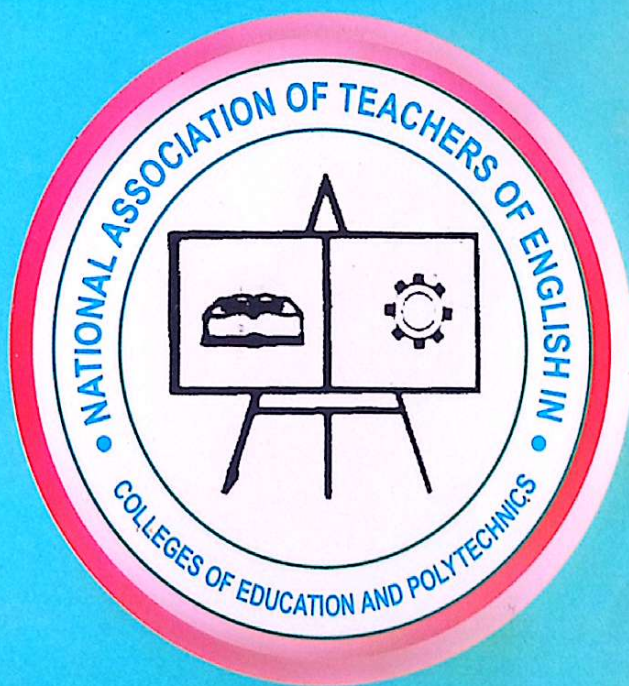


NJECS

ISSN 1118 - 115X

NATECEP JOURNAL OF ENGLISH AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES

VOL. 10 - SEPTEMBER, 2014.



**A Publication of
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS
OF ENGLISH IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION
AND POLYTECHNICS (NATECEP)**

**NATECEP JOURNAL OF ENGLISH
AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

VOLUME 10

SEPTEMBER, 2014

A Publication of

The National Association of Teachers of English

in Colleges of Education and Polytechnics ISSN: 1118-115X

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

The National Association of Teachers of English in Colleges of Education and Polytechnics (NATECEP), Publishers of this journal reserves all rights. No part(s) of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means - electronics, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission of the publishers except for any fair dealing for purpose of private criticism or review.

Published by:

**National Association of Teachers of English in
Colleges of Education and Polytechnics,
C/o Department of English,
Nuhu Bamali Polytechnic,
Zaria,
Kaduna State, Nigeria.**

Designed and Printed in Nigeria by:

**Bamise Printing Press
No 73, Ameh Oboni Street,
Sabongari Idah, Kogi State.**



EDITORIAL BOARD

Dr. Baba D. Danjuma
Donne Chikere
Mrs. Ojogan Izehiese

Editor-in-Chief
Deputy Editor-in-Chief
Review Editor /Board Secretary

EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS

Prof. Adebayo Joshua
Prof. Gbenga Ibiloye
B.I. C.Utuagha

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
Federal University, Lokoja
Federal Polytechnic, Idah

Editorial

"Tribe and Tongue may differ in brotherhood we stand". What language has united, let no diversity put asunder. The above may be said to be a clarion call on all Nigerians especially in the present state of anomy, anarchy, impasse, quagmire or better still imbroglio.

Nigerians are very insecure, poor, destitudinal and deliquential. Political instability, religious rivalry, weak economy, stained relationships, and numerous others have made Nigerians to , scorn, mourn, weep and cry. One could hear of wailing and the sight of mass graves are no more news.

In the presence of the above scenario, the vital place of language, literature and communication becomes paramount. To ensure a peaceful state and engineer national development, language must be appropriately employed and literature becomes the vehicle.

Boko Haram insurgency has become the order of the day. Ebola Virus has taken over and Nigerians are confused. To nip these, effective communication is the key. The current mass failure in English Language in public examinations speaks volume. Poor communication always reflected in communication gaps and break downs can be held accountable. Therefore, teachers of language must rise up to the occasion. They must teach effectively and ensure that what is said is what is meant and vice versa.

This edition of NJECS captures this goal and has showcased some scholarly articles very classical and down to earth. The topics are myriad as they permeate facets of society that could transform Nigeria.

We invite articles that are well researched and contributory in disseminating the desired knowledge that will help place Nigeria on the part of national security consciousness, peace and development.

Errors in this edition are regretted and we promise a better outing in the next edition.

Baba, D. Danjuma Ph D.
Editor-in-chief

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP) AS A PANACEA FOR NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION: THE CASE OF THE POLYTECHNICS

*Helen V. B. Jidanke, Angela N. Fasuba & Angelina N. Fajin
Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi, Plateau State.*

Abstract

Language as a unique human characteristic is central in any form of national transformation. Nigeria has come up with a long term developmental plan known as Vision 2020:20, meant to transform the country's socio-economic landscape to the 20 league of developed nations by the year 2020. It is therefore the main focus of the present administration. Technology development is an essential ingredient of national transformation, and to develop technologically requires the use of specialized language, hence the centrality of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). This paper examined the place of ESP in the 'Use of English' curriculum of the polytechnics in Nigeria, the training institutions for technical manpower. Adopting a theoretical research approach, using an evaluative check-list, the paper evaluated the 'Use of English' course outlines for ND and HND programmes. The findings revealed that the course outlines did not make specific provision for ESP, with the implication that ESP is not a specific approach to language teaching at all levels of the Polytechnic programme. This has an implication for human capital development. Recommendations were consequently made to remedy the situation, if Nigeria were to produce a man-power relevant to national transformation. One of such recommendations was that ESP should be an integral part of the 'Use of English' curriculum for polytechnics and even the General English course of the universities.

Introduction

Language as a medium of communication is not just incidental to being human; it is at the very core of human existence. Of all creatures only the human being can use language to think abstractly name things, ask questions, agree, deny, argue, discuss, express opinion, proclaim, etc. "Whatever else people may do when they come together whether they play, fight, make love, or make automobiles they talk. The possession of language, more than any other attribute, distinguishes humans from any other animal" (Fromkin and Rodman, 1978:1). Language therefore is a unique human characteristic.

