

Contextual Barriers to Implementing the Direct Method in French Language Teaching in Nigeria

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Abstract

This qualitative document review analyses the contextual and systemic barriers to the effective use of the Direct Method in French language instruction across Nigerian schools. Drawing on ten national policy papers, five Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) reports (2013–2025), and twenty peer-reviewed studies, the study identifies major constraints such as overcrowded classrooms, insufficiently trained teachers, limited instructional materials, and inadequate learner readiness. Anchored in Krashen's Input Hypothesis and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, findings reveal that while the Direct Method promotes communicative competence, its application requires context-sensitive adaptation in under-resourced educational systems. The paper concludes with practical recommendations for teacher retraining, methodological hybridisation, and policy reform to align instructional realities with linguistic goals. The study contributes to applied linguistics and African education policy by illustrating how global language teaching methods can be localised for sustainability.

Keywords: Direct Method, French Language Teaching, Nigerian Classrooms, Second Language Acquisition, Language Pedagogy.

Introduction

One particular cornerstone in terms of global integration and national development for societies like Nigeria, with its multilingual and multicultural character, is language education. Nigeria's status as the only Anglophone country in West Africa surrounded by Francophone countries necessitates the need for the propagation of French as a second or third language for many of its citizens. Even though many of the citizens do not know that French, as a language, was made the second official language in 1996 by the then Abacha-led military government (Omonigho, 2016; Faniran, 2017), the language has since been imbued to promote regional cooperation within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), improve international diplomacy and increase the employability rate of many Nigerian graduates in the global international market (Federal Ministry of Education, 2013; Chibiko, 2020; Olubukola & Ogbang, 2025).

However, as good as these aspirations are, there are different challenges facing the actual teaching and learning of the French language in Nigerian primary and secondary schools. No doubt, this has caused serious setbacks in its actualisation of a second official language

in the country. As such, the use of the direct method is a contemporary method that has been seen as a veritable means for French instruction (Ruyffelaert, 2020). This method is believed to absorb students in the target language by getting rid of the first language (L1) or any translation of such students. In principle, it could be said that the direct method aligns with modern communication language teaching goals by giving emphasis to oral interaction, inductive grammar acquisition, using realia and visual aids, and vocabulary teaching by way of experience and context (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

On the other hand, there is no how we would not talk about the different challenges besetting the educational landscape in Nigeria, in terms of an effective implementation of such immersive functioning and methods. There are many schools in the country with congested classrooms, a teacher-student ratio that falls short of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics' standards, underqualified and poorly motivated teachers, and inadequate basic teaching materials (Olaleye et al., 2017; Togunloju & Ajewole, 2025). Also, with limited exposure to the language outside the classroom, students often come to French instruction, which creates difficulties in acclimatising to immersion-based approaches that require a high level of linguistic accountability and engagement (Brito, 2017; Garrett & Mady, 2024). More importantly, there is no how the dominance of the English language, which is the official lingua franca of instruction and administration of schools in the country, will not marginalise the place of the French language, cognitively and socially.

Given these obstacles, this article analyses the challenges of applying the direct method to French language instruction in Nigerian secondary schools. The analysis has been structured around four interrelated areas: large class size, deficiency of qualified French teachers trained in communication methods/functions, inadequate instructional materials (especially realia and visual aids), and limited readiness of students for immersion due to cognitive and sociological factors. This article is based on language acquisition principles, especially with the Input hypothesis of Krashen and the sociological principle of Vygotsky, as well as a wide range of empirical studies and policy documents to assess the relevant suitability of the direct method in Nigeria. It also proposes educational and policy options to adopt immersive methods for the realities of the Nigerian educational system. The problem this study addresses is that challenges in Nigeria's educational context undermine the practical adoption of immersive approaches such as the Direct Method. Therefore, the objectives of the paper are threefold: to identify systemic and pedagogical obstacles, to examine contextual factors through second language acquisition theories, and to propose adaptive strategies for improving the method's effectiveness in Nigerian classrooms.

