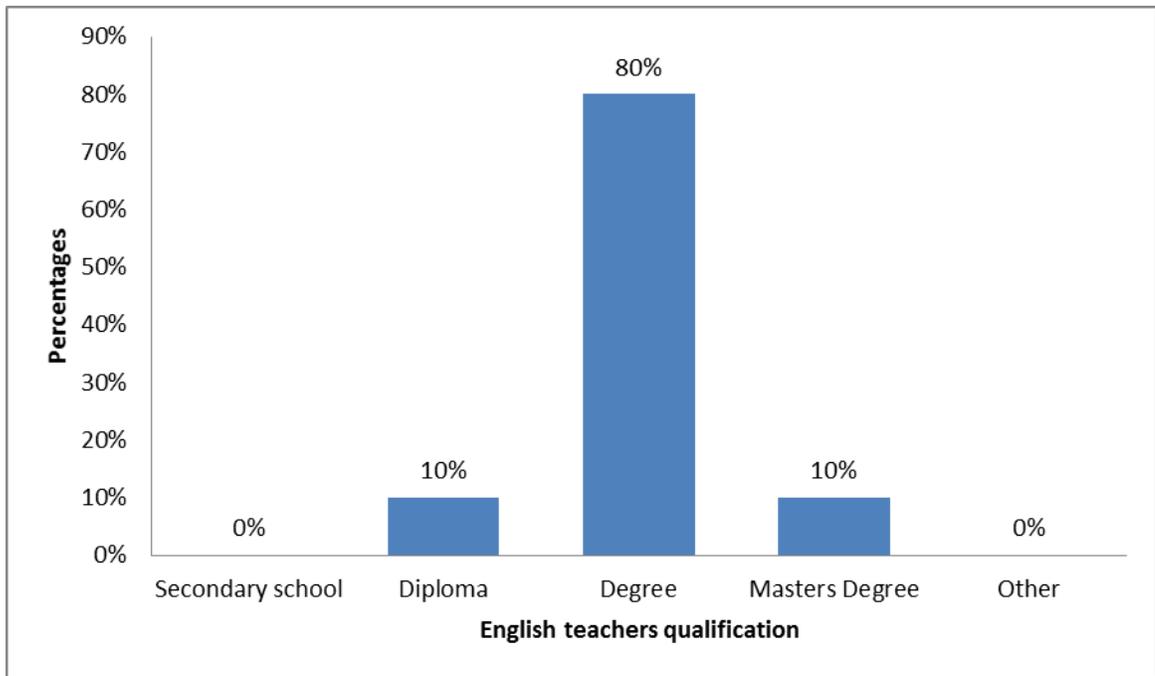
Ohangwena Region as well as the strategies they used to cope with their specific teaching challenges.

**Table 4.1: Age distribution of participants**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 30 years	25	41.6%
31-40 years	27	45%
41-50 years	6	10%
51-60 years	2	3.3%
Above 60 years	0	0
Total	60	100%

In terms of the distribution of the participants by the highest level of education qualification, Figure 4.2 below showed that 48 (80%) of the participants indicated that they held the Bachelor of Education (Honours) in English language. The figure further showed that 6 (10%) of the participants indicated that they held Master of Education in Curriculum Development, and another 6 (10%) held Diploma in Education in English Language. This implies that the English Second Language (ESL) teachers in Ohangwena Region are qualified enough to teach ESL and the qualifications of the teachers might not be a constraint to the teaching challenges experienced by these teachers in the study area. Majority of the participants possessed the required minimum educational qualification – Bachelor of Education (Honours) in English language as expected of an English Second Language teacher in Namibia as noted by Ipinge (2016). Harris (2011) conducted a study in Namibia and titled: “Language in Schools in

Namibia: The missing link in educational achievement” reflected a similar phenomenon. In the study, Harris (2011) established that educational qualification of teachers was not a factor to the challenges that English Second Language teachers and learners faced in the country. The author noted that ESL teachers were qualified enough to teach the subject at least, at the secondary school level.



**Figure 4.2: Highest educational qualification of the participants**

The years of teaching experience of the participants (Table 4.2 on page 73) revealed that 36 (60%) of the participants had less than five years of teaching experience, and 12 (20%) of them had six to ten years of teaching experience. The result further showed that 6 (10%) of the participants had 11 to 15 years of teaching experience while 3 (5%) each had 15 to 20 years and above 20 years of teaching experience. These results revealed that majority of the participants were still novice teachers with little teaching

experience. The fact that more than half of the participants had less than five years of teaching experience was a clear indication that the majority of English Second Language teachers in the study area might still be new in the teaching profession, and hence, may not have vast experience and skills in teaching ESL. This suggests that teaching experience of the ESL teachers is a constraint that English Second Language teachers are facing in the study area. Ceka and Murati (2016) highlighted that the experience of the teachers is critical in teaching ESL, emphasizing that more skills are acquired as the teacher gain more years of experience.

**Table 4.2: Participants’ years of teaching experience**

<b>Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0-5 years	36	60%
6-10 years	12	20%
11-15 years	6	10%
15 - 20 years	3	5%
Above 20 years	3	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>

In terms of the job positions held by the participants (Figure 4.3 on page 74), (90%) of the participants indicated that they were subject teachers only (English Second Language) while 9% were English Second Language teachers who are also serving as head of department, while only 1% was an English Second Language teacher serving as principal. This implies that majority of the English teachers in the study area had no other extra-responsibility which could pose a challenge to their teaching job. Having

extra responsibilities increase the work load of the subject teacher. According to Harris (2011), when teachers take on extra responsibility, they tend to reduce their effort on the subject they are teaching.

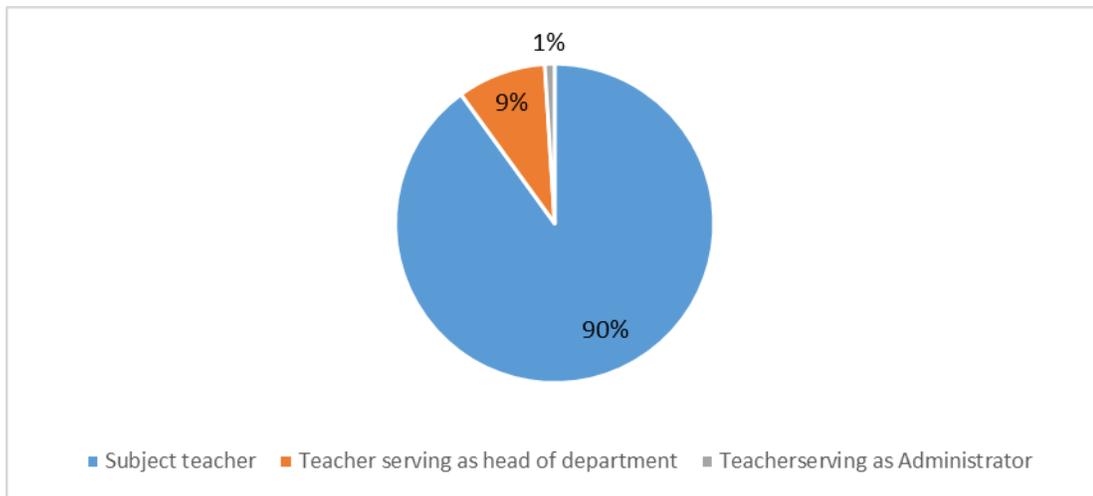


Figure 4.3: Job positions held by the participants

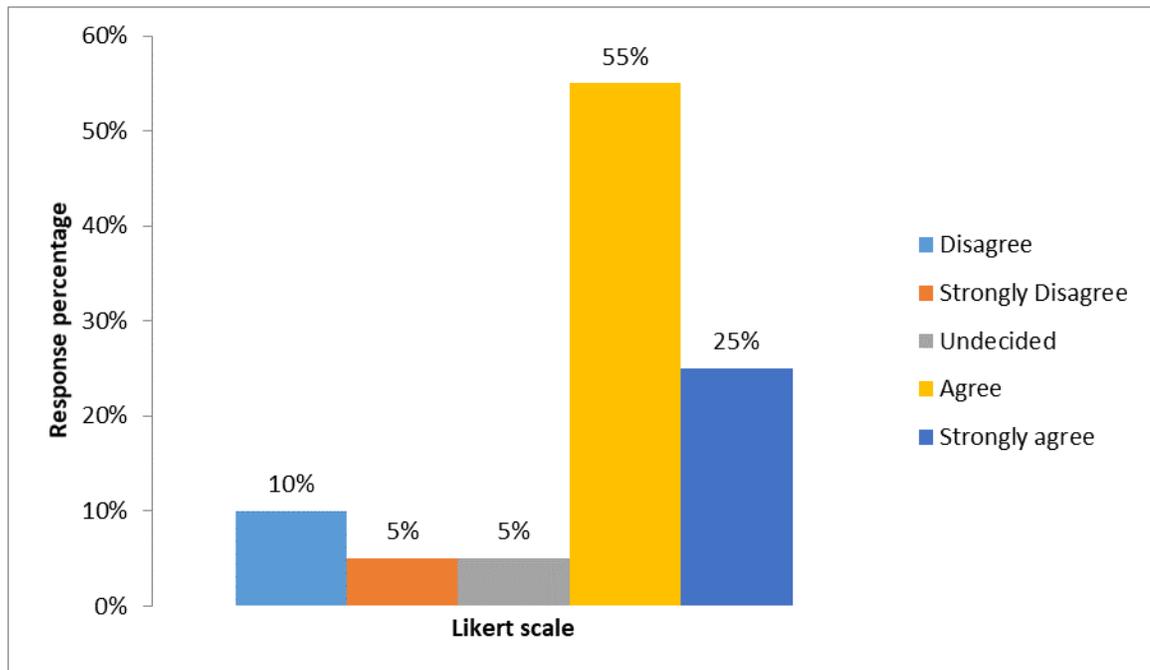
#### **4.2 Challenges Faced by English Second Language Teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region.**

The data gathered using the questionnaires, observation and focus group discussions revealed several challenges faced by the English Second Language (ESL) teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region. The major challenges identified include lack of resources for teaching and learning ESL, overcrowded classes, absenteeism by learners, lack of parental support or involvement, learners' lack of motivation.

#### **4.2.1 Lack of Resources for Teaching and Learning ESL**

The data gathered using the questionnaire (Figure 4.4) revealed that 55% of the participants agreed that they experienced challenge of limited access to teaching and learning resources in ESL in their schools while 25% strongly agreed that they also experienced this challenge. In addition, the participants in the focus group discussions stressed that their schools are not equipped with resources for ESL teachers to teach the subject effectively according to the requirement of the syllabus. Notably, majority of the focus groups (6 out of 11) highlighted that their schools lacked of textbooks, reading materials, photocopier machines to copy question papers, as well as computers and internet to integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching ESL. All the eleven focus groups stressed their frustration with the lack of ESL textbooks for the learners, adding that this situation often compelled the learners in their classes to share textbooks during teaching, adding that in most cases, a minimum of 4 learners share one textbook during ESL lesson. The participants argued that the situation was further worsened by the government's COVID-19 mitigation measures where learners' sitting arrangements in classrooms must adhered to the social distance rule of 1.5m apart. This constrained the textbook sharing approach being used by the ESL teachers to engage learners and hence, affect effective teaching. During the focus group discussion, the participants also indicated that their schools do not have well-equipped libraries neither do they have English language laboratory where they could access extra reading resources apart from the textbooks they used in the class. In addition, during the observation of live English lessons, the researcher noticed in all the eleven schools that learners were indeed sharing textbooks. Furthermore, most of the participants complained that they do not have photocopiers to make copies of teaching and learning

materials to share to the learners during the lesson, and hence, the sharing of the available textbooks.