The English language has assumed a world status whereby in many countries it

either serves as a mother-tongue, lingua - franca, second language or foreign language, which means the human activities enumerated above are carried out in the English language where it is spoken; even when nations come together the English language is prominent.

In Nigeria the English language does not only assume the status of a second language but it is also the official language as well as the language of wider communication, in view of our multi-lingual nature. It is the sole medium of education beyond the first few years of primary school, the main language of politics, government (administration and legislature), administration of enterprises (both public and private), the law courts, transportation, building and vocational occupations, a vehicle for science and technology, language of journalism and broadcasting, of international communication, etc. The English language therefore occupies a privileged position in Nigeria, not only serving the purposes enumerated above but has also become a language of prestige in that competence and performance in the English language has become synonymous with rise in the social ladder.

Since the English Language is fast assuming a global role as a language of unification, for Nigeria to take her position among nations, the use English language as a medium of communication is not negotiable. This underscores the importance of English for specific purposes (subsequently referred to as ESP,) as a prominent tool in realizing national transformation.

The importance of ESP cannot be overemphasized, especially in the nation's polytechnic educational system in view of the fact that it is the products of the system (among others) that occupy positions in the mainstream of the economy. To what extent does ESP feature in our national language curricula in general and of the polytechnics in particular? How do these curricula prepare their beneficiaries language-wise to handle the present challenges of technology development in pursuance of national transformation? The development of technology, be it science and technology, communication technology or other technologies is fundamental to the nation's attainment of the much desired national transformation. Development of technology requires the use of the language of the relevant technology. This calls for training in specialized language usage.

The main objective of this paper is to stress the importance of ESP in the Polytechnics as institutions of technology development, assess its place in the Polytechnic curriculum and draw implication(s) of its sufficiency or deficiency on the educational system as it affects technology development toward national transformation. Specifically the paper will examine the inclusion of ESP at the ND (National Diploma) and the HND (Higher National Diploma) levels of the Polytechnics 'Use of English' course outlines. The choice of these levels is informed by the vital positions they occupy in preparing the nation's manpower.

The findings will be of great implication to policy makers, language curriculum developers (especially NBTE,) teachers / lecturers of the English Language in the Polytechnics and other beneficiaries, as well as add to existing literature on English Language teaching.

The paper is therefore divided into five sections: following this introduction are the conceptual issues/literature review, methodology, discussion of results, conclusion and recommendations.

Conceptual Framework/Literature Review

The Development of English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

The phenomenon of ESP emerged between the early 1960s to the 1970s after the Second World War, which, according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) in Gatehouse (2009), brought with it an age of enormous and unprecedented expansion in scientific, technical and economic activity on an international scale for various reasons, most notably the economic power of the United State in the post-war world, the role (of international language) fell to English. In addition, the oil crisis of the early 1970s resulted in Western money and knowledge flowing into the oil rich countries; the language of this knowledge became English.

The second key reason Gatehouse cites as responsible for the tremendous impact on the emergence of ESP is a revolution in linguistics whereby focus began to shift from traditional linguistics which set out to describe the features of language, to more revolution in linguistics with a focus on the ways language is used in real communication. The idea was taken further to propound that if language in different situations varies, then tailoring language institutions to meet the needs of learners in specific contexts is possible. This gave rise to the attempts (right from the early 1960s to the late 1970s) to describe English for Science and Technology (EST. The third reason was psychological. Rather than focus on method of language delivery, more attention was given to the ways in which learners acquire language and the differences in the ways language was acquired (learner centred). So the needs of the learner became equally important as the methods employed to disseminate linguistic knowledge. This led to the designing of specific courses to better meet the individual needs.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987:6) succinctly put it:

But as English became the accepted international language of technology and commerce, it created a new generation of learners who knew specifically why they were learning a language—businessmen and women who wanted to sell their products, mechanics who had to read

instruction Manuals, doctors who needed to keep up with developments in their field and a whole range of students whose course of study included textbooks and journals only available in English...

To this day, the catchword in ESP circles is "learner centred or learning-centred" Hutchinson and Waters concluded. ESP is therefore now a new innovation in language teaching/learning though it has been in use for more than three decades. The question is, how much has the English language acquisition process in Nigeria imbibed the rudiments of ESP? How much is the educational system prepared for it even right now?

What is ESP?

Strevens (1978) regards ESP as the notion that the teaching of a language can, with advantage be deliberately matched to the specific needs and purposes of the learner. In order to arrive at a workable definition of ESP, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) modified Streven's definition of ESP to two characteristics.

The first is what they termed "absolute characteristics". Under this, ESP is seen as consisting of English language teaching that is designed to meet specific needs of the learner. It should also be related in content such that themes and topics reflect the particular discipline, occupation or activities. This is in contrast with general English which embodies general content.

The second is the "variable characteristic" which considers ESP as, but not restricted to language skills to be learnt, e.g. reading only, writing only, etc. ESP here is taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

A broader definition of ESP, theorized by Hutchinson and Waters (1987 : 19) says, "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reasons for learning". Learners learn in order to fit into and be productive in different segments of the society's economic, social and other needs. Language mastery prepares them for such tasks and ESP plays a great role.

To this effect Carter (1983) has identified three types of ESP:

- i. English as a restricted language.
- ii. English for academic and occupational purposes, and
- iii. English with specific topics.

ESP therefore is designed for intermediate or advanced learners, either at tertiary level education or professional/occupational work situation, using a different methodology from that of General English. It could however be learnt at Secondary School level and because most ESP courses assume some basic

knowledge of the language system, it can also be used with beginners.

The scope of this paper will not permit detailed discussion on these different segments of ESP but they are all central to the issue at stake ESP as a springboard to meeting the challenges of technology development in the realization of national transformation.

ESP and the Language Curriculum

Cummins (1979) in Gatehouse (2009) theorized a dichotomy between basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). While the former refers to the language skills used in everyday informal language as used with friends, family, co-workers, etc, the latter refers to a language proficiency required to make sense of and use academic language.

