

Critical Appraisal of the ‘Use of English’ Language Curricula as Used in Tertiary Educational Institutions in Enugu State, Nigeria

Ojel Clara Anidi, Ph.D

Department of Language Studies
Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu
Email: ojelanidi@gmail.com; Phone: +2348030917559
(Corresponding author)

Ifeyinwa Carolyn Anibueze, Ph.D

Department of Language Studies
Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu
Phone: +2348030895837

Fabian ObinnaAmuta

Department of Language Studies
Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu
Email: Amutaobyno@gmail.com; Phone: +2348062469839

Abstract

This paper critically appraised the ‘Use of English’ language curricula, as used in tertiary educational institutions in Enugu State, Nigeria. The motivation for the research is the general report that the majority of Nigerian undergraduates and graduates exhibit poor proficiency in English language, a situation which a number of writers attribute to the curricula being used in the teaching and learning of the subject at the different levels of education in Nigeria. As teachers of English language at the tertiary level of education in Nigeria, the researchers were, thus, interested in carrying out this research, at their own level/ area of practice, to determine the adequacy or otherwise of the curricula, as used, in attending to the students’ needs. The research objectives, specifically, were to determine: the core contents, the appropriateness of the teaching methods, the teachers’, and the learners’ perceptions of the implementation of the ‘Use of English’ language curricula in the institutions studied. Descriptive survey method was used for the study. The findings revealed the adequacy of the curricula in most of the tested items. The only areas of inadequacy in the curricula, and which is quite significant, include insufficiency of practical communication activities/ skills, lack of the use of ICT and language laboratories in the teaching of the courses, extra-large classes and excessive workloads of lecturers in some institutions. Recommendations are therefore made along these lines.

Keywords: English language, ‘Use of English’ curricula, teaching methods, perceptions of curriculum implementation, Nigerian tertiary educational institutions

Introduction

Background of the Study

Matters relating to the teaching and learning of English language in the Nigerian schools are crucial, not only because of the prominent roles the English language plays in Nigeria, but also because the language is a fundamental requirement for education and career development, in the twenty-first century global world. Writers such as Anidi (2018), Le (2016), Bamgbose (2001), and Dabalon, Oni, and Adekola (2000) maintain that proficiency in English language and communication is imperative for an individual's career growth and economic competitiveness in an increasingly globalised world. Anidi (2018), for instance, citing U.S. Department of Labor, buttresses that organisations often lose money due to poor communication, and so they seek people who can follow and give instructions, listen accurately, provide useful feedback, get along with coworkers and customers, network, provide serviceable information, work well in teams, and creatively and critically solve problems and present ideas in an understandable manner.

Again, English is a useful global language which ensures mutual intelligibility among its adherents in the world. It is estimated that about one billion people use and speak the English language across the nations of the world (Otagburuagu, Anidi, Ogayi, Kadiri, & Nnamani, 2016). English is the official language for more than 70 countries of the world (Nnadi, 2015, Adewunmi, 2012). Adewunmi (2012), citing Asoba, further asserts that-

It is evident that one out of five of the world's population speak English to some level of competence and the demand for the other four fifths is increasing on a daily basis as it is the language of books, newspapers, airports and air traffic control, international business and academic conferences, science, technology, sports, international competitions, pop music and advertising. It is true that over two third of the world's scientists read in English. Third quarter of the world's mail is written in English; while 80% of the world's electronically stored information is done in English. Of the estimated 40 million users of the internet, the majority of its users communicate in English (p. 2).

For these reasons, a high premium is placed on the acquisition of the English language in most countries of the world, including Nigeria. In Nigeria, English language is a compulsory subject taught at all the levels of the Nigerian primary and secondary schools, and at the foundation levels of the tertiary education. The 'Use of English' courses are the compulsory English language courses done at the foundation level or first year of study in the Nigerian tertiary institutions. The question, however, is: Are Nigerian undergraduates and youths faring well in their learning and use of the English language?

Statement of the Problem

There are a number of negative reports of the performance of the Nigerian students, undergraduates, and graduates in the English language. Many lecturers from various disciplines in the Nigerian tertiary educational institutions complain that the majority of their students are unable to make correct sentences in oral speech, take good notes, or write simple reports or assignments using the English language. In the same vein, Dabalon, Oni, and Adekola (2000) report that employers of labour describe the majority of Nigerian graduates as unemployable because they show poor mastery of the English language and communication skills. Writing about this problem, also, Nnadi (2015) observes that many Nigerian graduates cannot use English to communicate effectively in the workplace, or even in job interviews in English, despite studying English for six years in the primary school, six years in the secondary schools, and a minimum of one year in the tertiary institutions. Nnadi further states that even those students who achieve an overall high distinction in their degrees, diplomas and certificates and have obtained excellent, specialized, technical knowledge are often deemed not employable by foreign companies due to their lack of English language proficiency. What is more, a number of these writers, including other writers such as Aduwa-Ogiegbaen (2006), Oribabor (2014), and Tom-Lawyer (2014), have gone ahead to attribute the problem to the different methods of implementing the English language curriculums in the Nigerian schools.