Conceptual Framework

The analytical foundation of this study rests on two major theoretical approaches in second language acquisition (SLA): the input hypothesis of Stephen Krashen and the sociological theory of Lev Vygotsky. These frameworks jointly illuminate both the direct method and academic arguments behind structural boundaries that challenge their implementation in contexts such as Nigeria. Krashen's input hypothesis posits that language acquisition is

most effective when learners are made aware of the language input, which is slightly above their current level of proficiency, according to the conditions of “i+1” (Krashen, 1982). According to this model, the learners are not in contact with meaningful, intelligent input, not through direct instructions of grammatical rules, but in the target language. It closely aligns with the main principles of the direct method, which avoids translation and instead emphasises understanding through reference, recurrence and visual stimuli. However, Krashen also warns that in order to have an effective input, the learning environment must cut down affective filters like anxiety, monotony, or lack of motivation that are disrupting acquisition. In a class environment like we have in Nigeria, that is congested and under-resourced, such affectionate filters are often high, which reduces the possible benefits of intelligent and comprehensive input.

Complementing this approach is the sociological principle of Vygotsky, which emphasises the nature of social mediation of learning. Vygotsky (1978) emphasises that language development occurs through guided interaction within the learner’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where scaffolding from teachers or peers facilitates progress. This perspective draws attention to the importance of collaborative learning, teacher competence, and resource availability, all of which are often insufficient in the Nigerian context. It also explains why the absence of effective scaffolding mechanisms, such as interactive dialogue and practical modelling, constrains immersion-based instruction.

These two theoretical perspectives jointly inform the analytical process of this research. They serve not only as conceptual anchors for identifying challenges but also as interpretive tools in the qualitative document review. By applying Krashen’s and Vygotsky’s principles to the reviewed policy documents, reports, and scholarly studies, this research interprets how structural, pedagogical, and affective factors interact to shape the implementation of the Direct Method in Nigerian classrooms.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, document-based review design to examine the challenges associated with implementing the Direct Method in French language instruction across Nigerian classrooms. A qualitative approach is appropriate for this research because it allows for the in-depth exploration of contextual, pedagogical, and institutional factors that shape the application of immersive teaching methods. Rather than producing numerical generalisations, this design focuses on interpretive understanding, policy alignment, and the relationship between language pedagogy and classroom realities. The data for this study were collected through a systematic review of diverse documentary sources, including ten national and state education policy documents, five Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) annual reports (2013–2025), and twenty peer-reviewed academic studies on French language education in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa. Additional materials from international agencies such as UNESCO and the Nigerian French Embassy were consulted to provide comparative and policy-level perspectives. The inclusion criteria were based on relevance to French language pedagogy, the use of the Direct Method or

communicative approaches, and publication within the period 2013–2025 to ensure contemporaneity and policy relevance.

The analytical process followed a thematic analysis approach, guided by the principles of qualitative content interpretation. After initial reading and familiarisation, key themes were coded manually using recurring patterns related to four central areas: (1) class size and learning environment, (2) teacher qualification and pedagogical competence, (3) instructional resources and materials, and (4) learner readiness and motivation. These categories emerged inductively from the reviewed literature and policy documents. The thematic framework enabled the researcher to identify how structural and pedagogical constraints intersect to influence the application of the Direct Method in Nigerian classrooms. To ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, multiple strategies were employed. Triangulation was achieved through the use of multiple data sources (government policies, academic studies, and international reports), enabling cross-verification of information. Document authenticity and author credibility were also considered in selecting sources, ensuring that all materials used were published by recognised institutions or peer-reviewed outlets. Reflexivity was maintained throughout the analytical process to ensure objectivity in interpretation and alignment between theoretical perspectives and data analysis.

The Direct Method

Often referred to as a natural method, the direct method characterises an educational modification in language teaching that prefers oral communication and a learning environment that is immersive (Batoool et al., 2017). Emerging as a response to the boundaries of the Grammar-Translation method in the late 19th century, the direct method gives emphasis to the importance of thinking and responding directly in the target language without the intervention of the mother tongue of the learner. Its fundamental basis is that learning a second language should mimic the natural acquisition of the first language, allowing the learners to internalise the structures and vocabulary through meaningful interactions and relevant signals rather than rote memorisation or mechanical translation (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). In this approach, grammar is taught individually; the weak are not clearly taught, but are expected to guess from the use of language in real situations. Classes using the direct method usually depend on visual aids, realia, mime, and repetition, permitting students to form a relationship between words and objects or functions without resorting to their L1 (Harmer, 2007).