**Figure 4.4 Participants' responses on the lack of English language resources in the study area**

The participants particularly attributed the challenge of limited English language textbooks to the high enrolments of learners in their schools. According to the participants, this situation made effective teaching of ESL and monitoring of learners very difficult in the affected schools. Abebe and Davidson (2012), Mathew and Alidmat (2013), and Akasha (2013) are of the opinion that teachers of ESL should be provided with relevant teaching materials such as magazines, newspapers, as well as graphic and visual sources to aid the teaching of ESL. This situation was further compounded by the remote locations of majority of the schools which made access to modern infrastructure

and technology very difficult. The results are in line with the findings of Van Wyk and Mostert, (2016) about challenges in teaching ESL and Garton et al. (2014), who established that most English language teachers encounter challenge of resources, especially in developing countries and other non-English speaking countries where the number of learners enrolled in government schools will be too high as compared to the number of textbooks available. Harris, (2011), Brozak, (2016), Mule (2011) and Kisting, (2011) separately stressed that the lack of appropriate textbooks is a big hindrance to the teaching of ESL where the prescribed textbook lack quality activities. Government schools are characterized with high number of learners in a classroom and these learners often shared textbooks during classroom instructions. However, for effective teaching of ESL, there is need for each learner to have his or her own copy of the needed textbook.

#### **4.2.2 Overcrowded Classrooms**

Figure 4.5 below showed the responses of the participants on whether overcrowded classrooms constitute a challenge to them in teaching ESL in the schools. The results revealed that 45% of the participants agreed, 25% of them strongly agreed, and 5% were undecided that they have challenge of overcrowded classrooms in their ESL classes.

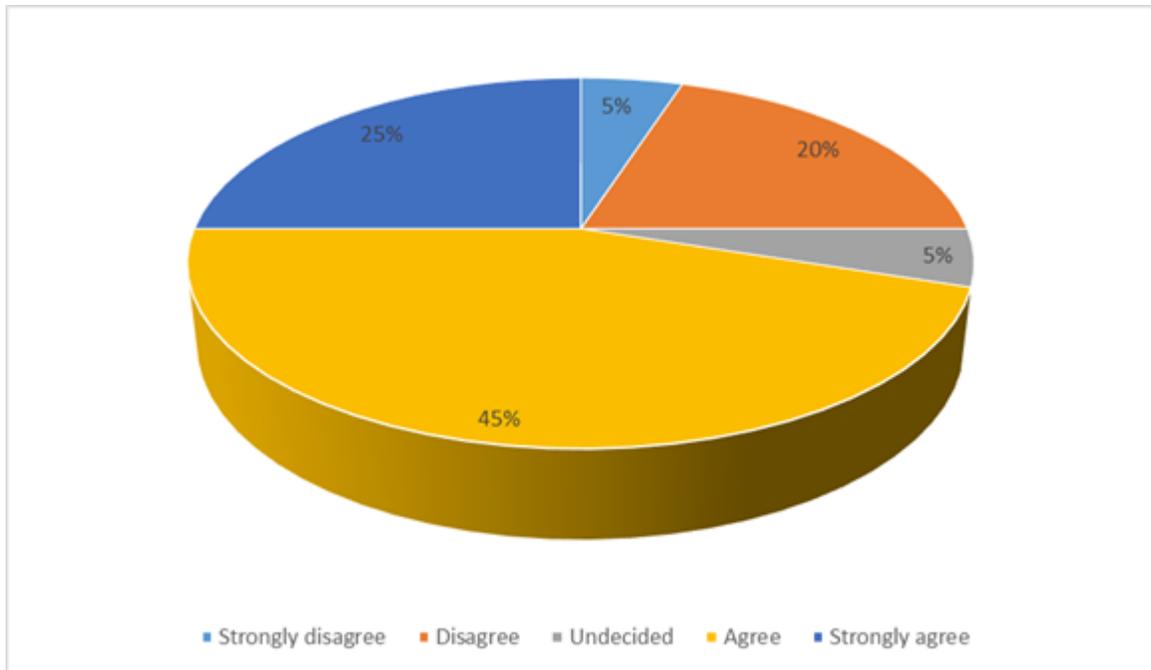


Figure 4.5: Challenge of overcrowded classrooms in the study area

Furthermore, participants in six focus group discussions (6 out of 11 schools) stressed that they have real difficulties in teaching ESL effectively and monitoring learners due to overcrowded classes.

Majority of the participants, 36 (60%) indicated that their class size ranges from 36 to 40 learners; 18 (30%) of the participants stated that their class size ranges from 41 to 45 learners; and 3 (5%) of the participants even indicated that they had class size of over 45 learners, sharing the same resources meant for a class of below 35 learners. Only 3 (5%) of the participants indicated that their class size is below 35 learners. The teacher-learner ratio in Senior Secondary Schools in Namibia is 1:30 (Iipinge, 2016). The table below presents the participants' responses on the class sizes in their respective schools.

**Table 3: Participants’ responses on the class sizes in in the study area**

Class size	Frequency	Percentage
Below 35	3	5%
36-40 learners	36	60%
41-45 learners	18	30%
Above 45 learners	3	5%

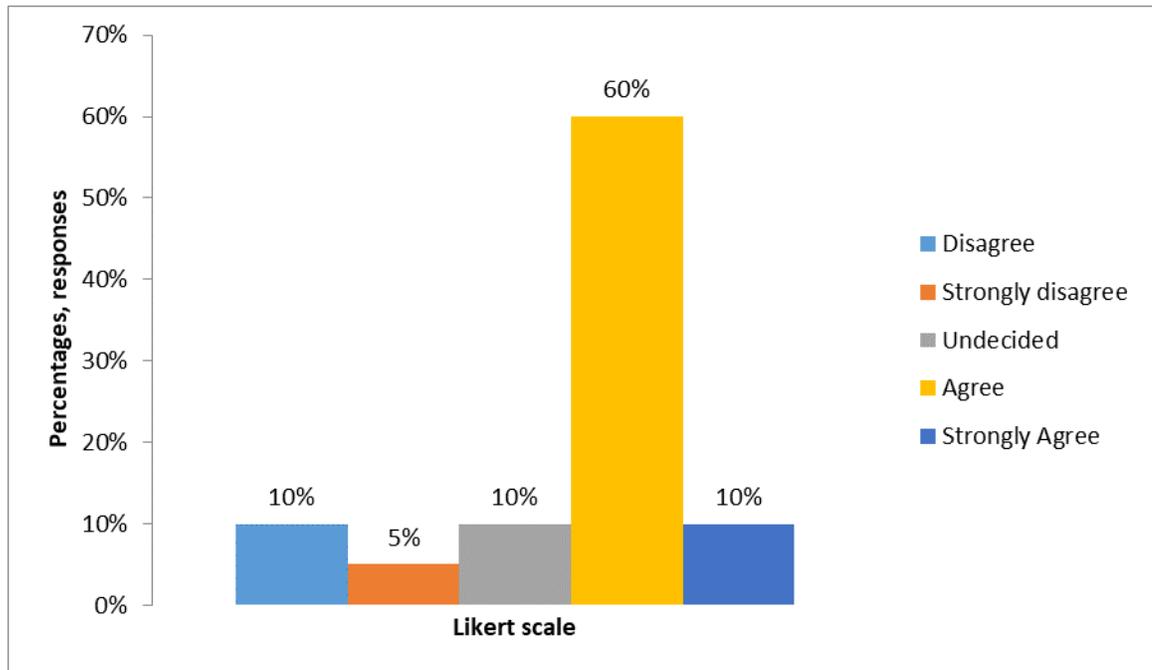
During the live ESL lesson observation, it was noted that in all the eleven schools, the classrooms were indeed, overcrowded. From the focus groups discussions held, the participants brought many sentiments on the challenge of overcrowded of classrooms. They echoed that they were stressed up by the high teacher-learner ratio as they could not effectively manage their classes. One participant from one of the focus groups said he was no longer worried about learners performance as he could not effectively perform his work in overcrowded classes. He said the circumstances in his classes were beyond his control. At 10 schools, the participants in the focus group emphasized that large classes were a burden to them as they could not cater for individual difference of learners especially, the slow learners who require special attention. One teacher repeatedly said “large classes stress a lot and they give me high pressure. May (2018), Davila (2019), and Botes, *et al.*, (2020) in their separate studies noted that teaching ESL in an overcrowded classroom is stressful, overwhelming and discouraging. When a classroom is overcrowded, it poses various challenges to the teacher, even to the most productive teachers. According to Maleki, Mollae and & Khosravi, (2014) in his study ,Foreign language teaching in over-crowded class room state that learners tend to learn

effectively when the teacher can offer one on one instruction or teach a small group of learners. However, this becomes a major challenge when the classroom is overcrowded. In overcrowded classrooms, many teachers struggle with classroom management while learners have the tendency to make noise. Svy-Biloon , Recino and Munoz (2020) conducted studies on factors affecting the teaching of English Second Language and concluded that in most African countries, effective teaching of ESL is hampered by problem of overcrowded classes which also have direct consequences on the teaching and learning outcomes. It becomes difficult for the teacher to give individual attention to learners who are struggling while learners themselves find it difficult to concentrate. Panferov (2010), Niehaus and Adelson (2014), as well as Göktürk and Dinçkal (2018) revealed that teaching ESL in overcrowded classes poses various challenges, stressing that there is lack of use of “immediacy behavior” in overcrowded classes as well as lack of one-on-one interaction between the teacher and learners. Similarly, Mahmoud (2018) submitted that teaching in overcrowded classes is self-defeating because there is absolute lack of interaction between the teacher and learners, and learners engagement is minimal.

#### **4.2.3 Absenteeism of Learners**

The participants in the questionnaire responses highlighted that learners’ absenteeism has become a major challenge to the teaching of ESL in the study area. The result (Figure 4.6 below) showed that the majority of the participants (60%) agreed and 10% of them strongly agreed that learners’ absenteeism from school was a challenge faced by ESL teachers in the study area. However, 10% each of the participants disagreed, strongly disagreed, and undecided that learners’ absenteeism constitutes a challenge to

them in ESL classes. During the focus group discussions, it also emerged that absenteeism of learners were highlighted as real challenges for ESL teachers in the study area.