Again, Le (2016), writing about the English language curriculum and workplace communication needs in Vietnam, discovered that there is little correlation between most remedial language programmes done in the universities and the workplace communication needs of the students. He argues that workplace genres such as emails, memos, letters, reports, meetings, telephone conversations, teleconferences, press releases, presentations and customer complaint forms are usually not sufficiently dealt with in the English language curricula used in the universities. Additionally, Dubin and Olshtain (1990) recommend that the compulsory English language programmes/ curricula usually run in the universities and colleges of most countries where English is used as a second language should be periodically surveyed. Such surveys, according to Dubin and Olshtain, will among other things discover facts about the overall curriculum, the existing textbooks, the existing teaching methods, and the opinions and perceptions of the teachers and students on the curriculum.

Given all these issues, the present researchers were motivated to carry out this research, at least, at their own level and area of practice (tertiary educational institutions in Enugu State), to determine the adequacy or otherwise of the English language curricula in attending to the students' language and communication needs in the global economy. Lastly, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, there has not been any survey of this nature on the 'Use of English' curricula, as used in tertiary educational institutions in Enugu State, Nigeria. The dearth of literature in this area of study makes this research, particularly, necessary.

Research Objectives and Significance

The specific objectives of this research include: To determine (1) the core contents, (2) appropriateness of teaching methods, (3) teachers', and (4) learners' perceptions of the implementation of the 'Use of English' language curricula in tertiary educational institutions in Enugu State, Nigeria.

This paper, which is only a summary of the larger research report, is organised in the following order: First there is the Review of Conceptual Literature, which include Concept of Critical Appraisal, Concept of Curriculum, Concept of the Use of English, Core Contents of the English Language Curricula, 21st Century English Language Teaching Methods, and Perceptions of the Implementation of the English Language Curricula. Then, there are the Research Methodology, Presentation of Results, Findings and Analysis. The Conclusion; and Recommendations are discussed last.

The study is significant as it will, among other things, help the teachers of the 'Use of English' courses, undergraduates and graduates of various disciplines, including policy-makers, heads/administrators and supervising (curriculum development) bodies of the tertiary institutions in Nigeria, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the 'Use of English' language curricula and its implementation, and how to adapt or readapt them to suit the students' immediate and work place needs.

Review of Conceptual Literature

Concept of Critical Appraisal

The term, 'critical appraisal', as used in this study, is analogous to (critical) analysis and evaluation. Thompson (2017) defines critical appraisal as a detailed examination of published research for the purpose of making a decision about scientific merit. In the view of Young and Solomon, developing efficient skills in critical appraisal is one practical way that clinicians use in managing 'information overload'. Both Thompson, and Young and Solomon here seem to have dwelt on the view of critical appraisal as 'review'. This is not quite the same perspective as taken in this research. This research views critical appraisal from the same lens with which the term, critical analysis, was viewed by Pinto and Vithalrao (2017). Pinto and Vithalrao define critical analysis as a detailed examination of the parts of the curriculum, including concepts, teaching-learning process, assignments, assessments and skills. The present research shares this perspective of critical appraisal.

Also, critical appraisal, as viewed in this research, is related to the term, evaluation. Smith (2015) describes evaluation as a general judgment of the outcome of a programme, which involves the use of observations, various tests, questionnaires, interviews, etc. In other words, evaluation is a

critique, analysis or review of some educational methods. The sole purpose of evaluation is to bring about quality improvement in education which it does by providing feedback regarding students' learning, classroom teaching, effectiveness of curriculum, and course contents. Analysis is another term that is closely related to critical appraisal. Jansen and Reddy (1994) define analysis as "unpacking" of the curriculum in order to understand the plan. They explain that while curriculum development involves building the curriculum in order to present a coherent plan, curriculum analysis involves unpacking the curriculum into its component parts (e.g. learning, teaching, knowledge, society, resources), to evaluate how the parts fit together; check underlying beliefs and assumptions; and seek justification for curriculum choices and assumptions. The foregoing has shown that curriculum appraisal, review, analysis, and evaluation may be viewed as one and the same; hence the term 'critical appraisal', as used in this paper, means the same as critical review, analysis or evaluation.