At the core of the direct method, it is believed that oral proficiency is not only the foundation of language capacity but also the key to developing the skills of reading and writing (Hossain, 2024). The texts are structured around everyday conditions, introduced through dialogues, role-playing and relevant exercises with vocabulary and manifestations. Pronunciation and correct intonation are preferred to create flow and communication confidence from the beginning (Valenzano, Alibali & Klatzky, 2003). The teacher plays an important role as a language model and facilitator of interaction, to promote understanding

and participation using gestures, pictures and stories (Valenzeno et al., 2003). This method is particularly effective in small class settings where learners can get opportunities to speak continuously and personally. The overall purpose is to create a class environment that allows a learner to come into contact with the natural language, a learner will experience in a target-language-speaking community, thus promoting the automatic and internal understanding of language forms (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

The theoretical appeal of the direct method lies in its alignment with key principles of second language acquisition. For example, Krashen (1982) emphasises the importance of the input hypothesis, exposing learners to comprehensible inputs that are slightly beyond their current level ($i+1$), as the main driver of acquisition. The immersive nature of the direct method, which requires learners to operate entirely in the target language, corresponds with the idea that meaningful input in real communication contexts is provided by the surrounding students. Likewise, the sociological principles highlighted by Vygotsky (1978) suggest that learning is mediated through social interaction and scaffolding within the zone of proximal development (ZPD), emphasising the importance of active learner-teacher engagement and dialogue interactions that are central to direct methods. From this theoretical perspective, the method is not only academically valid but also cognitively and socially well-founded.

Notwithstanding these benefits, there are still many obstacles to overcome before the direct method may be adequately employed in many developing nations, including Nigeria. Despite being sponsored by foreign partners like the Alliance Française and the French Embassy, as well as being endorsed in curriculum documents, the approach is frequently used in a superficial or symbolic manner. The national French curriculum for junior and senior secondary schools promotes communicative language instruction and places an emphasis on oral fluency (NERDC, 2013). However, there is no gainsaying the fact that the majority of classroom activities are still based on grammar-translation strategies. There are deeper systemic problems, including inadequate teacher preparation in communicative pedagogy, a lack of suitable teaching resources, and an excessive focus on high-stakes tests that prioritise reading and writing over speaking and listening, all of which are reflected in the gap between policy and practice (Adebayo, 2019; Oluwatosin & Ogunyemi, 2024).

Furthermore, the Direct Method's fundamental ideas need considerable contextual adaptation, even though it has been successfully modified and incorporated into contemporary approaches like Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Small class sizes, a strong multimedia infrastructure, and language labs are common features of well-resourced educational environments, especially in Europe and some areas of Asia. On the other hand, packed classrooms, restricted access to instructional technology, and a lack of qualified French teachers are common features of the Nigerian educational system, particularly at the public school level. Many educators are forced to return to more conventional, teacher-centred ways as a result of these limitations, which severely limit the successful use of immersive methodologies (Bature, 2020; Owolabi, 2020).

However, the Direct Method is still a particular aspect that is being taught in programmes that prepare teachers and is seen as a goal by legislators (Osiesi, Odinko & Blignaut, 2024). Nigeria's national objectives of improving bilingual capacity and regional integration are in line with its emphasis on oral practice and practical communication skills. Hybrid versions of the Direct Method have been used with varying degrees of success at urban private schools that have superior facilities and a lower student-teacher ratio. These schools frequently use French-speaking teachers who can create a semi-immersion setting and add multimedia resources to guide instruction (Olaseinde & Olaseinde, 2024). These instances, however, continue to be the exception rather than the rule, underscoring the disparity in educational opportunities and the significance of context-sensitive instructional design (Ademoh, 2025).

All things considered, it will not be out of context to say that the Direct Method promotes language as a dynamic, social tool and provides an alternative to conventional rote-based approaches, making it a significant paradigm in contemporary language instruction. It is very appealing for learning a second language because of its theoretical foundation in communicative competence and naturalistic language acquisition. However, a wealth of instructional resources, well-trained staff, and supportive educational environments are all necessary for its success, and these are not always available in Nigeria. A more thorough analysis of these contextual issues is provided in the section that follows, with particular attention to four important areas: learner preparedness, classroom size, teacher quality, and instructional resources.