**Figure 4.6: Participants' responses on the absenteeism of learners in the study area**

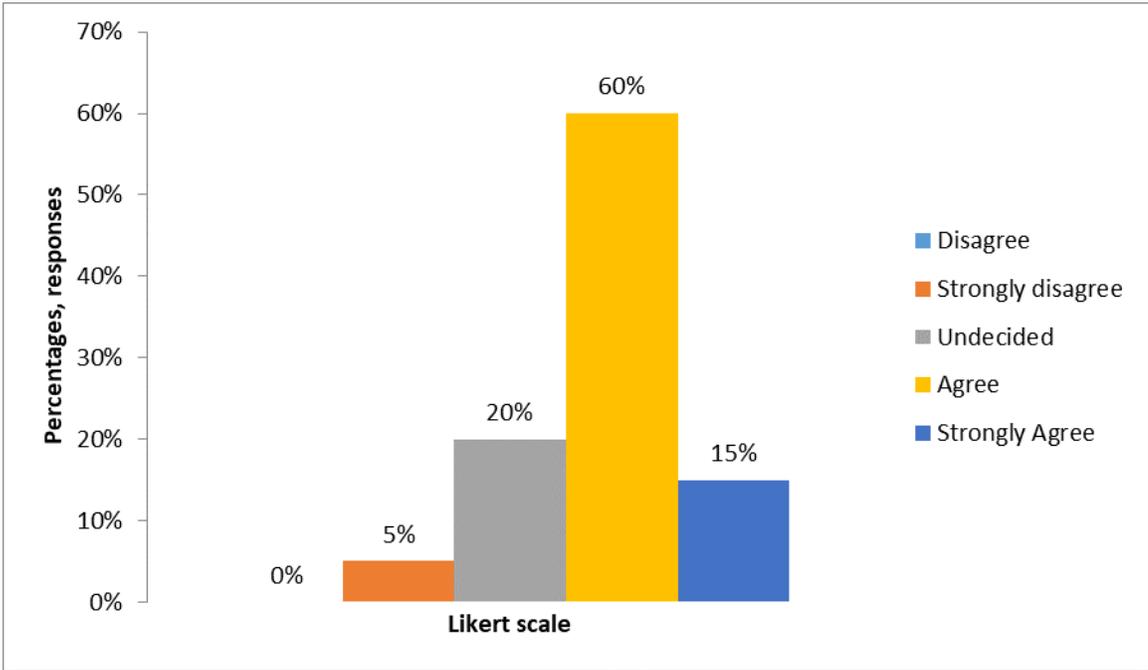
During the live ESL lesson observation, it was observed in many schools that several learners were absent from classes. Participants in all the focus group discussions cited absenteeism as genuine constraint to ESL teaching in their schools as many learners often missed lessons without providing any genuine reasons for not attending classes. The participants stressed that when learners are absent from school, they often missed valuable information on ESL. The participants also echoed that it was very difficult for them to handle classes where learners always absent themselves as learners were always on different levels every day. One focus group argued that whether learners that were absent from school provide a genuine reason or not, the impact still remain the same

since absenteeism impacted negatively on learner performance in ESL. In the studies conducted by Jordan and Gray (2019) as well as King (2013) about challenges in teaching English as a foreign language, the authors concluded that it is a serious challenge teaching learners English as a foreign or second language when they (learners) are always absent from class lesson. In a different report, Davila (2019) and Chen (2019) concurred that the socio-economic background of learners has an effect on the attendance of learners in classes, with most learners coming from the lower class in the society having lower attendance as compared to the middle and upper class socio-economic background. This could be that learners from the lower class society assist their parents with family and house chores. Learners from the Ohangwena Region, being a predominantly rural community assist their parents with farming duties and tend to miss classes. LaRocque, Kleiman, and Darling, (2011) and Al-Mahrooqi, Denman, and Maamari, (2016) add that families that have poor education background do not value education and their children are likely to miss school. Furthermore, some learners absent themselves from school because of truancy and early pregnancies among the female learners. In a similar study, Crawford *et al.*, (2019) also reported that learners' absenteeism from ESL lessons is high.

#### **4.2.4 Lack of Parental Involvement**

The participants in their questionnaire responses also highlighted that lack of parental involvement has become a major challenge to the teaching of ESL in the study area. The result (Figure 4.7 below) showed that 60% of the teacher participants agreed that the lack of parental involvement was a challenge they face when it comes to teaching and monitoring learners in ESL in the study area. On the other hand, 20% were undecided

about whether the lack of parental involvement constitute a challenge to the teaching of ESL in the study area. Participants from all the eleven focus groups echoed that most parents do not assist their children with their academic work (English Homework) at home and as a result the pass rate in ESL remain low. Participants from one focus group complained about parents were even failing to have positive influences no the behaviors and attitudes of their children towards school works. Most participants also complained that parents were simply not serious because any time the schools invite them (parents) to parent-teacher’s meetings, prize giving days and book inspections, they (parent) would rarely showed up. Participants in one focus group responded with emotions and said “the parents are disappointing”. If you call them for a face to face briefing on how best both teachers and parents could join efforts to assist the children, they (parents) always give a deaf ear. Some of them would prefer online communication via text, phone call and WhatsApp which is not effective.

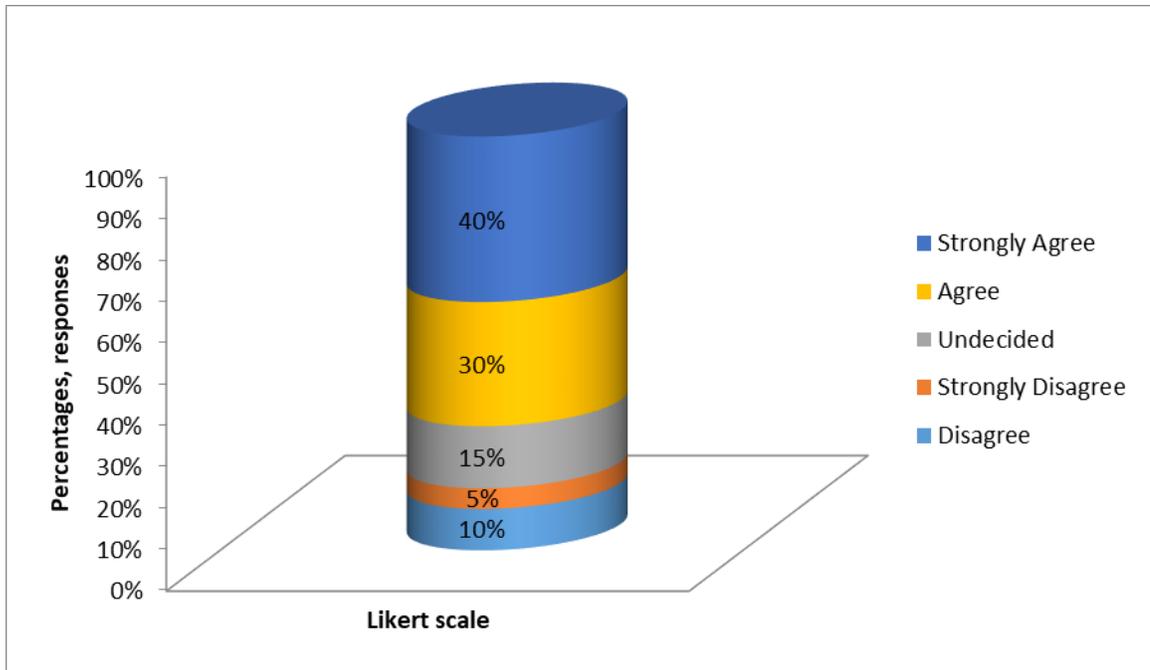


#### **Figure 4.7: Participants' responses on lack of parental involvement**

In all the focus group discussions, the participants also cited lack of parental involvement as a major concern in ESL teaching as many parents were not aware of the progress of their learners. One focus group argued that where there is minimal parental involvement, learners tend to misbehave. Davila (2019) and Chen (2019) in their studies about role of parents in teaching and learning ESL emphasized on the effect of parental involvement on both the attendance of the learners in class and behavior of learners. LaRocque, *et al.*, (2011) and Al-Mahrooqi, *et al.*, (2016) posits that parents are the first teachers of their children and they continue to play that role during school life where they provide a conducive environment for studying at home as well as being collaborative with teachers. Erdener and Knoepfel (2018) as well as Tekin (2010) highlighted that parental involvement in the ESL encompass the actions that parents take in order to enhance the achievement of the children at school. This requires joint partnership between parents and teachers, parents and learners as well as between parents themselves. Where healthy joint partnership between critical education stakeholders is lacking as indicated by participants in this study, the teacher's job becomes very difficult as the learners become irresponsible in their school works and in most cases, this could lead to poor performances.

#### **4.2.5 Lack of Refresher Workshops**

The result (Figure 4.8 below) presents the participants' responses to whether or not, lack of refresher workshop constitute a teaching challenge for the ESL teachers in the study area.



**Figure 4.8: Participants’ responses on the lack of refresher workshops**

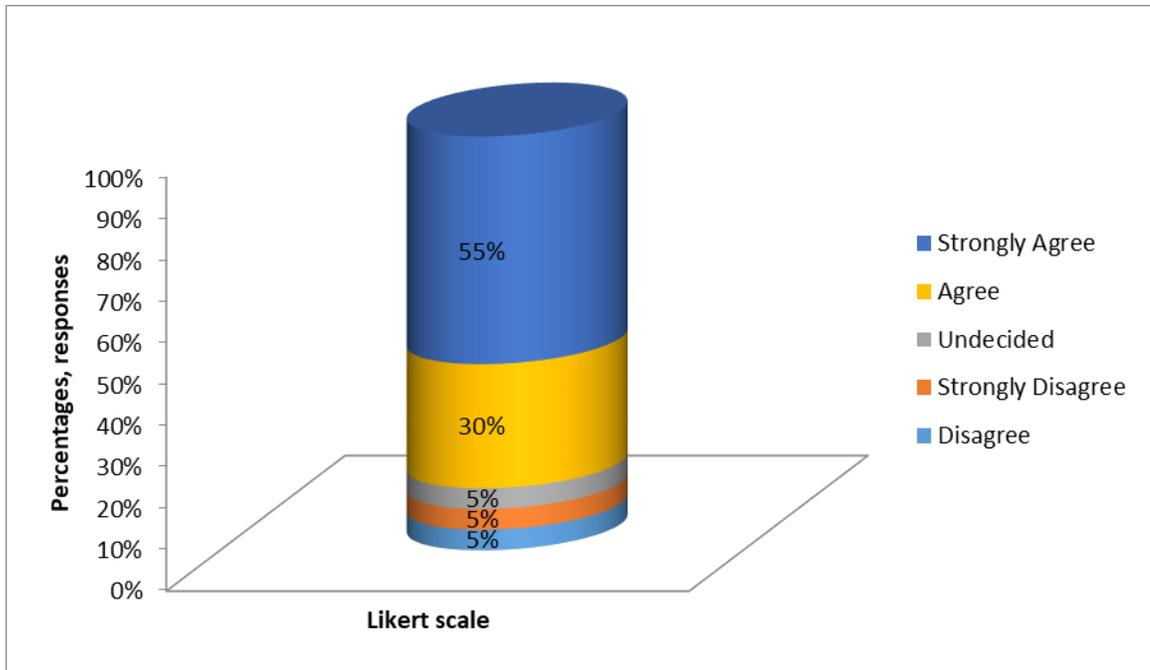
The figure shows that 30% of the participants agreed and 40% of them strongly agreed with the statement that the lack of refresher workshops for ESL teachers constituted a challenge to their job performance while 15% of the participants were undecided. Participants in one of the focus group discussions articulated that ever since they joined the teaching profession, they had never attended any workshop to inform them about new strategies, and methodology on ESL teaching. Other participants said they were not growing professionally since they lacked refresher courses for professional development.

Pande (2013) and Fatiloro (2015) in their studies about problems and remedies in teaching English Second Language, established that refresher workshops help teachers with new ideas and strategies of teaching ESL. Teachers who are struggling with teaching of the subject can get assistance during refresher workshops. Refresher courses

can also be of great help in providing relevant experiences, especially for teachers who teach examination classes but are not part of the national examination marking tutors.