Designing a language curriculum calls for the integration of elements for linguistic competence (what you know) and linguistic performance (what you do). This informs the need for proper integration of ESP curriculum development and ESP testing as integral parts of the English language curriculum. The need cannot be over-emphasized for Nigeria in the light of the present globalization of almost every aspect of life. To feature ESP prominently in the curriculum and not in an obscured manner, there must be definite selection of content and determination of teaching/learning strategies. ESP is an approach to language teaching which aims to meet the needs of a particular learner (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Needs analysis therefore must be considered vis-a vis language, learning and needs. What distinguishes ESP from General English is not the existence of a need but rather an awareness of the need. Learners' needs tend to be shaped by national needs therefore these should be harnessed through the kind of language curriculum designed for the nation's educational system, and in this case, Polytechnic education.

The Concept of National Transformation.

The Dictionary. com Mobile App! defines 'transformation' as a verb, meaning "to change in form, appearance or structure; metamorphose", "to change in condition, nature, or character; convert"; or "to change into another substance; transmute".

The Business Dictionary (www.businessdictionary.com) on the other defines transformation from an organizational context, as: a process of profound and radical change that orients an organization in a new direction and takes it to an entirely different level of effectiveness.

In defining transformation from a national point of view, the World English Dictionary simply sums it as, "transferring from a resource based, low income nation to a modern industrial upper middle income country..." Change is therefore

central in any transformation agenda. Doing the same thing using the same methods all of the time will always produce the same result, therefore change is required to transform. Transformation is a trans-sectional thing; that is to say it cuts across individuals and infrastructure. A credible society is determined by the disposition of the people in such a society. There is therefore no government initiative that will succeed without the willing support of the citizenry.

Nwosu (2012) cites global investment expert Goldman Sachs as having identified Nigeria in 2004 as one of the countries that have the potential for attaining global competitiveness based on their economic and demographic settings. The President Goodluck Jonathan's administration is passionate about national transformation, and the transformation agenda is pitched on the President's resolve on a National Transformation Mission that would have government to be responsibly vision driven to take Nigeria to its rightful position as a world leader, hence the pursuance of the vision 20:2020.

Change is difficult; the truth remains that people only change when their perceptions and mental paradigms shift. Transformation requires that you rise above the present circumstances and continue to seek and transfer relevant knowledge and enhance learning. Truth is that no nation can achieve growth and development without the right caliber of people with goodwill, technical know-how and required competence and efficiency who pilot the affairs of such a country. That takes us to the question of training man power.

The achievement of a national transformation informs the challenges of technology development and development in technology depends much on specialized language use to address issues in the different fields of endeavour, as well as compete favorably internationally in the scheme of things. This calls for a proper reassessment of the role of ESP in manpower training, especially in the Polytechnics.

The Challenges of Technology Development and Promotion of ESP towards Realising National Transformation.

Technology is the general term for the processes by which human beings fashion tools and machines to increase their control and understanding of the material environment (Encarta, 2010). The Encarta further highlights issues in modern technology to include:

- a. The Industrial Revolution which focuses on new labour patterns, increased pace of innovation, and technical education
- b. Reassessments of technology
- c. Proposed alternatives, and
- d. Outlook

Houns and Siverntrosky (1999), summarise technology by opining that technology

depends on design and problem solving, and that technology is using knowledge to develop products and systems that satisfy needs, solve problems, increase our capabilities; it is linked or tied with various tasks.

They further categorized technology into:

- iv. Communication technologies
- v. Production technologies
- vi. Power technologies
- vii. Bio-related technologies (Health and Environment)
- viii. Electrical and Electronics technologies
- ix. Integrated technologies (including Engineering and others).

For Nigeria to move from a developing country status to a top economy, we need to increase our technological intellectual capital. Intellectual capital is needed to produce products and services that will lead to the path of economic development that can catapult us into a world power. "Productivity is the engine that drives global economic growth" (Emeagwuli, 2009).

All of these have implication for the specialized use of the English language which demands tailoring the language instruction to meet the needs of learners in specific contexts, since the products of the educational system form the intellectual capital. The Polytechnics are geared more towards the training of technical manpower.

Methodology

In order to drive home the importance of ESP in the teaching of 'Use of English' in Polytechnics as a panacea for national transformation, this paper made a theoretical evaluation the 'Use of English' course outlines of the Polytechnic educational system. The essence is that whatever is documented in the curriculum is what finds its way into use in the classroom, thus, the place of ESP begins with the curriculum. The 'Use of English' course outlines of the General Studies programme of the Polytechnics are those of:

- x. ND I and ND II Course outlines.
- xi. HND I and HND II Course outlines.

The choice of these levels was deliberate in view of the important roles they play in preparing the nation's manpower.

A simple checklist of evaluative criteria was developed to evaluate the course outlines as follows:

1. **Aims/Objectives Criteria:** What are the general aims/Objectives of the curriculum? Are they clearly stated? Do the aims include ESP by specific mention?
2. **Content Criteria:** Is there any content of ESP overtly or covertly provided for? Is it adequate? Does it cover a range of disciplines/occupations?

3. **Method Criteria:** What method of presentation do the course outlines provide for? Does it make use of the spiral method of reintroduction of the items at the different themes of reading, grammatical structures, writing, etc. Is there provision for the learner to display a performance that reflects what he/she has learned?
4. **Testing Criteria:** Is there provision for ESP testing? What provision is made for the learner's evaluation?

Results and Discussion

Applying the checklist of evaluative criteria outlined in the methodology to the chosen course outlines, the results are hereby presented and discussed according to the different levels namely ND I and II, HND I and II.

