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AN ASSESSMENT OF PEDDAGOGICAL APPROACHES IN ESP LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS OF SELECTED NIGERIAN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

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English Language Teaching (ELT) assumes the fact that language is an important learning and reasoning tool. The English for specific purposes (ESP) which is an offshoot of ELT emphasizes the utilitarian purpose of English Language. This paper takes a cursory look at the practices of ESP in second language situation like Nigeria Africa. Several issues have emanated from (ESP) Classrooms in Nigerian technological institutions; one of these is the lopsided pedagogical approaches of the language teacher. A survey was carried out on the practices of the selected forty-two (42) instructors from 4 institutions. Non-parametric statistical procedure of simple percentage was applied on the data. Results show majority still practice outdated traditional methods and approaches in ESP classrooms. Implication for language learning in science and technological institutions in Africa are discussed.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English Language Teaching (ELT), Pedagogical approaches, ESP classrooms, Technological institutions.

Introduction

Language is an important factor in learning especially in the formal School System. It is doubtful if a learner will be able to cope within a learning environment without the adequate knowledge of language of Instruction. The learner should also be able to use language to perform outside the classroom, in the immediate environment and world of work. The history of English Language in Nigeria dated back to the Colonial period, after the independence in 1960 English Language continues to be the official and language of education in Nigeria and most of former English Colonies in Africa. In some instances it became the Lingual Franca. With the teaching and learning of the language it became important in all institutions. English language is important to the learner both in an outside the classroom. It is also the language of Science and Technology.

According to Emerole (1995), over the decades, developments have been apparent in the methods of English Language teaching all over the world. One of these has been an increased concern with the problem of learners in higher education, who need to know the language to pursue special studies in their field of endeavours. The need of users of English all over the world led to the resolute in the teaching and learning of the language in the 1960s. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is generally used in circumstances in which the command of English is being imparted according to specific job or subject purpose. ESP is a break with the long tradition of English Language as part of general education. It is an enterprise involving education training, practice and drawing upon the three major realms of knowledge

of language, pedagogy and student's special needs. It is a shift from language delivery to language acquisition in the classroom. To Hachinson and Waters (1987) ESP focus on learners needs and course materials development that could best meet these needs.

The objective of this study is to assess the pedagogical approaches that language instructors in technological institutions in Nigeria employed to inculcate language skills in the classrooms. Thus the following research questions will be systematically considered in the course of the study.

Research Questions

1. Do Language instructors in technological institutions differentiate between General English and ESP?
2. Which are the pedagogical approaches in the Language classrooms of Nigerian Technological Colleges?
3. Are the language pedagogic al approaches in the classrooms adequate to meet the needs of the learners?
4. Will the pedagogical approaches employed by the language instructors help the learners to function effectively in the professional world?

Literature Review

English for specific purposes has rapidly developed recently to become a major part in English Language teaching and research. It arose in 1960s as it became increasingly apparent that general English courses frequently did not meet the learner or employers needs. In ESL according to Jiboku (2000) English is not taught as a subject separated from students real world, instead it is integrated into subject matter area important to learner. In ESL, English as second language all forms of language skills listening, speaking, reading and writing are stressed equally. In ESP, it is the need analysis that determines which language skills are most needed by the students and the syllabus is designed accordingly (Mumby 2000). For instance ESP programme might emphasize the development of reading skills in students who are preparing for higher diploma graduate work in Business Administration; while speaking skill will be emphasized for tourism students who are learning to become tourist guides.

According to Coanca Mariano (2013), the term specific in ESP refers to the specific purpose for learning through a field that is already known and relevant to them e.g. English in building technology. This means, they are able to use what they learn in ESP classroom right away in their study and work. The Language teacher in the ESP classroom will need to assess the needs of learners and integrate motivation, subject matter and content for teaching of relevant skills.

Michael Marek (2008) asserted that ESP approaches depends on ESP purposes e.g. ESP for tourism and ESP for nursing may be different. But regardless, the active learning is necessary. Students must use their experience in authentic situations that feel like real world. This is creating a flipped classroom.

To him the features of ESP classroom should be:

A) Selecting material- Here the teacher determines which aspect of ESP will be focused.
B) Select types of activities with text. Text or learning materials can be used for learning of and practicing with wide range of skills e.g. recorded video cassette.
C) Creating a learning environment. This is very important, a learning environment in classroom for achieving set objectives.

Thus the ESP teacher is a (i) Teacher, (ii) Course designer and material provider (iii) Collaborator, (iv) Researcher (v) Evaluator.

1 Language teaching approaches in technological Institutions in Nigeria.

The next important question is which are the pedagogical approaches in ESP classroom in Nigeria; The practices in the technological institutions will be part of the literature.

Some of the observable approaches and models noticed in some the institutions are:

i. **Traditional Approach:** This is popular approach of teaching Use of English in tertiary institutions in Africa. According to Williams (1990) the traditional method of teaching language has its origin in rhetorical theory of invention, arrangement and style as propounded by Aristotle.

ii. **Adjunct Approach:** The adjunct is instructional model which links very advance use of English courses with content courses in a literal way. It was developed by Trimble (1985). In this model the English teacher use the content of specialized course for example materials from the content area to teach language.

iii. **Tutoring Approach:** The tutoring approach according to Strevens (1988) assigns students to small tutored groups. It focuses on the content of different courses, such as Civil Engineering or Estate Management. In the group, tutor help students write and talk about the course content thereby increasing students' comprehension of course material while working on language related skills at the same time.

iv. **Skill Teaching Approach:** This model emanates from Cummins (1979) theory where he differentiated between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skill (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Here students concentrate on reading, writing, listening and speaking skills with each skill area usually constituting a separate course. Many teachers at tertiary level especially in science and technological institutions in Nigeria use this model.

v. **Text Variation Approach:** This was first mentioned by Falter (1998). The approach is popular in writing in some Higher Institutions in Nigeria. This approach is designed for use in classes made up of students from various disciplines. In teaching language course, the teacher uses written materials exemplifying the various styles which serve as a point of reference and which will provide students with subject class discussion that will precede most writing assignments.