#### **4.2.6 Lack of Support from Advisory Services by Subject Education Officer**

Figure 4.9 presents the participants' responses about whether the lack of support from advisory services by subject education officer constitute a challenge to the ESL teachers. The figure shows that 30% of the participants agreed and 55% of them strongly agreed that they were not receiving the desired advisory services from the subject education officer. The findings from the focus group discussions revealed that in five different schools, the participants highlighted that ESL teachers were not getting enough guide from the advisory services provided the subject education officer. Participants from three focus groups highlighted that most of them were still fresh from the university and did not know how best they can deliver their lessons in ESL to meet learners' needs considering that the subject is also foreign to them. Other participants said they were not growing professionally since they lack immediate advisors and mentors who can advise and mentor them to grow professionally in ESL teaching. All the eleven focus groups complained that ESL subject education officer rarely visits schools to reinforce, guide and advise teachers especially novice teachers on English teaching.

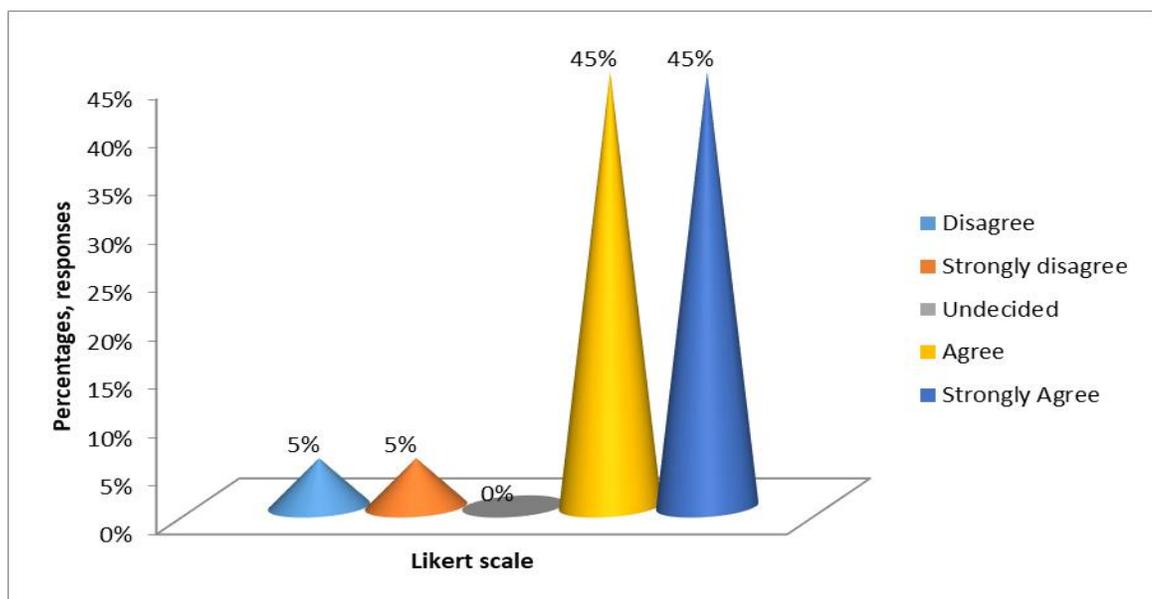


**Figure 4.9: Participants' responses on the lack of support from advisory services**

Jordan, et al., (2019), Pande (2013) and Fatiloro (2015) posits that teachers of ESL should get advice from subject experts and curriculum designers to enable them to teach and assess learners effectively. According to the participants, the subject advisors rarely visit schools but are always based at the offices. This means that ESL teachers in Ohangwena region have a challenge of lack of guidance from the subject advisors. In a study conducted by Zughoul (1986) cited by Souriyavongsa, Rany, Abidin and Mei, (2013), the study established that most subject advisors in developing countries are based at the regional offices when they are supposed to be visiting schools and provide expert advises to teachers in areas that needs attention. Shede (2010) also concurred that English Second Language teachers should receive advisory services from the ministry, especially in areas that have to do with marking of papers and any changes that might have been implemented.

#### 4.2.7 Lack of Motivation

It was also found that teaching unmotivated learners towards classroom tasks constitute a challenge to the ESL teachers in teaching the subject in the study area. Figure 4.10 revealed that 45% of the participants agreed and another 45% of them strongly agreed with the statement that the learners lack motivation in ESL learning. Participants from three focus groups said nowadays learners seem to lack intrinsic and self-driven motivation to participate in class. Another focus group said learners were not self-driven and they only participate and work through teacher coercion. Participants from one focus group further argued that learners were carried away by social media and that destroyed their motivation. In another four focus groups, the participants highlighted that parents, and the society at large do not motivate their children and as a result, learners had a negative attitude towards learning. One emotional participant from one focus group said, “It’s a mere waste of time and effort to teach learners who is not motivated and who has a negative attitude”. The participant further alluded that most of them were wasting time because learners in their schools were not motivated.

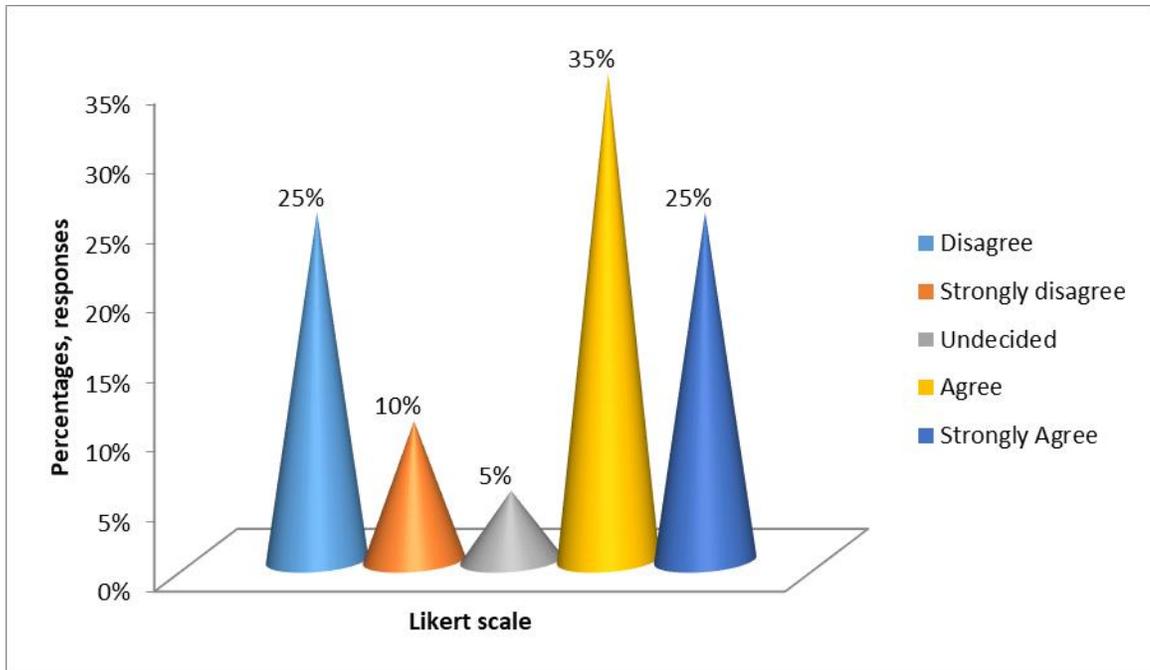


#### **Figure 4.10: Learners' lack of motivation**

Several authors highlighted that most learners viewed learning English language as a duty; something that they have to, but do not want to do (Akasha, 2013; Al-Khairiy, 2013; Bahrani, & Soltani, 2012). In studies conducted by London (2011), and Mawere (2012) about learning difficulties in English language, the studies established that it is not possible to master the intricacies involved in the language without total commitment to it. It is not possible to be a competent speaker of English language without giving it the attention it deserves in reading, studying and writing. Thus, the learners' lack of motivation towards given tasks as indicated by the participants might frustrate the teachers' efforts in teaching ESL in the study area with predominantly rural set up.

#### **4.2.8 Learners' Poor Attitude Towards English Second Language**

Figure 4.11 revealed that 35% of the participants agreed and 25% of them strongly agreed that learners have poor attitudes towards classroom tasks in ESL while 25% of the participants disagreed and 10% of them strongly disagreed with the statement. During the focus group discussions, seven out of the eleven focus groups highlighted that learners had poor attitude towards ESL.



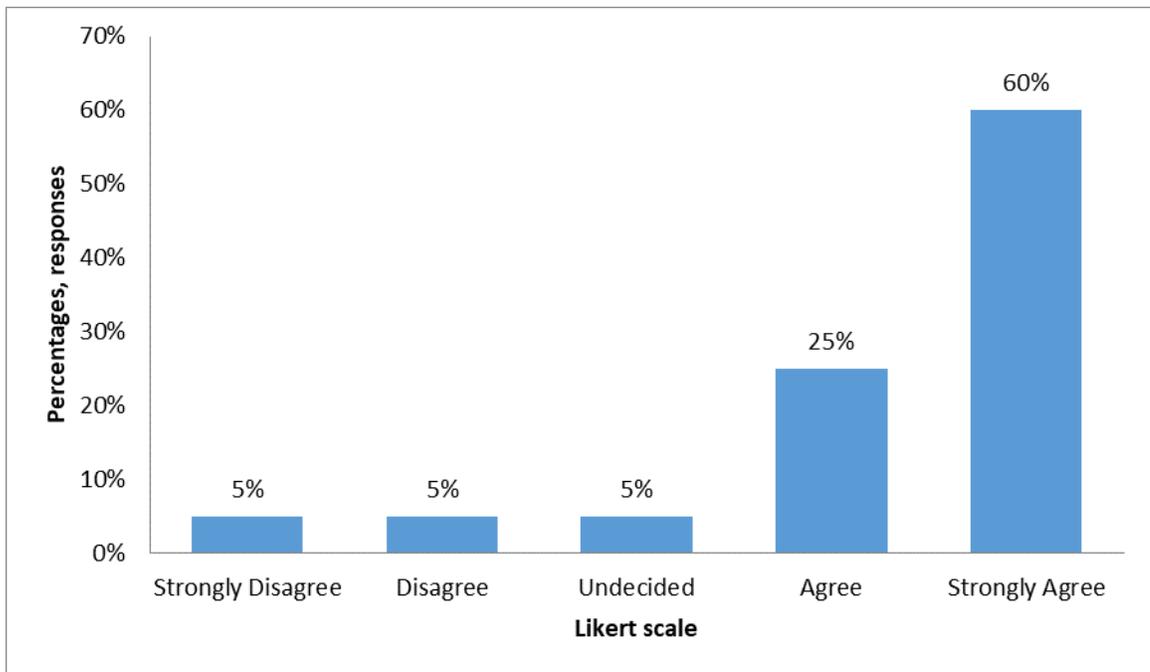
**Figure 4.11: Learners’ poor attitude towards ESL tasks**

Having poor attitude towards ESL is bad for the learners as they tend to put less effort in the subject. London (2011), in the study on factors affecting quality of English language teaching and learning. and Mawere, (2012) in reflection on the problems encountered in the teaching and learning of English language in Mozambique’s public schools explained that teachers tend to struggle in teaching learners who have poor attitude towards school work. Where there is poor attitude towards a subject, learners always tend to dislike the subject. Some learners develop negative attitude towards ESL because they hear from friends that it is a difficult subject. Such negative attitude translates to lack of effort by learners.