- a. Aims/Objectives Criteria General objectives are clearly stated for each level as follows: On completion of the course the student should:

ND I

- Develop appropriate study skills
- Know the nature of language
- Understand the basic rules of grammar
- Know the essential qualities of paragraphs
- Appreciate the literary works in English

ND II

- Understand the rules of grammar
- Know the nature of language
- Comprehend the difference between denotative and connotative use of words
- Understand the techniques of comprehension and summary writing
- Appreciate literature in English

HND I

- Know how to construct good sentences
- Know how to reason applying the basic principles of logic
- Know how to write different types of essays
- Appreciate literature in English

HND II

- Comprehend the theory and practice of communication
 - Know the concept of organizational communication.
- There is no mention of ESP; not even registers in the objectives at all the Levels.

b. Content Criteria

The content for each level is based on the items enumerated in the objectives as outlined above. Not one of them includes ESP content material, therefore throughout the Polytechnic 'Use of English' course there is no direct provision for linguistic options appropriate to specific situations such as Science, Engineering, building Technology, Administration, etc., which are disciplines offered by the polytechnics preparing the students for employment/ Occupational purposes.

C. The Method Criteria

Since this is a lecture level curriculum, no specific methods are suggested, but expected outcomes are as per the general objectives. No curriculum spiral is provided for either.

d. Testing Criteria.

There is no specific provision made for ESP Testing at any of the levels since the content is not even ESP based.

Conclusion

From the generalized structural analysis of the objectives, content, method and testing criteria of the Polytechnics 'Use of English' course outlines, it can be concluded that the course outlines are based on General English only, with no specific provision actually made for ESP. The success of a curriculum is not only to satisfy examination requirement but also most especially existential purposes. Whatever the curriculum entails has implication for the textbook writer and the classroom teacher. Therefore to meet the challenges of technology development (which is an umbrella term covering a range of issues) towards the realization of national transformation, to take Nigeria to the top hierarchy of the global map, ESP must be taken more seriously in the Polytechnic educational system. ESP should not only be seen as a special course for students majoring in English at the University level but should be taught at all levels of 'General English' or 'Use of English' courses.

Recommendations

On the basis of the literature reviewed in this paper and the findings from the evaluation of the polytechnic 'Use of English' course outlines, the following recommendations are proffered in order to meet the challenges of technology development for the attainment of national transformation:

1. ESP should be taught at all tertiary levels of the nation's educational system besides the General English component and should be specifically tested
2. The 'Use of English' course outlines of polytechnics and indeed all tertiary

- level institutions including the General English courses of the universities (as they stand suspect) should be reviewed and ESP be given prominence.
3. English language textbook writers should take up the challenge of writing More specifically on ESP, as textbooks on the subject are not very common.
 4. ESP courses should be developed for various professional trainings like Medicine, Law, Engineering, Computer Science, Administration, etc, to Prepare the products for employment/ occupational challenges.

References

- Carter, D. (1983): Some propositions about ESP. *The ESP Journal*, 2,131-137.
- Doudley Evans, T. and St. John, M. (1998): *Development in ESP: a multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambrige: cambridege University Press/Emeagwali, p.
- (2009, May 8): Ideas, Not Money Alleviate Poverty. LEADERSHIP Newspaper.
- Fromkin, V. and Rodman, R. (1978): *An introduction to language*: New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston; Gatehouse, K. (2009, Oct. 2). key issues in English for specific purposes (ESP)curriculum development. *The Internet TESL Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.khae-service.com>
- Houns, H. R. and Swernrotsky, N. (1999), *Technology integrations*, New Yourk Glencoe MC Graw Hill.
- Nwosu, R.O. (2012, May 25).
- National Transformation: Vision 20.20.20. Let's make it happen. Retrieved from [Http://www.businessdictionary.com|definition|transformation/html](http://www.247ureport.com|nationaltransforamtion-vision-20-20-20-let's-make- it-hapen-one-by-one/Strevens, P. (1978). New orientations in the teaching of English. London & Edinburgh: Oxford University Press Dictionary. Com Mobile App! Retrieved from http://www.dictionary.com/browse/transforamtion.</p>
<p>The Business Dictionary. Retrieved from <a href=)
- World English Dictionary. Retrieved from <http://www.dictionary. Reference.com/ browsetransformation.>
- Encarta (2010).

THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Angela N. Fasuba, Angelina N. Fajin & Helen V. B. Jidanke
Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi, Plateau State.

Abstract

Writers of prose, drama and poetry use language with style to give a picture of the world around us. This is literature. Knowing our world (or our nation) can help us in our effort to transform it. The tasks of writers are not merely to convey experience but to attempt to clarify and order the chaos of experience and analyse the nature of man. A good work of literature is aimed at entertaining, conscientising, sanitizing, energizing and educating the reader (and indeed society). In this way the reader can change his economic, political, mental and social status thereby transforming society. It is in this regard that the paper looks at the role of literature in national transformation. The paper examines the intrinsic relationship between language, literature and culture and highlights the role of literature in national transformation.

Introduction

There is so much talk these days about 'transformation agenda'. What then is transformation? Why the need to transform? Transformation means a radical change or alteration. Not just a change but a radical one that shows the urgency for the need for change. It means changing the situation for the better,

Literature is a written material, such as poetry, novels, essay etc. especially works of imagination characterized by excellence of style and expression and by themes of general or enduring interest. It can be a body of written work of a particular culture of people. Literature can also be practically defined as a verbal or written artistic portrayal of a particular life or ways of life or culture of a society or a people in its own language and by one of its members, in a definite literary genre.

This paper looks at literature in general and what role it plays in transforming a nation. The paper however does not focus on particular or specific instances of the literature of individuals or groups of writers.

The Nature of Literature

Literature is a creation of the individual and manifests itself in both oral and

written forms. Literature treats themes that are also the concern of engineering, physics, astrology, archeology, economics, sociology, etc. Literature explains the human condition. It is the expression of an individual's experience in his/her society. Literature pushes language further and further to create new modes of feelings, awareness and communication. Since literature generates consciousness and awareness, it is bound to lead to action in the society. It is language in action. It satisfies human in all endeavours by giving pleasure through the beauty of form and style. Literature has a social commitment since the individual that produces the work of art is a product of the society, it is expected that such art will reflect the artist's being-in-society.

Studying literature involves a commitment to analyzing history and forms of culture, knowing why we study literature will lead us to a better understanding of how literature can be a tool for national transformation.