2 General English vs ESP in Nigeria

The National Board for Technical Education in Nigeria; the control organ for technological developed the syllabus for English and Communication Courses. Named GNS 101, Use of English, GNS 102: Communication Studies GNS 201 Use of English 2. GNS 202 Communication in English 2. GNS 301: Use of English 3 for higher level GNS 302, GNS 401 and GNS 402 for higher diplomas. The Board for Technical Education only specified the items to be taught following the traditional-grammar method approach. The document does not specify the pedagogical approach or specific instructional procedure that can be employed by the instructor. It does not take into the consideration the needs of the learners at various levels.

Methodology

This study is a survey of approaches in teaching of English and Communication Skills in selected Nigeria Technological Institutions.

The subjects for the study were forty-two (42) Language instructors randomly selected from four (4) institutions in South-West Nigeria. Namely (1) Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro (2) Yaba College of Technology, Lagos (3) The Polytechnic, Ibadan (4) Lagos State Polytechnic, Lagos. The Language instructors in Nigeria use the syllabus specified by National Board for Technical Education (NBTE).

The main instrument for data collection is a questionnaire entitled "Teaching Polytechnic Use of English and Communication Skills Questionnaire (TPESKILL)

The questionnaire is made up of two parts.

Part (1) is on the biodata of the lecturer concerned, this include, age, institution, years of teaching and academic qualification. The biodata was meant to collect the information on the academic background and the experience of the subjects. Part (2) In this part, the respondents were asked to signify the teaching approach which they normally use from a list of alternatives. Nine (9) alternatives were given.

The questionnaires were collected immediately. Simple percentage was used to analyse the data.

Table 1. Analysis of Pedagogical Approaches In Language Classroom of Selected Nigerian Technological Institutions

APPROACHES	**NO OF RESPONDENTS**	
Traditional Teaching Approach	10	23.8
Adjunct Approach	2	4.7
Tutoring Approach	9	21.4
Text Variation Approach	5	11.9
Teacher-Model Approach	5	11.9
Skill Approach	6	14.2
Case Study approach	-	0.0
Team Teaching Approach	-	0.0
Two or More of the Approaches	5	11.9
	42	100

Source: Field Survey Jiboku (2015)

The results from the table above show that the greater percentage of instructors in the Polytechnics used traditional approach (23.8%). Also some of the respondents (21.4%) adhere to tutoring approach and very few number (11.9%) combine two or more approaches in the classroom. Case study approach was not considered at all. There was also no application of team teaching approach. These results have implications for teaching and learning in the technological institutions in Nigeria Africa. The instructors are not dynamic enough to meet the latest challenges that the students will face outside the classroom. The results are contrary to the findings of Bolitho (1983) Emerolo (1985) Josedo (2015) Coanca (2013) which asserted that ESP pedagogical strategies are focused and specific language teaching which will help students master their chosen subjects/vocation or academic field. If ESP refers to teaching and learning of a foreign language for a clearly utilitarian purpose, then the appropriate teaching approach must be used to meet the immediate and professional needs of the students that are involved.

Recommendations

> The hallmark of ESP instruction all over the world is its attempt to appeal more directly to the students' interests outside the English class than is normally done in traditional ESL/EFL instruction. Thus, the ultimate interest of University/Polytechnic student is to be able to move into the working world and function well in a professional capacity increasingly proficient in spoken and written English. In this case ESP teachers should train students in these skills by giving them challenging, meaningful and genuinely communicative exercises that will help them to function effectively.

This approach is recommended for Nigerian Classrooms. In this approach, the instructor typically turns the class into one or more companies with each student being assigned to a particular role consistent

with his/her academic background. A civil engineering student might for instance be cast in the role of site engineer while an accounting student might be a budget manager. The instructor then present the class with a realistic complex problem that has many solutions the students must work together in the respective groups and attack the problem. In many cases it is desirable to have groups compete against each other. In the course of addressing the problem they can be required to perform many different kinds of communicative activities, all in English, such as listening to a briefing from a guest lecturer writing proposal writing memos and letters; gathering information from library, talking to experts, participating in meetings, reading technical reports, giving short oral presentation e.t.c.

The third recommended approach in ESP classrooms in Nigeria Africa is team teaching. Team teaching involves collaborative efforts since most English Language teachers lack the technical knowledge that would be appropriate to setting up a simulation for engineering students; they would probably want to turn to a technical colleague in academic or industry to help them out.

Hackos (1984) asserted that team teaching has proven to be the best in technological institutions. The technical colleague can provide the technical information necessary to set up the game and the instructors can jointly monitor the students in an attempt to solve technical problems and they can also evaluate the proposed solutions from technical perspective. The English instructor can make sure that each student is made to perform certain communication task. The teacher can monitor each student's performance and can provide corrective feedback when exercise is over.

Conclusion

English for specific purposes is a major and recent activity in the academic world today. As the world is turning to a global village, there is the need of introducing dynamism into the training of students in all facets of life; especially in science and technology. ESP is meant to satisfy a student need for quick and economic use of English Language to pursue a course for academic study at the tertiary level. The survey conducted by this paper reveal that the pedagogical approaches of the language teachers in technological institution in Africa are backward and cannot meet the global standard. There is need for student focused dynamic and communicative teaching that will help the students to function effectively in the classroom and in the professional and academic world outside the classroom.

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