#### **4.2.9 Lack of Exposure to English Language**

The result in Figure 4.12 presents the participants’ responses to whether or not, learners’ lack of exposure to English language constitute a challenge to ESL teachers in the study

area. The figure showed that 60% of the participants strongly agreed and 25% of them agreed that learners in the study area generally lack exposure to English language and only 5% each disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. Furthermore, participants in 8 focus groups indicated that due to limited exposure to English language, they (ESL teachers) are seriously finding it difficult to teach ESL and enjoy it.



**Figure 4.12: Lack of exposure to English**

During the focus group discussion, all the participants shared the same views that the learners lacked classroom English language practice and exposure from the early grades. Participants from 5 focus groups agreed that in their schools, most learners come from typical rural background and the learners do not have access to televisions to expose them to English cartoons and other ESL programs. In all the eleven focus groups, the participants argue that learners who lacked English language exposure were difficult to teach as teachers spend most of their time translating to the mother tongue language for

learners to understand. Some participants added that the geographical location of most schools is a disadvantage as they do not offer exposure opportunities to the learners. Most rural areas do not have electricity and hence, most learners could not watch televisions and access internet. Thus, it is not surprising that the learners' lack of exposure to English language has become a major challenge to the work of the ESL teachers in the study area. It has been widely reported that learners are not given ample opportunities to practice English language in classrooms when learning other subjects (Yilmaz, 2011; Nhan, & Lai, 2012; Abebe, & Davidson, 2012). This situation results in minimal exposure to English language usage under different learning context in the study area. This becomes a challenge to the ESL teacher to create a flexible ESL teaching atmosphere. Van Wyk and Mostert (2016) in their study on the influence of mother tongue and gender on the acquisition of English language confirmed that the ESL teacher is left with the sole burden of helping learners develop competence in English within a 35-minute lesson because the language outside the classroom and at home is mainly the local language. Furthermore, during observations, it was found that mother languages dominate inside and outside the classroom especially where there is no classroom teaching and these compounded the lack of exposure to ESL by the learners.

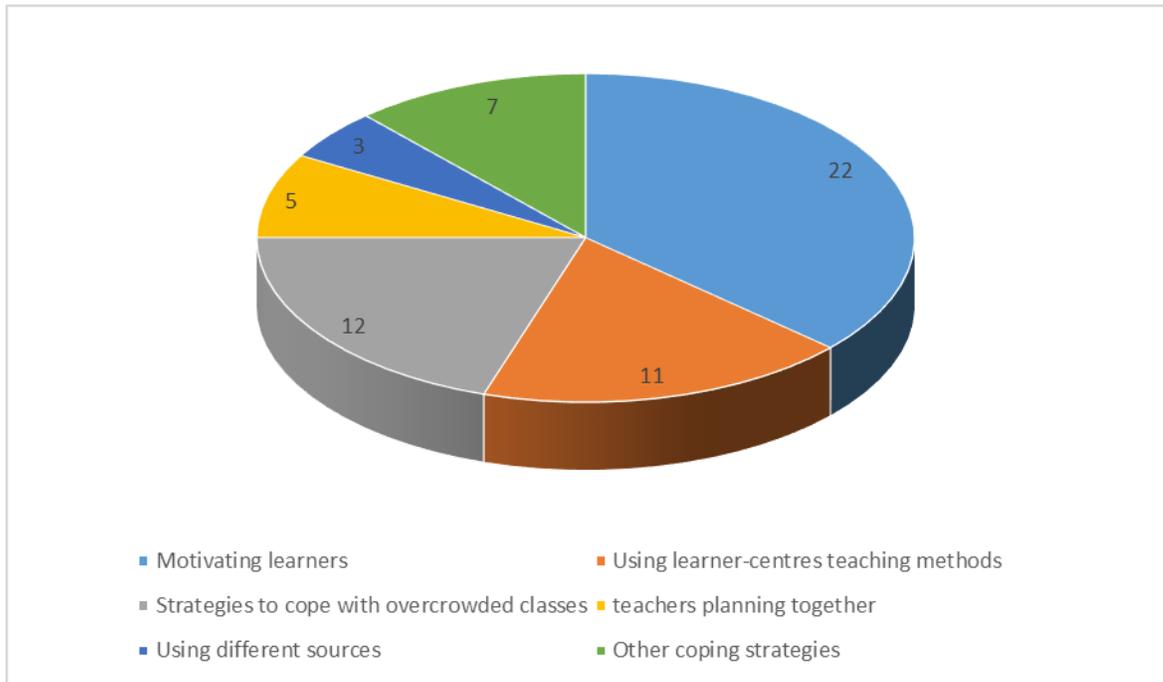
The role of mother language during and outside the classroom in ESL is subject to debate, with some scholars such as Van Wyk and Mostert, (2016)) arguing that if there is no proper transition from the mother language to ESL, learning of the ESL is weakened and or even lost leading to learners losing their confidence and interest in ESL. Gao (2012), and Abebe and Davidson (2012) concur that mother tongue interferes

with the learning of ESL given that the structures of English language are different from the mother tongue and also the sentence patterns in mother tongue and English language differ significantly. In some extreme cases, the confusion from mother tongue interference might lead to failure in ESL. However, Mathew and Alidmat (2013), as well as Mai and Iwashita (2012) are of the opinion that learners in schools which use mother tongue in the lower primary and make a gradual transition from the mother tongue to ESL tend to learn ESL more quickly. Mawere (2012), and Murray and Christison (2011) agreed with the previous authors that the use of mother tongue enhances the learning of ESL, suggesting that there are some phrases that learners cannot understand even if the teacher uses different methods of explaining and such cases only requires the teacher to explain in mother tongue. However, the suggestions of Harris (2011) require that learners be afforded the opportunities to develop in ESL. In the case of schools in the Ohangwena Region, they lack opportunities for learners to get exposure to ESL and develop their ESL skills outside the classroom setting. Furthermore, there is an abrupt transition from the use of mother language as medium of instruction in junior primary school (Grades 1 to 3) to English language as medium of instruction in senior primary school and above.

#### **4.3 Coping Strategies Applied by the English Second Language Teachers to Cope with their Teaching Challenges**

The results (Figure 4.13) below revealed the questionnaire responses by the participants on the coping strategies used by the English Second Language teachers to cope with their teaching challenges in the study area, Furthermore, Table 14 showed the themes

that emerged from the different focus group discussions on the coping strategies used by the English Second Language teachers.



**Figure 4.13: Frequency of coping Strategies used by the English Second Language teachers**

**Table 14: Coping strategies as suggested by focus group discussions**

Coping strategies	Frequency
Learners were forced to speak in English language to enable them to develop their vocabulary	4
Teachers improvise on the availability of English Second Language teaching materials	4

English Second Language teachers in the region work together as a team	2
English Second Language teachers use learner centered teaching methods	1

With regard to coping strategies being applied by ESL teachers in the study area to cope with their teaching challenges, Figure 4.13 revealed that most participants indicated that they constantly motivate the learners to develop interest in reading and building vocabulary of new words. During the observations, the researcher noted that ESL teachers were actually motivating struggling learners by using words that encourage them, for examples, “you can do it”, “good work, keep on working hard”. The findings from the focus group discussions also complemented the results from the questionnaire and classroom observations. Participants in the focus group discussions shared that they always encourage the learners and motivate them to perform better. A participant in one of the focus groups said he is not only motivating his learners but also encouraged his colleagues by saying, “Learners should be intrinsically motivated to learn this ESL, not extrinsically motivated; and at our school, that is what we are reinforcing”. Several authors have expressed the need to motivate ESL learners to improve their performances (Al-Khairi, 2013; Bahrani, & Soltani, 2012; Khan, 2011). According to Vygotsky as cited by Mahn and John-Steiner (2012), practical problem like teaching challenges in education is solved by the application of psychological theory. The transactional model of stressors (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) suggests that specific types of situations result in positive perception. The stressors appraised as having the potential for personal

growth, the attainment of goals, or rewards will be categorized as “challenges”; whereas, stressors appraised as having no potential personal gains will be categorized as “hindrances”. Since learners in the study area have very poor English language background and lack adequate exposure to English language activities, the use of motivation by the ESL teachers might be very helpful in encouraging the learners towards hard work and better performances. In this regard, the teachers would use the positive stressors to attain their goals of teaching ESL through using positive words of encouragement.

It also emerged from the questionnaires analysis that the participants used the learner-centered teaching method as a coping strategy to motivate the learners to take responsibility for their learning in English Second Language class. Findings from the focus group discussions and live lesson observations also revealed that the teachers were actually using the learner-centered approach to teach ESL. One participant from one focus group indicated that he always uses the learner-centered approach in his ESL class and it proved helpful since learner get motivated when they initiate learning too. According to Alkhairy (2013); Manasreh, (2011), Pande, (2011); and Khassawneh, (2011), the use of learner-centered approach when teaching ESL is important for learners’ active participation in ESL classrooms. However, Fatiloro (2015) had a different view and suggests that in handling English language teaching problems, teachers must use a variety of methods to enhance better understanding. Pande (2013) also believes that by applying various methods, particularly in matching the method and teaching topic, teachers would be able to establish effective teaching processes. When teaching ESL, the teacher needs to be flexible with the teaching methods as different

situations requires different teaching methods. Given the background of the learners in the study area (Ohangwena Region), the ESL teachers must use a variety of techniques that will suit the learners in their classrooms. According to Prashanti and Bhavani (2016), the transactional model of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) views that when an individual view an event as challenging, the secondary analysis process provides a global assessment of the individual's ability and resources to handle the threat or challenge. However, an individual will develop coping responses only after cognitive appraisal, therefore the resultant psycho-physiological experience (stress outcome) of this potentially stressful event depends on the effectiveness of one's cognitive appraisals and coping processes. In this regard, teachers in Ohangwena Region developed coping strategies by using learner centered approach that suits the learners in their classrooms.

On the strategies to cope with overcrowded classes and high workload, the participants indicated that they mostly used group work in their lessons to actively engage learners and to enable them learn from each other. During the focus group discussions, the participants also shared that the teachers often put the learners in group when teaching some basic concepts, and conduct discussions. One participant from one focus group said "although it is strenuous and burdensome to the teacher, however for now, that is what we are doing to help our learners grasp ESL". It was also observed during the live lesson observations that group activities were being conducted and were very vital to teaching ESL. Murphey et al., (2014) and Chen (2019) were of the opinion that learners can assist each other and provide resources by using a reciprocal exchange of ideas to create a group that is motivated. This is also in line with the findings of Carson and Kashihara (2012) who established that learning of ESL involves a transformative