Literary works are portrayals of the thinking patterns and social norms prevalent in society. Exposing an individual to good literary works is equivalent to providing him/her with the finest of educational opportunities. Lack of exposure to classic literary work is equal to depriving an individual of an opportunity to grow as an individual.

Great literary works like the Bible and Indian epics provide society with the guiding principles of life. Ancient poetic works by poets like Homer, Plato, Sappho, Horace and Virgil, Shakespeare's sonnets and notable poetry by W.B. Yeats, John Keats, Wordsworth, Tennyson and William Blake are timeless. When we read great literary and poetic works, we get to understand life better. It changes one's perspective of life. When we do not read we remain ignorant. Literature is an enormous information base. We get to know ground breaking discoveries of famous inventors through their research works. Ongoing developments in the fields of science and technology are documented so that the world can know about them. Literature indeed adds 'life' to 'living'!

Relationship between language, Literature and Culture.

Language is used by literature as its medium of portraying culture. That means the people's ways of living (culture) are artistically encoded in their literature (story, novel, poetry, drama, song) by themselves.

It is through this relationship that literature has been able to fulfil its main socio-linguistic functions of entertainment, education, documentation preservation

and propagation of language and culture. Literature occupies a central and enviable position as a cultural code. Literature prides itself for being the key to the appreciation of all cultural practices. Literature harmonizes differences in society and ensures the creation of a reading class of Nigerians. Education whether applied formally or informally uses a literary means to reach its audience. Literature involves a commitment to analyzing history and forms of culture.

Literature is an art of communication paying attention to formal structures to ensure that its language is more clearly defined and more deserving of attention than the language of other communications. As a chronicle of past events, literature is expected to arrange the stories about the past in time perspective without any judgement of their causes, nature, affects and character. This then implies that literature simply reconstructs past events as they happened. The writer then is one endowed with the impressive narrative dexterity and is also knowledgeable about past and present event. Literature turns to the past in the belief that it is the father of the present, it turns to the past because both the past and present are intricately tied to each other. Literature therefore feels the need to ensure that humanity needs to have a firm grasp of both the past and the present for a secured prognosis into the future. Literature consists in seeing the past in the light of its problems. In this way, the main work of literature is not to record but to evaluate that which it records to have lasting meaning.

The reflective role of literature reveals what people thought during a particular time and how they thought about it. In this way an individual gets to know why things are the way they are in society. For example, reading Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*, one gets to know the traditions of the Igbos before the coming of the white man. Literature has a unique function in shaping and teaching society. Literature is a rich source of authentic material. It is not purely written, there is the aural tradition. Many of the stories that enrich our lives today were often heard rather than read. They were preserved and passed down until people could write and save them.

Literature and National Transformation

Going by what literature is and what it can do, there is no doubt what it can contribute to transforming a nation. It is unfortunate there is so much ignorance among Nigerians about the role of literature in Nigerian's development / transformation. Adequate knowledge of literature is paramount to the understanding of the forces that determine the nature and character of the

development process of a people and their understanding of that process of development.

The desire of the literary artist is to reconstruct the image of his/her society. Unlike the sciences, it is often difficult to prove the worth of literature. Literature consists essentially in seeing the past through the eyes of the present and in the light of its problems. Literature, especially socially committed literature, advocates change. It is all about change. Indeed, it is change itself. It is no wonder then that the implication of the sum total of the meaning of section 1 of Nigeria's National Policy on Education (2004) sees it as the most veritable tool. In this regard literature is first and foremost a defender of change. It studies the changes the society is going through by analyzing the variables that are responsible in the first instance. This requires close interaction with and an understanding of the processes of the changes taking place in society and the consequences of such to human relations in general.

Most African (Nigerian) writers use literature to solve modern problems. Chinua Achebe in *No Longer at Ease* (1963) shows that even in the modern age, the traditional spirit of communalism is still to a great extent possible. Sons and daughters of Umuofia come together to help one another in far away Lagos. The solidarity of the Umuofia Progressive Union with Obi during the dark days, even when he is considered a prodigal son is a manifestation of this spirit.

Majority of writers, if not all started on a patriotic note. They saw their job as that of reconstruction, rehabilitation of defence against the psychological wounds and denigration inflicted upon the people by the colonial invaders.

Achebe's dictum makes it clear:

Here then is an adequate revolution for me to espouse to help my society regain believe in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement. (Achebe, 105).

As far as Achebe is concerned the writer cannot expect to be excused from the task of re-education and regeneration that must be done. In fact he should march right in front for he is the sensitive point of his community. In the words of the Ghanaian professor of Philosophy, William Abraham:

Just as African Scientists undertake to solve some of the scientific problems of Africa, African historians go into the history of Africa, African political scientists concern themselves with the politics of Africa; why should African literary creators

be exempted from the services that they themselves recognize as genuine? (Achebe, 105).

Literature has been influential in changing societies and individuals. In fact, literature has once helped save a soul. Emila Zola's *J' Accuse* (1998) inspired by the Drefus Affair led to the release of captain Drefus. Andre Gide's work *Voyage au Congo* led in modern history to the termination of King Leopold's hold on that nation, by exposing the atrocities perpetrated by Belgians against the Congolese peoples.

We must not forget that unlike technology, literature cannot be 'transferred'. It belongs uniquely to a people. As a people we should not allow literature and the arts to die through neglect. As Nigerians, our identity as a people will not only be under threat but it will disappear and that very identity in world culture will face complete effacement. Nigerian literature has fostered patriotism and nationalism; Nigeria's most valued export commodity is not petroleum products but her literatures which have won international prize including the Nobel Prize. Achebe's works alone have been translated into fifty different languages outside Africa. Through Nigeria's literatures, Nigeria exports her cultures to other parts of the world, and through these literary works, exposes to the world the very foundations of her national consciousness.

The aesthetic experience of literature fosters mutual sympathy and understanding which will normally help on a larger scale to draw people together, and all shared experience helps to bring people together in friendship and mutual respect. This leads to unity among a people. So, I would say Nigerian literatures unite Nigerians more than politics, science or religion. Today, Nigeria stands tall

Before the international community because of the collective endeavours of her writers.