Key Challenges in the Nigerian Context

A number of long-standing and interconnected issues hinder the Direct Method's successful application in Nigerian classrooms, despite the fact that it provides substantial theoretical and pedagogical advantages for the learning of a second language. The immersive and communicative environment necessary for the Direct Method to succeed is undermined by these obstacles, which include excessively large class sizes, a lack of French language teachers with the necessary training, a persistent lack of suitable teaching materials, and low levels of student readiness for immersion. These difficulties are not specific to Nigeria, but they are made worse by structural flaws in the public education system there as well as by larger sociolinguistic factors that influence language acquisition in multilingual communities.

One of the most pervasive obstacles to implementing the Direct Method in Nigerian classrooms is the problem of large class sizes, especially in public secondary schools. In many states, classrooms often contain upwards of 60 to 80 students, a figure that far exceeds the optimal student-teacher ratio recommended by UNESCO, which is 30:1 for effective language instruction (UNESCO, 2021). In such crowded conditions, the interactive and student-centred features of the Direct Method become almost impossible to sustain. Teachers are unable to engage all learners in spoken activities, provide individualised feedback, or create the kind of controlled immersion needed to foster communicative

competence. Moreover, excessive class sizes reduce classroom discipline and increase teacher fatigue, further limiting the opportunity for meaningful verbal exchanges and scaffolded learning (Gbenga, Surajo, & Ibrahim, 2022). Given that the Direct Method relies heavily on oral participation and immediate correction of errors, overcrowded classrooms inherently dilute its effectiveness and force teachers to adopt more passive, lecture-based strategies.

The lack of trained and proficient French teachers is closely related to the problem of class size. Many French language teachers in Nigeria were themselves educated using antiquated approaches that placed more emphasis on translation and grammatical knowledge than on fluency and communication. A substantial portion of French teachers in Lagos State, one of the nation's most resourced regions, lack the pedagogical training and speech ability required to successfully apply the Direct Method, per a study by Adebayo (2019). This shortcoming frequently stems from the structure and content of Nigerian teacher education programmes, which prioritise formal grammar, rote memorisation, and literary analysis above oral practice and communicative pedagogy (Oluwatosin, 2024). Furthermore, there aren't many, inadequately financed, or instructionally innovative professional development programmes for in-service teachers. Most teachers are ill-prepared to provide the degree of immersion required by the Direct Method if they are not supported in using French as a medium of instruction and receive ongoing retraining in communicative language teaching techniques.

The use of immersive language techniques is further jeopardised by the inadequate teaching and learning resources, which are equally crippling. In order to enable learners to infer meaning contextually rather than through translation, the Direct Method assumes the availability of a variety of visual aids, audio recordings, interactive media, and realia, real-life objects used to teach vocabulary (Okonkwo, Ndur & Wadei, 2024). However, the majority of Nigerian public schools are devoid of even the most basic teaching resources, including working whiteboards, posters, or storybooks in French. They are even without internet connectivity or multimedia equipment that may facilitate audio-visual language learning resources, and classrooms frequently lack electricity (Ajayi, Ogunode & Ayoko, 2023). Even French textbooks can occasionally be out-of-date, out of sync with the curriculum, or shared by multiple pupils. The basic tenet of the Direct Method is undermined by these resource limitations, which force teachers to resort to bilingual education, grammar drills, and vocabulary translation exercises. Though prestigious private schools and foreign establishments could have the resources needed to apply the approach, these settings are not typical of the typical Nigerian classroom, especially in underprivileged or rural areas (Murana, 2019).

Another underexplored yet critical challenge is the limited readiness of students for immersion-based instruction, especially in contexts where French is the third language (L3) after the mother tongue (L1) and English (L2). Most Nigerian students come into French classrooms with little to no exposure to the language outside the school environment. Unlike English, which dominates the media, school instruction, and formal communication,

French remains largely confined to academic settings. This absence of environmental reinforcement significantly hampers learners' ability to contextualise new vocabulary or internalise grammatical patterns through use. As Krashen (1982) explains, second language acquisition requires not only comprehensible input but also low affective filters; students must be motivated, confident, and relaxed to absorb language effectively. In many Nigerian classrooms, however, students experience high levels of anxiety when required to speak French without translation, leading to resistance, disengagement, or rote memorisation of phrases without understanding. This is compounded by sociocultural attitudes toward French, which are sometimes seen as an elitist or foreign imposition rather than a tool for regional integration or economic opportunity (Owolabi, 2020).