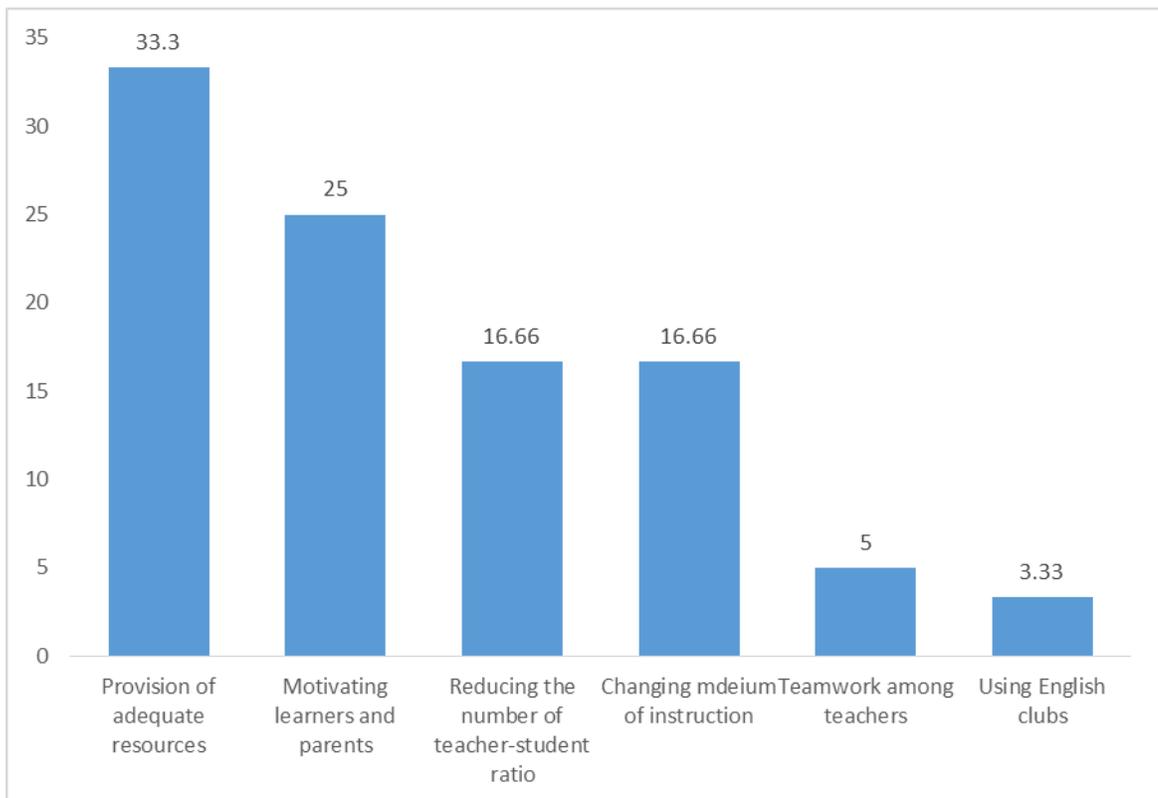
process where some learners can play an important role. Chen (2019) as well as Crawford *et al.*, (2019) suggested that interaction among learners is critical for language development. When learners are put into groups, fast learners will act as learner-teachers to create a learning platform that can aid their learning skills of ESL. The level of English language development will to a large extent, depend on the environment in the classroom, as well as intimacy among the learners in the classroom.

It also emerged from the questionnaires analysis that the participants used the strategy of team work in planning and preparing activities for the learners rather than individual efforts. The findings from the focus group discussions clearly showed collaboration among the ESL teachers in the study area in handling certain ESL teaching challenges. All the focus groups indicated that English teachers in the region were working together to overcome their teaching challenges. The participants indicated that they sometimes gather in a common venue at the circuit level to set ESL examinations for uniformity of evaluation activities. They also indicated that they have formed ESL teachers' WhatsApp group where they shared ideas, expertise and knowledge on ESL teaching. The researcher also observed that the lesson plans that were used by some participants had been prepared at the regional workshop and shared with the ESL teachers in the region. Pande (2013) noted that there are several benefits of using grouped lesson plans and these include sharing teaching techniques and methods. However, Carson and Kashihara (2012) and Alkhairy (2013) were of the opinion that teachers should develop their own lesson plans that suites the learners they have in their classrooms. Given that learners in Ohangwena Region come from a diverse background, the teachers should tailor make their lesson plans according to the learning characteristics of their learners.

In the questionnaire responses, the participants also indicated that they used different sources of ESL to teach in order learners to make the teaching and learning of ESL interesting to the learners. However, discussions from 4 focus groups highlighted that the teachers match their teaching pace with the understanding levels of the learners when teaching the lessons. One participant from one focus group said, “we have learners with different levels of understanding even within the same class, so what we do is to try by all means to reduce our content and teaching pace according to the level of the learners”. Carson and Kashihara (2012) and Alkhairy (2013) argued that the teacher’s own version of textbook could be used to develop leveled task since it is considered effective when it covers various tasks for learners whose levels of understanding are different. On the other hand, Pande (2013) suggested that teachers should be patient in teaching learners of different abilities and strive for matching level with the learners. When matching the level of learners, teachers can use role-plays, games and simulations to help learners especially those lagging behind. However, Abebe and Davidson (2012), and Mathew and Alidmat (2013) agreed with the finding of this study that teachers should use different sources by suggesting that ESL teachers can use audio-visual aids to assist learners to understand concepts and improve their English communication skills which involve pronunciation skills. Mai and Iwashita (2012), were of the opinion that teachers should complement both different sources and matching the levels of the learners with different activities such as role-plays and task-based communication activities as well as audio-visual materials. However, accessing the audio-visual materials can be a challenge for many secondary schools in the Ohangwena Region as some of the schools have no electrical power supply for the teacher to use audio-visual materials.

#### 4.4 Mitigation Strategies to Minimise the Teaching Challenges Faced by English Second Language Teachers in the Study Area

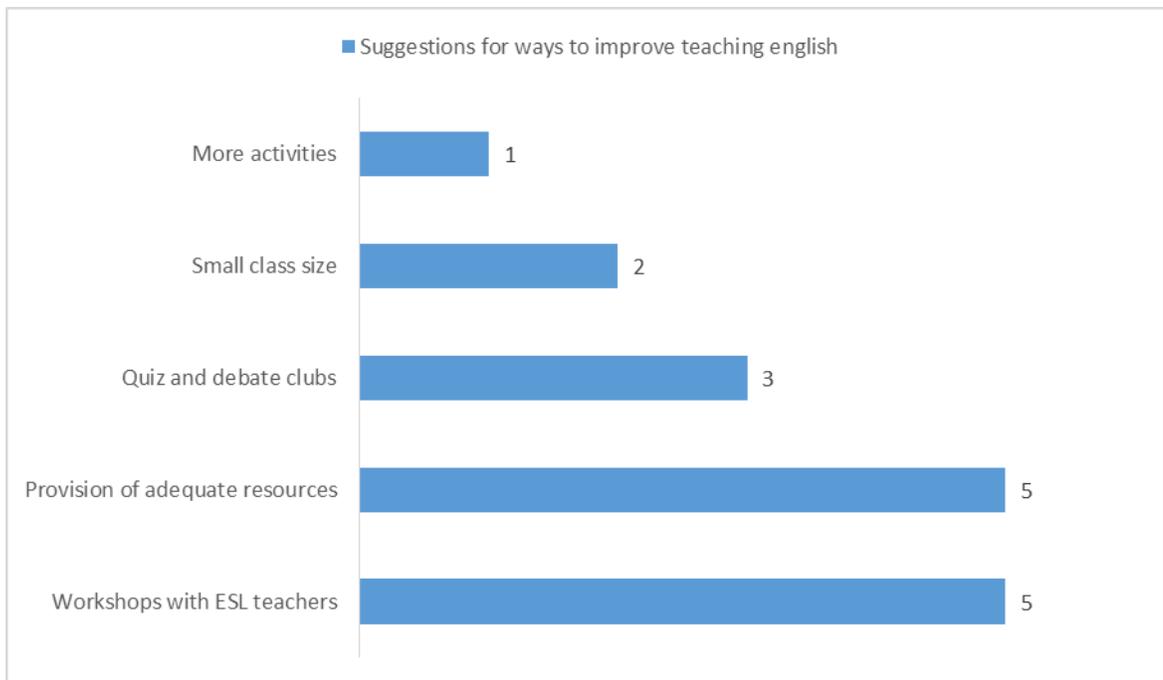
The findings on the mitigation strategies that could be used to minimise the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language (ESL) teachers in the study area as gathered using the questionnaires are presented in Figure 4.14 below. On the other hand, Figure 4.15 below shows the results obtained from the focus group discussions. Most of the results obtained from the focus group discussions complement the data gathered using the questionnaires.



**Figure 4.14: Participants' indication of the mitigation strategies to minimise ESL teaching challenges in the study area**

The figure above shows that 33.3% of the participants suggested provision of adequate resources as a mitigating strategy while 25% of the participants advocated for motivating learners. Other participants (16.6%) advocated for reducing the number of teacher-student ratio. The same percentage of 16.6% suggested that changing the medium of instruction could be a mitigating strategy.

Results from the focus group discussions are presented in 4.15 below. Five themes emerged from the focus group discussions and these themes are: more activities, small class size, quiz and debate clubs, workshops with ESL teachers and provision of adequate resources. The results are presented below.



**Figure 4.15: Focus groups’ suggestions on mitigation strategies to minimise the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in the study area.**

One of the themes that emerged with regard to the mitigation strategies to minimise the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in the study area was the provision of adequate resources such as textbooks and buildings to accommodate all the learners. A total of 33, 3 % of participants that responded to questionnaires advocated for adequate provision of resources to ESL teachers. During the focus group discussions, it emerged that resources such as textbooks and other teaching materials were not always provided in time by the regional education office. Five (5) out of 11 focus groups emphasized the importance of provision of adequate resources for teaching and learning ESL in their schools. Participants from 2 focus groups further argued that the resources are not only textbooks, but all necessary things that reinforce teaching and learning of ESL. The participants highlighted that textbooks, stationaries, computers, printers, internet and many other resources should be provided to the ESL teachers to reinforce teaching. Pande (2013), Graves (2016) and Harppe (2018) concurred that ESL teachers should be equipped with the right tools that include textbooks, teaching aids and reading materials for them to effectively deliver their duties as at when due. Teaching ESL requires a teacher to be equipped with the right tools particularly for those who teach in rural schools where English language exposure is limited. Resources for teaching ESL encompass not only textbooks but also include reading materials, access to photocopiers and computers and projectors (Manasreh, 2011; Khassawneh, 2011). ESL teachers should provide their learners with wide variety of reading materials and should also integrate technology in their lessons to make the lessons more interesting to the learners. However, some schools in the Ohangwena Region lack facilities such as electrical power supply and internet that could enhances the use of technology in ESL lessons as was noticed during observations.

More so, the participants suggested that teachers and parents should put the learners at the center and jointly work together to motivate learners. They suggested that teachers should be more patient with learners and use creativity techniques that promote discovery learning as this motivate learners more. Another participant who looked highly motivated said, “It is high time we move from traditional content and teacher-centered approaches that do not motivate learners to learn this foreign language. Let us move on with the modern approaches to teaching”. Hamid and Honan (2018) argued that the motivation of learners is necessary if the learners are going to succeed in learning English as second language faster. Bahrani and Soltani (2012) conducted studies about challenges in teaching ESL and recommended that motivating learners to speak and practice speaking in English language can result in improved performance of learners. Thus, the teachers should keep on encouraging learners to practice speaking English language. If a learner is motivated towards a subject, it becomes easier to develop interest in the subject. Khassawneh (2011) emphasized the need to motivate parents to be engaged in the learning process of their children. Al-Khairy (2013) concurred that if the parents are involved the learning process of ESL of their children, they will not only provide resources for learning but they will also create a conducive environment for their children at home. Involving parents in the teaching and learning process of ESL help to reinforce the importance of ESL both at school and at home. Furthermore, learners whose parents are engaged in the learning process tend to take their school works seriously.