Nigerian writers have accomplished this by establishing the Nigerian tradition in literature a tradition that has set the pattern for the entire continent. This tradition makes use of and expresses allegiance to use folk culture by stressing what is indigenous to Nigeria. The Nigerian writers are concerned with the rehabilitation of the image of the black man in general and the Nigerian man and woman in particular.

Mention must be made of Nigerian female writers. Flora Nwapa set the pace both for Nigeria and the entire continent as the trail blazer in modern African female

writing. It was for her a duty to redeem and correct the disparaged and debased image of the Nigerian woman as the women saw it depicted by Achebe and Cyprian Ekwensi women created helpless, dependent, brutalized, disparaged, living either as prostitutes, concubines or "kept women". Nwapa was joined by Buchi Emecheta, Zulu Sofola, Zaynab Alkali, Ifeoma Okoye and many others in preaching the dignity and economic independence of the Nigerian woman in captivating titles like *Women Are Different* (Nwapa) and *The Joys of Motherhood* (Emecheta). Far from being parasites the Nigerian woman is highlighted as dignified in comportment, economically independent, highly industrious and possessing superior and higher moral values than their male counterparts.

Through Associations like Association of University Women, Women I Nigeria, the National Council for Women's societies etc, women have contributed in no small way to national development. Their combined and collective pressure through conferences, demonstrations, seminars, workshops and in extreme cases litigation can positively and without bloodshed change the future of women and create an atmosphere of self-definition for all women. Through these organizations and conferences, women have built a formidable case for feminism and the world is much better for it. The Nigerian female writers are concerned about the Nigerian woman on whose survival the society depends. Flora Nwapa promotes female participation in development in her illuminating and thought-provoking works of social documentaries, autobiographies and biographies.

Literature plays a significant role in an individual's development. It is from reading that an individual forms ideas and concepts about the world in which they live. The ideas form an ideology of some sort. It is from this ideology that an individual is motivated and so he begins to act and gets engaged in something. For instance, an individual can decide to become a 'born again' Christian having been influenced by the act of reading John 14:6.

Conclusion

Literature is a useful tool even in emotional development. The study of literature provides a wide range of experiences for the individual. It eases tension by permitting through the application of imagination and to try out other obsessions that may not be achievable in real life and prepares one for the task ahead. Literature inspires, encourages, strengthens, challenges and molds the mind. Stories touch lives in different ways and broaden one's horizon to learn more

and think more. Literature brings the world to life and helps us understand the trends of the past in order to benefit the future.

Artistic truth, courage, expressed in profound images, metaphors, allegories, irony, satire and sarcasm can go a long way in educating the majority in our society so as to effect lasting revolutionary change. Majority of us choose to remain ignorant and illiterates by refusing to read, thereby letting creative work lie waste. Sadly, most of even our educated people do not read. A nation that does not read cannot expect a radical change. It is in reading that we gain knowledge to act and transform our society. Writers are the interpreters of our culture, the enemy of sinister forces in society, the conserver of our values, the terrors of bad governments. The ultimate aim of writers is to transform society. A writer is a dreamer envisaging a heaven on earth, freedom from racial, colonial and non-colonial abuse, in short a golden era of opportunities!

Nigerian literature as depicted in the works of Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Chukwuemeka Ike, Cyprian Ekwensi, Emmanuel Emenyonu, Flora Nwapa, Zaynab Ali and a host of others, shows in contest that until the many ethnic groups learn to live with one another peacefully, in unity, as one people pursuing one destiny the hopes for all forms of development will continue to be a mirage.

List of Works Cited

Achebe, Chinua. No Longer At Ease. London: Heinemann, 1963

_____. "The Novelist As Teacher" Morning Yet on Creation Day.
London: Heinemann, 1975.

_____. "The African Writer and the English Language" Morning
Yet on Creation Day. London: Heinemann, 1975.

_____. Arrow of God. London: Heinemann, 1964.

Alkali, Zaynab. The Virtuous Woman. Nigerian: Longman, 1986.

Azuike, Macpherson. (Ed): Studies in Language and literature in honour of
Professor Michael Adeleke Adekunle. Nigeria: Mazlink, 2001.

Emecheta, Buchi. The Joys of Motherhood. Nigerian: Heinemann 1979.

Emenyonu, Emmanuel. African Literature and the Ethnic Imperative. Journal of
Creative Writing:Afa, 1982.

Ike, Chukwuemeka. Our Children Are Coming! Ibadan: Spectrum 1990

Nnolim, Charles. Approaches to the African Novel. Lagos: Malthouse Press, 1992.

_____.Issues in African Literature Lagos: Malthouse Press, 2010.

National Policy on Education. Federal Republic of Nigeria. Lagos: NERDC, 2004

THE ROLE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE ATTAINMENT OF VISION 20:2020

L.O. Nwokeneme

Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic Unwana

Abstract

Language is indispensable in the life and existence of man as an individual. It is most uniquely a human possession, a distinctive and natural ability which characterizes the behavior of man as an animate being. High premium is therefore, placed on the study of English language as a medium of communication and interaction and the language of educational instruction. There is thus the need to study and master the rudiments of English language to enhance fluency and proficiency in its uses. Implicit on this, the paper briefly takes a look at some aspects of English Language studies, especially the areas that prepare an individual for a pragmatic and functional use of the language. Issues revolving around English Language use and factors affecting the studies are discussed. The paper finally ends with conclusion and recommendations.

Introduction

The term "language" and its studies have constantly engaged the attention of scholars who wish to know more about its relationship with man. Language makes the social man what he is because there can be no social man without language. In fact, the capacity to acquire and use language is a quality which distinguishes human being from all other creatures. In the development of an individual as social man, language is unarguably a *primus inter pares*.

The ability to think and carry out our thoughts is made possible by the existence of language. Language offers an individual the necessary potential and capacity to function as a social man. Thus, Halliday (1978:10) asserts that the existence of language implies the existence of man. Language is the medium through which man becomes a personality. Without the existence of language, man would be little less than a beast. This assertion is true as language makes expression possible and communication easy. Words are the vehicle of thought manifested in utterance through language. In human activities, language plays a central role, including formal and informal upbringing of a child.