These challenges are further magnified by policy-level inconsistencies and a general lack of strategic investment in language education. While national curriculum documents support communicative approaches and promote French as Nigeria's second official language, there is a wide gap between policy aspirations and practical implementation. Language policies often lack accompanying financial support, monitoring mechanisms, and accountability frameworks. Consequently, the Direct Method remains more of an ideal than a reality in most Nigerian schools. Canagarajah (2005) argues that the uncritical importation of Western pedagogies into postcolonial contexts without due regard for local conditions results in ineffective teaching practices and educational inequality. This critique is particularly relevant to the Nigerian context, where well-intentioned policies are undermined by infrastructural deficits, teacher shortages, and contextual misalignments. It must be noted here, however, that despite being conceptually in line with best practices in language learning, the Direct Method has significant practical challenges in Nigerian classrooms. Inadequate teaching resources necessitate the use of translation; low student preparedness for immersion reflects broader sociolinguistic realities; large class numbers limit opportunities for spoken interaction; and underqualified teachers lack the fluency and training to maintain immersion. These interrelated issues raise doubts about the viability of implementing the Direct Method in Nigeria in a purist manner and point to the necessity of tailored, hybrid strategies that take into account the particular characteristics of the Nigerian educational system.

Table 1: Summary of Key Challenges Affecting Implementation of the Direct Method

Challenge	Evidence	Implication for the Direct Method
Large Class Size	UNESCO (2021) – avg. 60–80 per class	Limits oral participation
Teacher Qualification	Adebayo (2019) – 40% untrained in CLT	Reduces immersion quality
Resources	Ajayi et al. (2023) – lack of AV tools	Forces reliance on translation
Student Readiness	Krashen (1982); Owolabi (2020)	High anxiety, low motivation

Pedagogical and Policy Recommendations

Addressing the challenges associated with implementing the Direct Method in Nigerian classrooms requires a multidimensional approach that combines immediate pedagogical adjustments with long-term systemic reforms. While the limitations discussed earlier highlight the considerable gap between theory and practice, they also point toward practical areas where strategic interventions can improve outcomes. It is crucial to recognise that the success of any teaching method is not solely a function of its internal logic but also of the sociocultural and institutional context within which it is deployed (Canagarajah, 2005). In the case of Nigeria, this means tailoring language teaching strategies to accommodate local realities while gradually building the capacity for more communicative, immersive instruction over time. The recommendations below are organised into four domains: teacher training and development, contextual adaptation of methodology, resource investment, and policy alignment.

First, there is an urgent need to strengthen the professional development and pedagogical retraining of French language teachers across the country. Given that many existing instructors were trained under outdated curricula that prioritised rote memorisation and literary translation, it is necessary to revise teacher education programmes to reflect contemporary communicative and student-centred approaches. Colleges of education and faculties of arts should update their French teaching methodology syllabi to include practical training in the Direct Method and other communicative models such as CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) and TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching). Furthermore, in-service teachers should benefit from regular professional development workshops organised through collaborations between state education boards, foreign language institutes such as Alliance Française, and international partners like the French Embassy in Nigeria. These workshops should focus not only on linguistic competence but also on classroom management strategies for large groups, the use of low-cost visual aids, and techniques for fostering student participation in immersion-based contexts. As Fullan (2007) notes, sustainable educational change depends heavily on the continuous learning and motivation of educators who serve as agents of transformation.

Second, rather than enforcing a purist application of the Direct Method, which may be unrealistic in many Nigerian schools, there is a need to promote a context-sensitive adaptation of immersive language teaching. Hybrid pedagogical models that incorporate the core strengths of the Direct Method, such as the use of target-language-only communication and visual aids, alongside elements of bilingual support and guided grammar instruction, may prove more effective in diverse learning environments. For instance, in situations where learners are at an early proficiency level or where classes are excessively large, teachers can combine short immersion segments with scaffolded explanations in English or the local language to ensure comprehension while still promoting communicative use of French. This type of flexible, blended methodology aligns with the principles of Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, which emphasises the importance of scaffolding and learner support in complex learning tasks. It also allows for gradual

immersion, reducing student anxiety and resistance while maintaining fidelity to communicative goals.