The findings from the questionnaire further revealed that participants recommended reducing the number of teacher-learner ratio in the classrooms. A total of 91, 6 % of the

participants (55 out of 60) who responded to the questionnaires recommended the reduction of class size to suit the normal teacher-learner ratio. During the focus group discussions, the participants also highlighted that class sizes should be small for effective teaching of ESL and monitoring of learners' progress. They suggested that the government should employ more ESL teachers and deploy them to schools with high teacher-learner ratio to reduce overcrowded classes. Brown (2019), Al-Khairi, (2013), and Bahrani and Soltani (2012) suggested that small class sizes allows the teacher to have good classroom management and control as well as enable the teacher to give individual attention to every learner. When the teacher has a small class size, he/she attend to pay attention to individual learners especially the slow learners who might need special attention of the teacher. Furthermore, in a small class size, learner tend to be well-behaved as opposed to frequently observed indiscipline cases that are mostly evident in big classes. Therefore, reducing the class size might assist in many ways that include class management, minimal noise and individual attention.

In addition, some participants recommended that there is need for changing the medium of instruction for junior primary grades from the local dialect, Oshikwanyama to English language. A total of 66.6 % of the participants (40 out of 60) who responded to questionnaires recommended the change of medium of instruction from the local dialect. Cummins (2017) and Bhattacharya (2015) concurred that using English language as a medium of instruction right from the junior primary grades leads to learners grasping vocabulary at an earlier age. In addition, using English language as a medium of instruction from junior primary could improve the eloquence of learners in English language. This is in line with the findings of Graves (2016) who concluded that the stage

at which English language is used as medium of instruction had a strong bearing on the achievement level of learners in learning vocabulary. The report further revealed that learners who uses English language as a medium of instruction from junior primary grades had richer vocabulary than those who use English language as a medium of instruction from senior primary (Graves, 2016). Therefore, there is correlation between the stage at which learner's uses English language as a medium of instruction and richer vocabulary acquirement.

Another theme that emerged from the questionnaire was making use of English clubs and debate clubs to enhance English language communication skills of the learners. This was in line with the findings of the focus group discussions where the participants recommended using English clubs in secondary schools to improve the teaching and learning of ESL. Three (3) focus groups shared the same opinion of reinforcing the formation of different ESL clubs that work together to promote ESL learning. They argued that learners can learn from each other when they are in their clubs. Manasreh (2011) was of the opinion that if learners are in their clubs, they are more comfortable to learn from their peers. Some learners develop their English language skills when they are speaking with other learners and clubs could be a good environment for learners to learn from each other. Some participants also suggested the introduction of computer games that promote English language learning.

#### **4.5 Summary**

This chapter presented the detailed account of the results of the study and the discussions. The findings and discussion were presented under the three main themes in an attempt to answer the research questions. The major teaching challenges faced the

ESL teachers in the study area as identified by the participants include shortage of ESL resources such as textbooks, overcrowded classes, absenteeism by learners, lack of parental support or involvement, and lack of motivation by the learners. With regard to the mitigating measures that could be used to address the identified challenges, the study established that providing teachers with the adequate resources, making use of debate clubs and having small class size as well changing the medium of instruction were some of the measures that can be adopted. In terms of the coping strategies, the study established that teachers use learner centered approach that make the lesson interesting as well as teamwork and using different teaching sources.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

### **5.1 Summary of the Study**

Namibia adopted English language as a medium of instruction in schools post-independence in 1990. Furthermore, English as a subject in Secondary Schools was categorised into English Second Language (ESL) and English First Language (EFL). However, there is little background of English language in most homes in Namibia, especially in the study area - Ohangwena Region, where the Oshiwambo dialects are the dominant mother tongue. Thus, ESL teachers encounter various teaching challenges inside and outside the classroom as learners lacked English language exposure. Moreover, ESL teachers teaching in Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) in the Ohangwena Region of Namibia appeared to be experiencing unconfirmed specific teaching challenges as learners taught by these teachers continued to perform poorly in the Grade 12 Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary level ESL examination in recent years. In this regard, the study answered the following research questions:

- What are the teaching challenges faced by the English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia?
- What are the strategies used by the English Second Language teachers in order to cope with their specific teaching challenges in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region Namibia?

- What are the views of the English Second Language teachers on the measure that could be used to minimise the teaching challenges they are facing in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia?

The study was guided by the theoretical framework of the transactional model of stress and coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). The model assumes that practical problem like teaching challenges in education is solved by the application of psychological theory.

A mixed methods research approach was used in exploring the teaching challenges faced by the English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, the strategies used by the teachers to cope with their specific teaching challenges, and the perceived mitigation measures that could be used to overcome the identified challenges. The study population consisted of 78 English Second Language teachers currently teaching in the eleven Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia. The population size was determined from the Ohangwena Regional Education Directorate's records (15<sup>th</sup> day statistic) of the English Second Language teachers currently teaching in the Senior Secondary Schools in the study area. A total of 78 participants were selected using the maximum variation purposive sampling method (Morgan 2014a; Teddlie & Tashakkori 2009).

Three research instruments were used to collect the data namely, questionnaires, focus group discussions and observation guide. After obtaining the research ethical clearance and all needed permissions, the researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the participants. Then, the researcher kindly requested to collect the questionnaires back

after three days. The total of 60 questionnaires representing about 76.92% were collected back. With regard to the focus group discussion, the study formed 11 different focus groups in which three English Second Language teachers per school formed a group with the researcher as the moderator. In addition, the researcher conducted live classroom observation to personally observe and identify the English Second Language teachers' teaching challenges related to classroom population, learner-teacher ratio, as well as resources to support effective teaching and learning of English Second Language in the study area.

The study found that the teaching challenges faced by the English Second Language teachers in the study area include lack of resources for teaching and learning ESL, overcrowded classes, absenteeism by learners, lack of parental support, and learners' lack of motivation. In addition, the teachers lacked refresher workshops and support from advisory services to enable them teach and assess learners effectively. The study also found that learners' lack of exposure to English language extracurricular activities constitutes a challenge in teaching ESL in the study area.

In terms of strategies used by the English Second Language teachers in order to cope with their specific teaching challenges in the study area, the study found that the teachers mostly motivate their learners, use learner-centered teaching methods, engage in team work, and make English language speaking mandatory for the learners inside the school premises.

With regard to the views of the English Second Language teachers on the measures that could be used to minimise the teaching challenges they face in the study area, the following were identified: provision of adequate resources such as textbooks and

buildings to accommodate all the learners, involvement of both the parents and community in the children's education, reducing the number of teacher-learners ratio in the classrooms, using English language club and debate club to enhance learners' communication skills as well as changing the medium of instruction for junior primary grades from Oshikwanyama to English language.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The study concluded that the English Second Language (ESL) teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region encounter challenges of limited ESL teaching and learning resources such as textbooks, magazines, newspapers, as well as computers and internet to integrate information and communication technology in teaching ESL. Furthermore, most of the Senior Secondary Schools in the study area do not have well-equipped library which increases the challenge of the ESL teachers, given that the learners are not exposed to variety of ESL reading materials. In addition, the classrooms are overcrowded which made it difficult for the ESL teachers to give individual attention to the needy learners, especially the slow learners who need extra attention. The ESL teachers also face challenges of learners' absenteeism and lack of parental involvement. Most learners in the Ohangwena Region come from poor socio-economic background that negatively affect their school attendance because the participants revealed that some learners assist their parents with farming duties and tend to miss classes. Another challenge encountered by ESL teachers in the Ohangwena Region is the lack of refresher workshops and support from advisory services which could enhance their professional development, and teaching efficiency. Furthermore, the ESL learners lacked motivation and have poor attitude towards ESL as a subject. The

learners viewed learning English Second Language as a duty; something that they have to, but do not want to do. In addition, learners in Ohangwena Region lack exposure to English language programs such as television and radio education series and this, contributed to the challenges faced by the teachers in teaching ESL in the study area. During the observation, the researcher noted that learners in the study area mostly used their mother languages both inside and outside the classroom especially where there is no classroom teaching and these compounded the lack of exposure to ESL by the learners.

With regard to the strategies used by the ESL teachers in order to cope with their specific teaching challenges in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, the study concluded that the teachers motivated their learners to develop interest in reading and building vocabulary of new words. In addition, the teachers used learner-centered teaching method to motivate the learners to take responsibility for their learning in English Second Language class. The ESL teachers coped with their overcrowded classes and high workload by using group work in their lessons to actively engaged learners and to enable them learn from each other. The study also found that the ESL teachers used team work in planning and preparing activities for the learners rather than individual efforts. Through the team work, the teachers shared ideas on teaching techniques and methods that worked best in their schools and learned from one another. The teachers used different sources of ESL such as textbooks, charts, role-plays and task-based communication activities to teach in order to make the ESL interesting to the learners. The study also concluded that using audio-visual materials to teach ESL in the study area is not feasible for majority of the teachers as most of the schools are not electrified.

Among the suggested mitigation strategies to overcome the identified challenges, the participants highlighted the need for the provision of adequate resources such as textbooks and more classrooms to accommodate all the learners, more involvement of parents in their children's education to motivate the learners and curb absenteeism as well as reducing the number of teacher-learner ratio in the classrooms. Reducing the overcrowded classrooms in particular, will enable the teachers to have good classroom management and control as well as giving individual attention to slow learners who might need special attention. The participants also emphasized the need for changing the medium of instruction for junior primary grades from the local dialect, Oshikwanyama to English language as well as the use of English clubs and debate clubs as ways of enhancing learners exposures to the use of ESL and developing their communication skills. Previous studies also established that learners tend to develop faster when they are learning from each other and speaking with other learners and hence, clubs could provide a good environment for learners to learn from each other.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Government should provide adequate and relevant ESL resources to the Senior Secondary Schools in Oshana Region to enable the ESL teachers to teach the subject effectively according to the requirement of the syllabus. The provision of adequate resources might also increase learners' exposure to English language which will motivate them in learning the subject.
- More classrooms should be built to reduce overcrowded classrooms in the study area. This becomes necessary in order to implement the government's recommended teacher-

learner ratio to allow for effective ESL teaching and teachers' interaction with the learners.

- There should be regular refresher workshops and support from advisory services to equip ESL teachers in Ohangwena Region with the necessary skills needed to develop professionally as well as to teach and assess learners effectively.
- English language should be used as the medium of communication within the school premises; both inside and outside the classroom to increase learners' exposure to English language usage and building vocabulary.
- Future studies in the study area should explore the feasibility of implementing English language as the medium of instruction from zero grade.

#### **5.4 Contribution to new Knowledge**

The present study established the teaching challenges faced by the English Second Language (ESL) teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region of Namibia, which were hitherto, based on public sentiments. The major ESL teaching challenges identified in the study area include lack of resources for teaching and learning ESL, overcrowded classes, absenteeism by learners, lack of parental involvement, learner's poor attitude, lack of advisory services, lack of refresher workshop, and learners' lack of exposure to English language programs.

The study also established the strategies used by the ESL teachers to cope with their specific teaching challenges. These include motivating learners to develop interest in learning ESL, improvising and using different sources to cope with the lack of ESL teaching and learning resources, using learner-centered teaching method to make learners take responsibility for their studies, using team work to enable the teachers

share experiences and resources, making communication in ESL compulsory for the learners to help them develop their vocabulary, and using English and debate clubs to enhance learners exposure to English communication skills.

Furthermore, the study established the views of the ESL teachers on specific measures that could be implemented to minimize the ESL teaching challenges in their context. The participants highlighted the need for the provision of adequate resources, building more classrooms and reducing the number of teacher-learner ratio in the classrooms, involving parents in their children's education, organising capacity building workshops for ESL teachers, and changing the medium of instruction for junior primary grades from Oshikwanyama to English language. These are important findings that might be explored by the relevant stakeholders to address the ESL teaching challenges in the study and hence, improve the learning outcomes.

