IMPROVING TEACHING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE THROUGH ICT FOR NATIONAL CURRICULUM CONSCIOUSNESS: LIMITATIONS OF TEACHERS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *In Nigeria today, almost all human endeavours have imbibed the culture of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to boost the process of activities, but education sector is yet to optimally utilize the multidimensional opportunities inherent in computer use in pedagogy as it is done mostly in the western world. This review has identified the use of computer by developing software to teach English language contents. Teachers' motivation has also been located as one of the indices that can improve teachers' utilization of ICT facilities to achieve the pedagogical goals. Lack of existing localised programme and software plus dearth of computer in Schools, coupled with insufficient knowledge of computer use among practitioners have been identified as limiting factors to the use of ICT by Teachers. It is recommended that the training and retraining of teachers on ICT is very pertinent in achieving optimal goal of ICT utilization among teachers in Nigerian Schools.*

KEYWORDS: Information, Communication, Technology, English Language.

INTRODUCTION

The use of English Language in Nigeria cannot be compared with any other language, it is referred to as the official language of the Nation and hence it is used as the medium of instruction at all levels of the Nation's education system from primary school through University. Without a credit pass in English Language, hardly will any student be admitted into tertiary institution in Nigeria.

The most concerned aspect of the educational development in the country today is the nose diving nature of the education system as seen in the publication of the terminal public examination results in recent time. The Senior Secondary School Certificate examination conducted by West African Examination Council and National Examination Council revealed that the dwindling performance of students in these examinations have remained unabated for quite some time now. The joint Admission Examination result is also not better.

The reasons for the above scenario are preponderant of which the roles of teacher are pertinent in this review. To look straight into the core of this study is the embarrassing result of English Language in the aforementioned examinations (NECO, 2010, 2012, 2013 and 2016). The primordial function of English Language to get admitted into higher School of learning has made it the most important subject. Hence, all search light must be beamed at it, to improve its knowledge among learners which can only be effectively done through the continuous training of English Language teachers inter-alia, especially on innovative teaching strategies among which the adequate knowledge of ICT is paramount especially in the area of computer use with

all its educative devices such as internet facilities, software development and programming among others. The teachers of English Language, occupy the central position in the English Language educational system in Nigeria in spite of the fact that English is the language of instruction and it is taught through integrated teaching of all other subjects in School. The National Policy on Education in Nigeria admitted that, "no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers". The policy consequently recommended some steps towards the enhancement of an effective and efficient teaching profession which includes training and recruitment of more teachers at both primary and secondary school levels (Adepoju, 2001; Adeyoju, 1999).

ICT and Teaching

Research findings over the past 20 years provide some evidence as to the positive effects of the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on pupils' learning (Mumtaz, 2006; Al Balushi, 2012; Nomass, 2013 & Jebakiruba, 2016). It is also recorded that in spite of projects on ICT, the effect of numerous training programmes and investment by schools in ICT resources, there has been a disappointingly slow uptake in schools (Cox, Preston and Cox, 1999; Passey and Samways, 1997).

Computer-Assisted intervention has been used widely to bring about behavioural change through education, many devices has been adopted. The use of computer through telephone has been used to deliver advice and support which has been found to promote behaviour change (McBridge and Rimer,1999; Soet and Basch, 1997). Real- time data collection and feedback can be provided via telephone, using computer controlled speech generation which can be used to teach several aspects of English language such as phonetics/phonology, syntax, touch tone telephone keypad or voice recognition.

Under creative writing in English language, the use of image through computer monitoring device via some exclusive websites can be useful to train learners in English language right from primary school through higher education employing websites like: daily writing tips.com; guarding. Com.uk, inkwelleditorial.com;frustburg.edu etc. the training on how to write good English composition, passages and so on can be effectively utilized.

The teacher of English language can adopt three styles of computers use as recommended by Evans-Andris (1995) which involves: avoidance, integration and technical specialization. Evans- Andris adopted a project that lasted 8 years period in the elementary school of a large area in her state. In this study, her teachers technically stayed away from computer and reduced the number of hours they spend on all issues that related to computer utilization. In the study, the learner had repetitive use of software intended for drill and practice or word processing. With the method adopted, the teachers restricted the learners` Interaction With The Computer While They (Teacher) Are On Computer But Encouraged An independent relationship of the learners with computer.

Teacher selected drill and practice software based on curriculum goals, and the needs of the learners which can be adapted, in the field of English language training.

Adopting integration, the English teacher will engage in technical specialization by embracing computer and view the technology as a challenge and promote computer utilization in School and virtually all School activities should be tilted towards the use of computer by adopting teaching methods that utilize computer devices that should involve consistent use, preparation and delivery of planned lessons which should involve computer. Computer should be used

during lesson as an integration teaching device rather than using them to supplement the traditional technique to achieve the curricular goals.

Limitations of Teachers to the Use of Computer

The use of computer is widely gaining ground in almost every field of human endeavour which includes, commerce, aviation, medicine, banking and so on, but the use of computer in education enterprise should not be limited to academic research but also the involvement in teaching learning process. In the business of teaching, there are several factor inhibiting the effective use of computer in both schools and outside the schools.

Several studies has been employed to investigate why teachers and others in education industry are not using computer effectively in their business (Okueso,2010; Glanz, Rimer and Viswanath, 2008; Rosen and well, 1995; Winnans and Brown 1992; Dupagne and krendi, 1992; Handley and Sheingold, 1993;Fakeye,2010).

In the findings of the previous researchers, several factors had been identified which includes:

- Limited knowledge of ICT

- Absence of motivation from administrators

- Dearth of professional ICT specialist to assist teachers.

- Paucity of updated computers

- Curricular Deficiency

- Dearth of fund to procure computers and software

- Absence of educative programme on teaching methodology to mention but a few.