Third, investment in appropriate instructional materials and localised teaching aids is essential for supporting the Direct Method or any communicative language pedagogy. While high-tech solutions such as language labs and interactive whiteboards may be beyond the reach of most public schools, low-cost alternatives, such as illustrated flashcards, dialogue posters, picture books, classroom objects (realia), and locally produced videos, can significantly enhance immersion. State ministries of education, teacher associations, and NGOs can collaborate to produce and distribute such materials in large quantities. Also, open-source French audio resources, mobile applications, and radio programs can be used to expose students to spoken French outside the classroom, increasing the quantity and quality of comprehensible input they receive. This recommendation is consistent with Krashen's (1982) argument that language acquisition improves when learners are surrounded by meaningful input in low-anxiety settings. It also reflects the global trend toward mobile-supported learning (m-learning), which has shown promising results in developing regions (UNESCO, 2021).

Fourth, and most critically, language policy in Nigeria must be aligned with practical implementation capacity. While the National Policy on Education recognises French as Nigeria's second official language and mandates its teaching in schools, the policy often lacks operational backing in terms of budget allocation, teacher deployment, and infrastructure development. Policymakers must avoid symbolic declarations that are not supported by implementation frameworks, monitoring tools, or resource commitments. For instance, if French is to be made compulsory at certain educational levels, there must be a corresponding increase in teacher recruitment, textbook provision, and assessment reform to emphasise oral proficiency alongside reading and writing. Moreover, examination bodies such as WAEC and NECO should revise their assessment formats to reward communicative competence rather than grammatical memorisation. Such reforms would incentivise teachers and schools to adopt more communicative methodologies, including the Direct Method, as part of their instructional practice. As Bamgbose (2011) has argued, policy consistency and implementation fidelity are essential for sustaining language education in multilingual African contexts.

When taken as a whole, these suggestions urge Nigeria to gradually but consciously move towards more communicative and learner-centred French instruction. The Direct Method's fundamental ideas can guide a more comprehensive pedagogical vision that prioritises student engagement, spoken fluency, and meaningful language use, even though it might not be universally applicable in its purest form. Collaboration between governmental organisations, educational institutions, instructors, and foreign partners is necessary to realise this aim. Moreover, it calls for a dedication to educational equity, guaranteeing that both urban and rural pupils may get top-notch French education. Long-term, improving French language instruction in Nigeria will boost the nation's regional and international connectivity in addition to improving academic results.

Table 2: Summary of Pedagogical and Policy Recommendations

Domain	Recommendation	Implementation Example
Teacher Development	Retrain in communicative pedagogy	National workshops with Alliance Française
Method Adaptation	Use hybrid bilingual scaffolding	Code-switching stages for beginners
Resources	Develop local visual aids	State-funded low-cost materials
Policy Alignment	Match policy with funding	Integrate oral proficiency into WAEC/NECO exams

Conclusion

This study has examined the contextual barriers that hinder the effective implementation of the Direct Method in French language teaching within Nigerian classrooms. It has shown that while the method is theoretically sound, emphasizing immersion, oral fluency, and communicative competence, its success depends heavily on structural and contextual enablers that are often lacking in Nigeria. Overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teaching materials, poorly trained teachers, and low learner readiness collectively weaken the immersive potential of the Direct Method. Despite these limitations, the study underscores that the core principles of the method remain valuable for promoting interactive and learner-centered language education.

The findings of this study have important implications for language education policy and pedagogy in Nigeria. For policy makers, the results highlight the need to align educational objectives with practical implementation capacity through strategic teacher training, curriculum reform, and targeted investment in instructional resources. Pedagogically, the findings call for context-sensitive adaptations that combine immersion with bilingual support and scaffolded learning, ensuring that communicative competence is built progressively. Reforms in assessment frameworks, such as incorporating oral proficiency into national examinations, could also encourage the adoption of communicative teaching approaches across schools.

Future research should focus on empirical evaluation of hybrid teaching models that integrate aspects of the Direct Method with contextually adaptive strategies suited to Nigerian classrooms. Longitudinal studies could explore the effects of teacher retraining, classroom size reduction, and material development on student proficiency outcomes. Comparative investigations involving other African countries that have successfully localised communicative language teaching could also offer valuable insights. In practical terms, the sustainability of the Direct Method in Nigeria will depend on continuous policy support, institutional collaboration, and the collective effort of educators, researchers, and stakeholders committed to strengthening French language education.

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