Concept of Curriculum

Many theorists view curriculum as a school plan. Tholappan (2015), citing Carter, for example, defines curriculum as "a general overall plan of the content or specific materials of instruction that the school should offer the student by way of qualifying him for graduation or certification for entrance into a professional or a vocational field." Similarly, Modebelu (2015) refers to curriculum as the planned and unplanned experiences which learners receive in the process of their formal or semi-formal education for the purpose of becoming rounded persons who can make meaningful contributions for the betterment of their society and global environment. These definitions reveal that curriculum is a fundamental requirement in the education process. A broader view of curriculum is given by Adult and Community Learning Services (n.d.). It defines curriculum as the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn at a particular period of their training. For Adult and Community Learning Services, curriculum includes the learning standards students are expected to meet; the units and lessons that teachers should teach; the assignments and projects given to students; the books, materials, videos, presentations and readings used in a course; and the tests, assessments, and other methods used to evaluate students' learning. In other words, the curriculum is a guide, which directs the attention of the teachers and learners to the content areas; reading and practical materials; instructional methods; and assessment techniques necessary in a particular course of study. Nunan (2013) gives a much broader view of curriculum. He sees curriculum as a plan of action (planned curriculum), a description of what actually happens in the classrooms (implemented curriculum), and an analysis and description of what learners actually learn (the assessed curriculum). Nunan's view summarizes the present researchers' perspective of curriculum – the course (curriculum) as 'planned', 'implemented', and 'assessed'. The present research therefore has not limited itself to the course plan or course contents of the 'Use of English' programme, but has accommodated the implementation (methods of teaching/ learning) and the assessment (perceptions of implementation) of the programme.

Concept of the 'Use of English'

The term 'Use of English', as used in this research, refers to the compulsory English language courses, studied as 'General Studies', by all first year students of the Nigerian tertiary educational institutions, no matter their course of study. The Use of English language courses are usually offered in the first and second semesters of the students' first year of study, and they may go by different course codes and titles in the different sectors of the Nigerian tertiary institutions (universities, polytechnics and colleges of education), though the course contents are more or less the same in each of these sectors. The Use of English courses are considered very vital for students at the tertiary level of education in Nigeria, because they are supposed to: (a) help the students acquire a high level of proficiency in the English language; (b) facilitate the students' mastery of their professional courses, course lectures, textbooks and other materials, the language of which is mostly technical in nature; and (c) aid effective communication in spoken and written exercises both within and outside their lecture halls. In this regard, the *National Universities Commission: Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard for Undergraduate Programmes in Nigerian Universities, Arts* (2014), states that the objectives of the General Studies English include:

- a) To offer students in all departments a sound foundation and functional mastery of the English Language in its various uses.
- b) To breed able and inspiring users of English who can assert themselves as expected.
- c) To enable students understand adequate approaches of organizing time; taking, organizing and developing notes.
- d) To enable students understand how to utilize the library adequately.

(p. 22)

These lofty goals of the Use of English courses, however, may not be attained without a proper implementation of the curriculum. In line with that, experts concede that selection of content, teaching method, and evaluation procedure quite often combine to make a course effective or ineffective. The present research, therefore, seeks to determine how these three factors contribute to the effectiveness or otherwise of the Use of English curricula in the tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Core Contents of Contemporary English Language Curricula

From literature available, it is gathered that any contemporary English language curriculum must have the following core contents, as appropriate to the level of study/ students for which the curriculum is meant: statement of objectives and processes; linguistic and communicative skills /activities, and four key language skills /activities. These core contents, as mentioned, are discussed briefly in the sub-sections following.

Statement of objectives and processes

The English language curricula usually begin by stating the 'objectives' of the curriculum/ programme and the 'processes' of achieving the objectives (Nunan, 2013). Williams (1990) refers to these objectives and processes as 'skills' and 'activities' of the English curriculum. Stotsky

(2013), on the other hand, prefers the term “guiding principles”. Objectives are usually derived from the needs of the students; in other words, the skills the course aims to inculcate in the students. Processes, on the other hand, are the activities, the different language elements learnt/ taught or practiced in order to achieve particular objectives and inculcate required skills in the students.

Linguistic and communicative skills/ activities

An ideal English language curriculum should contain both linguistic and communicative activities/ skills (Le, 2016; Nunan, 2013; Gray & Klapper, 2009; Williams, 1990). Linguistic skills or competence, in the opinion of Williams, is the ability to control items of language at the sentence level, while communicative skills or competence refers to the ability to use language in its socio-cultural, interpersonal aspects, beyond the sentence level; that is, at the discourse level. Linguistic competence usually considers correctness of phonology, grammar and lexis, example, ‘This is my bag. It is mine.’ It will be wrong, for example, to say ‘This is my bag. It is his.’ Correct choice of words and collocations are also part of linguistic competence, examples: ‘fine weather, strong tea’, not ‘handsome weather, powerful tea’. Correct pronunciation of words, for example, ‘flour’ should be pronounced as /flaʊə/ not /flo:/. Linguistic competence, generally, covers parts of speech, tenses, agreements, modals, and other structure items found in the sentence.