Aside from the general factors that limit teachers, there are specific reasons why teachers' resists the use of computer in teaching.

Robertson, Calder, Fung, Jones, O'she and Lambrechts (1996) and Glanz, Rimer and Viswanath (2015) divided teachers' resistance to computer use into several broad-based themes: resistance to organizational change; resistance to outside intervention; time management problems; lack of support from the administration; teachers perceptions; personal and psychological factors. The aforementioned factors as presented are product of research findings in use.

In addition to the points empirically stated, there are others limiting factors that are African domiciled due to the level of development which includes;

- Poor funding of education

- Poor network availability

- Inactive website, poor program packaging

- Poor internet connectivity

- Incessant power outage

- Paucity of computer in schools

- Lack of sufficient and active inservice training for teachers

- Absence of preplanned teaching devices and programme.

The School, the Teacher and I.C.T.

Much has been said in Nigeria on the issue of ICT by both the Government and Non-governmental Organization, but the issue is more of paying lip service to the matter rather than taking the pragmatic steps of improving the schools involvement on the use of ICT. Some states in Nigeria has distributed computers to schools while some are still concentrating on the schools in the main towns and cities of the States. The private schools that are seems to be active on the use of computers have failed to provide enough facilities for the use of ICT but with limited knowledge of computer appreciation.

In a study of projects to promote educational changes in America, Canada, and the UK as recorded by (Mumtaz, 2006) Fullan (1991) found that one of the most fundamental problems in education reforms is that people do not have a clear and coherent sense of the reasons for educational change, what it is and how to proceed. In Nigeria, the national policy on education that is periodically reviewed, has not been effectively implemented due to the non-active participation of the local teachers that will be eventually involved in the implementation among the highest population of learners in the rural communities. Also, the environment is not effectively prepared to meet the global needs of educational changes especially in the area of information technology (Okueso, 2010). Technological change has not satisfactorily affected schools as others organization due to multifaceted factors among which Cuban (1993) presented: cultural beliefs about what teaching is and what it should be, how learning occur, what knowledge is proper in schools, and the teacher relationship dominate popular views of proper schooling. Also the age-graded school, and organization invention of the late nineteenth century has significantly shaped what teachers do and do not do in classrooms, including the persisted adaptation of innovations to fit the contours of these age-graded settings and to cope with the prevailing global standard in bringing about an accepted norm.

Teachers' Motivating Factors to Use I.C.T

The use of ICT is about the most resisted innovative teaching strategy as it involves extra effort from the teacher, learners and the management, hence all efforts should be geared towards improving its utilization by teachers and student teachers alike. It has been reported through researches that teachers that are familiar with ICT, have confidence in using the technology in teaching. Those reasons why the teachers find it interesting to use ICT include: making their teaching more interesting, easier, more fun for them and their learner, more diverse, more motivating for the pupils and more enjoyable. Other personal factors for teachers were: improving presentation of materials, allowing greater access to computers for personal use, giving more power to the teacher in school, giving the teacher more prestige, making the teachers' administration more efficient and providing professional support through the internet (Cox et al, 1999).

In a study conducted by Veen (1993), two main factors were identified to be responsible for teachers` motivation. The teacher factor and the school factors, the teacher factors role outweighed the school factors in explaining the teachers use of Computer. The teacher level factors were grouped into two main subcategories: beliefs and skills and the teachers' beliefs

regarding what should be taught in the curriculum (content) and the manner in which the subject should be taught (methodology). The skills that most influenced the use of ICT were those relating to the teacher's competence in all teaching / learning processes in its entire ramification.

National Consciousness

Those factors that support teachers success in ICT utilization includes: the encouragement and commitment to their learners' learning and to their upliftment as teachers; the administrative support gotten from their schools; and access to adequate technological facilities that meet their pedagogical needs and expectations.

Nigeria as a nation is a unique entity with a large group of people with cultural diversity and language but united in a unique way. National consciousness is a shared sense of national identity, that is, as understanding that a people or group shares, a common ethnic, linguistic, and cultural background. National consciousness is being aware or being able to understand what is happening in one's nation and how these happenings affect one and other individuals in the nation. A good citizen will always consider what he or she needs to do to his or her Country to make it a better place to live because nations are built by men and women who have the will and vision to accomplish greatness, not for themselves, their immediate families and friends but for their country(Femi-Oyewo, 2016). English language curriculum review is proposed to improve the contribution of English language teaching for national development in line with national policy on education and national philosophy to reduce the failure rate in English language terminal examinations.

CONCLUSION

This paper has beamed search light on the use of ICT, adopting computer in the teaching of English language, and also considered the general opportunities inherent in the use of computer in general teaching / learning enterprises.

The review has also considered those factors that hinder/ limit the adoption of ICT concept in pedagogy which includes paucity of facilities, inadequate knowledge and poor motivation on the part of the school administrator, limited resources within the school are a great hindrance to take-up of ICT. Lack of computer software in the school and classroom environment can seriously limit what every teacher can do with ICT. The limited range of software to teach English language in school, but when there is varieties of software in school that teachers can use, this will enhance the use of ICT.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It was therefore recommended that:

- More teachers of English language should be trained on the use of computer.
- Varieties of software should be developed for the teaching of English language which will cover different areas of the subject such as phonology, Syntax, comprehension/ composition, creative writing that will be adapted to Nigeria environment.

- The existing teachers should be motivated to improve their output/productivity.
- There should be more computers in all schools.
- The Enthusiasm of the learners should be built through increased accessibility to software and internet facilities.
- Teachers should be exposed to evidence based knowledge on the various existing benefits of ICT use in teaching.
- More researches should be conducted on the use of ICT for teaching in schools to elicit some of the latest issues.

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