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## Appendix A: Ethical Clearance Certificate



### ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

**Ethical Clearance Reference Number:** HREC-NH/10/11/2020

**Date:** 09-11-2020

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

**Title of Project:** TEACHING CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE OHANGWENA REGION, NAMIBIA

**Nature/Level of Project:** Ph.D. (NON-HEALTH) (NQF10)

**Researcher:** ISIDOR HAUFIKU

**Student Number:** 218252296

**Faculty:** EDUCATION

**Supervisor(s):** PROF. J. ABAH & DR. P. MASHEBE

Take note of the following:

- (a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
- (b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.
- (c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.
- (d) The UREC retains the right to:
  - (i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
  - (ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

REC wishes you the best in your research.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H.L. Beyer", is written over a faint, larger signature.

Prof. H.L. Beyer, Deputy Chair: HREC-NH  
pp Chair: HREC-NH

## Appendix B: Research Permission Letter.

### CENTRE FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

University of Namibia, Private Bag 13301, Windhoek, Namibia  
340 Windume Ndenukava Avenue, Rondebosch Park  
☎ +264 61 206 3275/4662, Fax +264 61 206 3290, URL: <http://www.unam.edu.na>



09 November 2020

**Student Name** Isidor Haufiku

**Student number:** 218252296

**Programme:** PhD in Education (Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Studies)

**Approved research title:** Teaching challenges and coping strategies of English second language teachers in senior secondary schools in the Ohangwena region, Namibia

#### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby confirm that the above mentioned student is registered at the University of Namibia for the programme indicated. The proposed study met all the requirements as stipulated in the University guidelines and has been approved by the relevant committees.

Permission is hereby granted to carry out the research as described in the approved proposal.

Best Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seth J. Elseb', written over a horizontal dashed line.

**Dr. Seth J. Elseb**

**Acting Director, Centre for Postgraduate Studies**

**Tel:** +264 61 2063414

**E-mail:** [directorpgs@unam.na](mailto:directorpgs@unam.na)

A handwritten date '09/11/2020' written in black ink over a horizontal dashed line.

**Date**

## Appendix C: Director of Education Permission Letter



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA  
OHANGWENA REGIONAL COUNCIL  
**DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE**

Office of the Director  
Tel: (+264) 65 290200  
Fax: (+264) 65 290224  
Enquiries: Emilia N Johannes  
Our Ref: 12/3/10/1

Harebecke Street, Greenwell Complex Building  
Private Bag, 88005  
Ernhara

12 November 2020

To: Mr. Isdor Haufiku  
Cell: 0812793506  
Email: ihaufiku2@gmail.com

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AT THE SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OHANGWENA REGION.**

1. Receipt of your letter dated 10 November 2020 is hereby acknowledged.
2. The request has been evaluated and found to have merit.
3. Kindly be informed that permission to collect data from secondary schools in Ohangwena region for research has been granted under the following conditions and requests:
  - The data to be collected only be used for the completion of your studies.
  - Kindly liaise with the concerned Principals so as to make prior arrangements before the date of the research.
  - No other data should be collected other than the data stated in the request.
  - You may share the final report of your study with the directorate.

It is trusted that you will find this arrangement in order while wishing you all the best with your studies.

Yours Sincerely,

  
Isak Hamatwi  
Director



**Appendix D: Informed Consent Form.**

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM FOR  
TEACHERS**



**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Teaching Challenges and Coping Strategies of English Second Language Teachers in Senior Secondary School in the Ohangwena Region Namibia.**

**REFERENCE NUMBER: 218252296**

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Isidor Haufiku**

**ADDRESS: P.O .Box 1839 Ondangwa**

**CONTACT NUMBER: 0812793506**

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary**

and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part.

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee at The University of Namibia and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki, South African Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice and Namibian National Research Ethics Guidelines.

**1. What is this research study all about?**

*The study is about investigating teaching challenges and coping strategies of English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia.*

**2. Why have you been invited to participate?**

*You have been invited because the study will not be success full without your contribution.*

**3. What will your responsibilities be?**

*Your responsibility in this study is to answer question which you understand and if there are question which are not clear to you, feel free to ask the researcher for further clarity. Then possibly participate in focus group discussion and observation. You will be given three days to complete the Questionnaire and then participate in focus group discussion. The focus group discussion will take approximately 45 minutes. Therefore,*

*requesting for your permission to participate in focus groups discussion and observation for 40 minutes once you meet the selection criteria.*

**4. Will you benefit from taking part in this research?**

There is no direct benefit to participating in this study, but there may be secondary benefits that arise from the research results and recommendations.

**5. Are there any risks involved in your taking part in this research?**

There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study.

**6. Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?**

*Participation in the study is solely voluntary, and there is no financial payment to the participants.*

**7. Declaration by participant**

I..... agree to take part in a research study entitled \_\_\_\_\_

I declare that:

a) I have read or had read to me this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.

b) I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been adequately answered.

c) I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and I have not been pressurised to take part.

d) I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.

e) I agree / do not agree that the interview can be recorded. (Delete the inappropriate choice)

f) I agree / do not agree to be observed. (Delete the inappropriate choice)

g) I provide/do not provide consent for the viewing of documents. (Delete the inappropriate choice)

Signed at .....

Signature of participant

Signature of witness

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Declaration by investigator

I, .....declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to .....
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (place) ..... on (date) .....

**Is there anything else that you should know or do?**

As a participant, you have the right to withdraw at any given point in time during the study.

Otherwise, you can also contact the **Research Ethics Committee** at **+264 61 2064673**; **research@unam.na** if you have any concerns or complaints that I have not been adequately addressed.

## **Appendix E: Questionnaire**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE TEACHERS**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The researcher, Isidor Haufiku (218252296) is a Postgraduate student at the University of Namibia. I am undertaking a study for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education (Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Studies). I am currently conducting a research titled “**Teaching challenges and coping strategies of English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia**” as part of fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Doctor of Philosophy in Education (Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Studies) by the University of Namibia.

I am kindly seeking your assistance through participation in the research. All the data collected in this research will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will solely be used for the academic purposes. Any assistance you will offer is highly appreciated.

Thank you,

Isidor Haufiku (218252296)

Contact Number: 0812793506

Physical Address: Erf 2665 Atusheni Village, Eenhana

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC AND RESPONDENTS PROFILE**

**Please tick in the appropriate boxes**

Gender            Male [ ]    Female [ ]

Age

Less than 30 years	
31-40 years	
41-50 years	
51-60 years	
Above 60 years	

What is your highest level of educational qualification?

Secondary education	
Diploma level	
Bachelor's Degree	
Master's Degree	
Other (Specify)	

How long have you been teaching English Second Language at senior secondary school in Ohangwena region?

Less than 5 years	
6-10 years	
11-15 years	
15-20 years	
Above 20 years	

. Which title best describe your post

Subject Teacher	
Teacher serve as Head of Department	
Teacher serve as an administrator / Principal	

Class size (learners' population)

Below 35	
36 – 40 classes	
41- 45 classes	
Over 46	

**SECTION B:**

Assessing teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia

Please rate the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region. *(Please rate using a 5point Likert Scale, whereby 1=Disagree, 2= Strongly disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly agree)*

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Shortage of English teachers					
2 Limited access to resources attributed to the enrolments					
3 Shortage of textbooks					
4 overcrowded buildings					

5 Noisy environments					
6 Absenteeism from school by learners					
7 Minimal parental involvement in learner's learning					
8 Inadequate knowledge and skills by teachers					
9 Lack of administrative support					
10 The difficulty of balancing their teaching responsibilities and their personal lives					
11 Too much administration work by English Second Language Teachers					
12 Not enough periods allocation for English Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools					
13 Lack of refresher workshop					
14 Lack of support from advisory services at Regional					

education directorate office					
15 No balance between what is taught at University and School syllabus					
16. Teaching unmotivated learners					
17 Difficulty in sustaining discipline in the classroom					
18 Challenging relationship with colleagues and administrator					
19 High administrators' expectation					
20 Learners lack motivation from home in ESL learning					
21 Poor working condition					
22 Learner have poor attitudes towards classroom tasks					
23 Too much subject matters to teach					
24 Break time is too short					

SECTION: C

To assess coping strategies applied by the teachers of English second language.

What are the strategies used by ESL teachers in coping with challenges they encounter in order to teach English second language effectively to their learners?

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**SECTION: D**

**To identify mitigation strategies used to minimise the teaching challenges faced by English second language teachers**

1. What are the mitigation strategies that can be applied to minimise the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region?

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1. Give suggestions that you feel are necessary for the future development of quality teaching of English Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region.

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**THE END OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

## **Appendix F: Focus Group Discussion Guide**

### **Research Title: Teaching challenges and coping strategies of English second language Teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia**

The researcher will introduce himself and highlight the purpose of the gathering and inform the participants that for the purpose of smooth discussion, the voice responses will be recorded. Furthermore, the researcher will respond to any questions that may arise to the satisfaction of the participants and thereafter, commence the discussion. The researcher will record the responses provided by respondents.

1. How will you describe the quality of teaching of the English Second Language in your school?

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2. How will you describe the level of teachers' commitment to the teaching of English Second Language in your school?

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3. How will you describe the availability and usefulness of the resources for teaching and learning of English Second Language in your school?

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4. What are the teaching challenges you face as an English Second Language teacher in a senior secondary school in the Ohangwena region?

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5. Given the above challenges, what strategies did you use to cope with them in order to teach English second language effectively to your learners?

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6. Do the English Second Language teachers' relationship with learners influence the learners' understanding of the concepts taught in English second language quickly? Please elaborate.

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7. Do you think ESL teacher's years of teaching experiences is important in delivering English lessons? Please elaborate

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8. Considering the effect of mother tongue in Ohangwena Region in particular, do you think the teacher could translate English into other languages well understood by the learners to help them (learners) better understand the English concepts being taught?

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9. What do you think could be helpful as measures to minimise the teaching challenges faced by English Second Language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region?

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10. Give suggestions that you feel are necessary for the future development of quality teaching of English Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena region.

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**END OF THE DISCUSSION**

## APPENDIX G: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE GUIDE

### Teaching challenges and coping strategies of English second language teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia

	<b>OBSERVANT TO OBSERVE</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>
1	Teacher is well experienced in delivering English lessons			
2	Teacher shared learning materials with learners			
3	The teacher translates English into other languages well understood by learners			
4	The teacher is well committed			
5	Teacher provides immediate feedback to learners when they do well, for example, by congratulating them.			
6	Teacher gives learners time to think about the question before answering them.			
7	Learners pay attention and listen carefully to the teacher			

8	The teaching/Learning environment is conducive (clean and free from noise etc.)			
9	The teacher has all necessary resources required for English lessons (eg textbooks, chalks, pens etc.)			
10	The learners are always on time for the lesson			
11	The learners attend English Second Language regularly			
12	Teacher moves around in the classroom to ensure each learner is concentrating			
13	The teachers learners ration in English classroom is per National standards			
14	The school has relevant Library resources to support efficient teaching and learning English Second Language			
15	The teacher is qualified to teach English Second Language			
16	Each learner has his/her own English textbook			

17	Teacher uses technological tool and resources for teaching			
18	Too many learners in one classroom			
19	Noisy environment			
20	Learners are indiscipline, disrupt the lesson			
21	Break time is too short			
22	No teamwork among English Second Language teachers			
23	Not enough teaching resources			
24	Unmotivated learners			

**END OF OBSERVATION GUIDE**