Language exerts so much influence in all human endeavors, providing solutions to the numerous problems facing man. Consequently, language implements acts, influences and, in fact, does all there is to be done. As one of the major characteristics of man, language cuts across all areas of human activities.

Invariably, the impact of language has affected studies in such disciplines in the social sciences as psychology, sociology and Anthropology. It is against this understanding that Gleason (1975:10) writes that "scholars in these courses of studies have seen the need to investigate language as a form of human interaction". Naturally, the desire to know and master English Language makes a scholar to study its systematic internal structures, its creative potentials, its ability to refer to abstractions and imaginary objects and its ability to talk about itself.

The focal point of this paper however, revolves around the Role of English Language in the Attainment of Vision 20:2020.

Language Defined

There have been various attempts by scholars to define the term, "language" since the evolution of man and his existence. According to Sapir (1963:8), language is "a non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires". On its own Definition, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2007:902), sees language as "a system of communication by written or spoken words which is used by people of a particular country or area".

Furthermore, Bloch and Trager (1945:5) state that "language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbol by which a group cooperates". Egwim (2002:164) also asserts that it is "an instrument for communication, a symbol of social identity and an emblem of group membership and solidarity. Continuing, Chomsky (1968:6) further points out that language is "specie specific human possession, the human essence". One important thing to note in all these definitions, however, is that language is exclusively a human possession used for communication and interaction. It is in appreciation of the special place occupied by language in the life and existence of man that we examine its grammar and components.

The Functions of the English Language in Nigeria

When we talk of the functions which the English Language serves in Nigeria, we are equally referring to the importance and uses of English in the country. The functions or importance and uses of English Language in Nigeria cannot be over-

emphasized. The following are significant functions which English performs in Nigeria.

English is used as lingua franca in Nigeria, functioning as both national and official language. It is the language of communication and interaction. English is the language of educational instructions. It is the language of the classroom used to teach and impart knowledge. This helps to make the so-called technological advancement in the 21st century possible and vision 20:2020 realizable.

English is the language of international politics and commerce as it makes communication and interaction with the outside world possible. It is the only language that enhances the projection of the good image of Nigeria and Nigerians in the international community, a task which is an integral part of vision 20:2020. Again, the current trend in today's world is globalization. The knowledge of English makes this possible.

In Nigeria today, English is used in all sectors of the economy and human endeavours. Thus, it is the language of administration, commerce and industry, judiciary, mass media, music and entertainment. It is the language of religion. English language is in the centre of national development. All the nation's developmental policies in her vision 20:2020 will only be achievable with English language at the centre. Consequently, competence in English enhances individual prestige and acceptability in the society.

Furthermore, language is used for the purpose of recording facts. All kinds of record keeping such as history, geographical survey, business accounts, science reports, parliamentary acts, public data, literary and textbook writings, depict the function of language. This is, in fact, different from that used in every day conversations. Verbal language is used as the instrument of thought, mental work and mathematical calculations.

Language is used for the expression of identity. Our use of language can tell great deal about us. Information about our social background and personal data such as level of education, age, sex and personality can be passed through language.

Language functions as social and ethnic identity. People participate in social structure, belong to many social groups and perform variety of social roles with the aid of language. The question of linguistic identity is strong in the case of ethnicity and nationhood. Perhaps, this revelation accounts for why Egwim (2002:164) sees language not only as "an instrument for communication" but also "a symbol of

social identity and an emblem of group membership and solidarity". It is in the light of this that attempts to preserve ones language often lead to ethnic and political reactions which often result in the demand for self-government. Linguistic conflicts have in the past, developed due to merging together of people of diverse Sociol and ethnic backgrounds.

The English Language and Vision 20:2020

Apparently, our discussion on the functions and uses of language to a great extent portrays the place of language and the roles it plays in the attainment of vision 20:2020. Indeed, English Language occupies very important place in the nation's efforts for advancement in science and technology and her attainment of vision 20:2020. This assertion is made on the understanding that language provides solution to the numerous problems in science and technology, a key to national Development. For instance, man thinks and carries out his thought with language. Really, man uses language to do all he had to do. This is very true as we can only see, act influence and implement as far as language allows. No wonder **Halliday** (1978:12) asserts that language makes the social man what he is as "there can be no social man without language". The existence of language implies the existence of a social man since language is the means whereby people communicate and interact.

Corroborating the indispensability and versatility of language in man's daily endeavours, Crystal (1987:6-50) also observes that language covers all human activities and interactions without which survival will be difficult and existence impeded, if not impossible. The questions that arise then are:

- a) Can we talk of research of any sort without language?
- b) How do we write and disseminate scientific findings and laboratory results?
- c) With what language do we impart educational instructions and scientific Knowledge on learners?
- d) With what language and how fast can scientific knowledge and technological discoveries be passed to poor scientific and less technologically developed nations around the world for the people to imbibe or learn?

This leads to the monumental roles of the English Language as means of communication and interaction especially in the attainment of vision 20:2020. Considering the tripartite position which the English Language occupies in Nigeria

as national, official and language of international trade and diplomacy, this discourse believes that English Language answers all the above questions, including that of ICT which, of course, serves as the medium of information dissemination. It is for this reason that English occupies a central position in achieving vision 20:2020.

Consequently, these monumental functions that English plays in the attainment of vision 20:2020 may be a mirage, especially the development and advancement in science and technology if English Language studies does not focus adequate attention on the acquisition of the four language skills; listening, reading, speaking and writing. While listening (hearing) and reading are technically referred to as receptive language skills, speaking and writing are referred to as productive language skills (Nwaiwu and Obi, 2007). The proper acquisition of these language skills and their appropriate application will enhance user's proficiency and competence. Deficiency in any of these language skills will result in poor academic growth and performance and consequently Impede the acquisition of science and technological knowledge which the nation seriously requires for her the attainment of vision 20:2020.

Naturally, the literacy skills of the language, reading and writing are important in the nation's march to science and technological development. Problem in these areas can render any activity in science and technology mal-functional and redundant. For instance, Fakunde (2001-12-16) criticizes students' inability to read functionally, arguing that this ineptitude has resulted in students' persistent academic failure. For instance, reading and writing are pivotal to the acquisition and participation in science and technical education, knowledge, and function of ICT activities. In fact, what? are the proof of intellectuality. No wonder Nwoke (1993:11) observed that reading is a strategy used in equipping science and technology students to be able to verbalize the scientific concepts they possess. The language skills have been seen as indispensable tools that will make students and scientific researchers succeed in their academic endeavours in this 21st century where computer has made the world a global village and hence making vision 20:2020 achievable.

Again, the age of technology and knowledge explosion has made it possible for everyone to strive to know how to read and write as career opportunity basically depends on these skills. These literacy skills enable one to come in contact with a wide variety of knowledge which one can either copy, modify or even adapt for

future uses. The language skills also enable us to participate, share and benefit from educational research findings, scientific discoveries and inventions beneficial to man.

The importance, functions and roles of English Language in the attainment of vision 20:2020 cannot be over-emphasized for it holds the magic key to the realization of all the developmental policies mapped out in the vision 20:2020. We therefore need neither trifle nor trivialize in empowering the study and acquisition of the rudiments of English in order to make our policy makers and leaders proficient and competent in the communicative and productive aspect of English Language.

Problems Militating against the Role of English Language

Many problems militate against the English language. One of these is inadequate language teachers. There is inadequate English Language teachers in primary, secondary and even tertiary institutions in the country. This has grossly affected the teaching, learning and acquisition of the language. The few available teachers often find it very difficult to cover all the various parts of the language.

Non-challance is another serious problem which militates against the learning of English. This problem does not affect only the students, but also the teachers. Some language teachers really do not take the teaching of English very seriously. They are often engaged in and committed to issues outside their employment in attempts to raise additional income to meet personal and family demands. The result is that the teaching of English is either given less attention or totally neglected. The teachers usually rush students through the syllable to meet the requirements of examination. This always leaves learners totally unexposed, ungrounded and unrefined in the skills of the language.

The students themselves seldom show any sense of interest or seriousness towards the learning and acquisition of the skills and rudiments of the language. During English Language classes, some students are often seen engaging themselves in less important issues such as conversing, trifling with handsets, playing or even copying notes or solving problems in other courses or subjects. Others play truancy, absenting themselves from English Language classes. All these affect effective learning and acquisition of the skills of the language.

Lack of expertise and pedagogic skills affect the learning and acquisition of language skills. This, in fact, has been a serious handicap to effective teaching and

learning of English. Research has shown that there is serious disparity between what a teacher knows and what he actually claims to know. In fact, some English Language teachers have shallow knowledge of the subject and its pedagogy. This goes a long way to affect what they teach to the students and their general performance.

Lack of incentive to language teachers: Language teachers often find it difficult to shoulder the financial burdens of attending conferences and workshops. The result is that the teachers are not exposed to new research findings on the teaching of English Language.

Conclusion

In an attempt to portray the roles of English in the attainment of vision 20:2020, this paper has taken an exploration into various aspects of the English Language that play contributory roles to the successful attainment of vision 20:2020. In effect, this paper has vividly defined language. The functions and uses of English Language in Nigeria and its roles in the attainment of vision 20:2020, formed the main focus of the paper. Implicitly on this, the paper vividly stressed the need for the leaders and policy makers to be competent and proficient in the expressive, communicative and productive use of the language. These are in fact, the key to intellectuality and gateway to growth, development and advancement in science and technology.

Recommendations

- a) There is the need to employ more teachers of English Language. This will go a long way in improving the teaching and acquisition process and hence the attainment of vision 20:2020.
- b) There is also the need for the government of the day to employ more qualified teachers of English.
- c) As a way of checking non-challance and making language teachers have job satisfaction, the government should make the teaching of English more attractive through the grant of an equally attractive incentive such as sponsorship of workshops and conferences on English, in-service training and scholarship to language teachers. Classroom language activities should be monitored to ensure that they use effective language items so as to enhance language acquisition skills.

Works Cited

- Bloch, P. and Trager G.L. Outline of Linguistic Analysis. Baltimore: Linguistic Association of America, Waverly Press, 1945.
- Chomsky, N. Language and Mind. New York: Harcourt Press, 1988.
- Crystal, D. The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language. London: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Egwin, J.C. The Theoretical framework as solution to the problems of major and minor language in education in a multilingual setting like Nigeria in Oyewole Arotunomolase (Ed.) Development of the Minority Language in Nigeria. Ondo: Association of Nigeria Language Teachers (ANLAT), 2002.
- Fakunde, G. A Handbook for Readings Compresion and Summary Writing Skills. Yola: Paractleta Publisher, 2001.
- Gleason, H.A. An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics (Rev. Ed) England: Unwin Brothers, Gresham Press, 1975.
- Halliday, M.A.K. Language as social Semiotics: The Social Interpretation of Language. London: Edward Arnold, 1978.
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, (New Ed.) England: Pearson Education Ltd, 2007.
- Macmillan Family Encyclopedia Vol. G. New Jersey: Arete Publishing Company, 980.
- New Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of English Language. Naples, Florida: Trident Press, 2004.
- Nwaiwu, C.O. and Obi, I.V. Use of English for Nigerian Polytechnics Onitsha: Chambers Books Ltd, 2007.
- Nwoke, A. "The Emergency of English for specific purpose" An M.ED Post-graduate lecture, University of Jos, Unpublished, 1993.
- Nwokeneme, L.O. "teaching Grammatical Structures in Tertiary Institution: Any Relevance?" Conference Paper on Knowledge, Technologies, Language Teaching and Classroom Development, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, 2007.
- Nwokeneme, L.O. Modern English Grammar: A Simplified Approach. Enugu: Immaculate Publication Ltd, 2010.
- Sapir, Edward. Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech. Rupert holt. David, 1963.
- Strang, B.M.H: Modern English Structures. London: Edward Arnold Publication, 1964.