The foregoing indicates that learning grammar is the key to the development of the linguistic skill. To define grammar, we can borrow from Nwodo (2012), who views grammar as the principles and rules that underlie or govern the use of language. The grammar of a language is preoccupied with the rules and theories of the language. Grammar is made up of three main branches, namely, syntax, phonology, and semantics. While syntax is concerned with the parts of speech and their orderly arrangement in sentences, including concord, punctuation, and spellings; phonology deals with the sounds of the language, including syllables, stress and rhythm; and, lastly, semantics deals with the meaning of words, vocabulary, and meaning of sentences, ambiguities, etc. As regards the teaching of grammar or linguistic skills, Larsen-Freeman (2009) recommends that teachers adopt a “grammar checklist” rather than a sequence. This means that teachers should have an unordered set of grammar structures they need to teach, but they can do so locally in a way that attends to their students’ readiness to learn. This means that learners’ target language proficiency determines the aspects of grammar to teach. It also means that grammar structures can be worked on as they arise in content or during communicative activities.

Communicative competence, unlike linguistic competence, is interested in appropriateness of usage, conventional usage, transactional usage and interactional usage. For example the articles of language used when communicating at an executive meeting would be different from such used when greeting friends or discussing with a family member. Or, after a meal in a restaurant, the usual request is “Bill, please”, not “How much are you selling me the rice and chicken?” Learning the nature, strategies, and methods of communication are necessary while seeking to acquire communicative proficiency in a given language. Pearson, Nelson, Titsworth, & Harter (2003) view

communication as “the process by which meaning is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behaviour” (p. 10). In communication, one goes beyond language use to consider elements, such as the encoder, decoder, message, medium, noise, power, culture, environment, the verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication. Debates, seminars, meetings, interviews, public relations, conflict resolutions, leadership are topics that come up while teaching the communicative skills of language.

It is the challenge of the language classroom, as Gray and Klapper (2009) posit, to develop learners’ internalised linguistic competence, that is, their **implicit** knowledge of and capacity for appropriate language use, in tandem and interactively with **explicit** knowledge of grammatical and phonological rules (communicative competence). The latter, according to Gray and Klapper, requires the development of an expanding body of interlocking skills through imitation, repetition, drilling and frequent practice in extended contexts to the point where these skills become automatic and unconscious.

The four key language skills/ activities

The four key language skills include: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Any language curriculum seeks for ways of achieving these skills to a certain extent in the learner. On listening, Vandergrift and Goh (2009) observe that if language was taught for face-to-face communication, then listening was an important skill in this regard. Listening is the most basic skill of language. Babies/ children are only able to acquire language if they have the capacity to hear and listen. The ICT and the Internet are found to be effective in the teaching and learning of the speaking skill (Bygate, 2009). On this, Nawale and Mothe (2013), citing Barad, emphasize that the ICT has provided a wider scope to understand the way people from various parts of the world speak the language. Also, it has been discovered that the introduction of oral testing in some schools has resulted in more attention being paid to speaking skills within schools (Bygate, 2009).

Reading is one of the basic literacy skills. It is a prerequisite to comprehension. As the pupil goes from the primary school into the secondary school, emphasis shifts from reading stories with known content to reading more difficult materials that teach the child new ideas and opinions. This shift from ‘learning to read to reading to learn’ is especially important because the student must now begin to use reading skills to learn facts and concepts in social studies, science, and other subjects (Anidi, 2018). When the student moves into the institutions of higher learning, reading materials become even more abstract and contain a larger, more technical vocabulary. At this stage, the student not only must acquire new information, but also must learn to critically analyze the reading passage or text, summarize the ideas raised, and, at the same time, achieve an optimal reading rate based on the difficulty of the material and the purpose of the reading. Literature is particularly important in the development of reading and comprehension skills in the students.

Writing facilitates general language proficiency and teachers use writing to promote other skills. In this regard, Polio and Williams (2009) discovered while studying the writing of high school ESL students that the learners had greater access to written input, generated more written language than oral, and received more feedback on their writing than on speech. The simple act of writing can help learners pay attention to language form (linguistic skills), even without any teacher intervention.

21st Century English Language Teaching Strategies

The pursuit of the most appropriate language teaching method is considered central in the field of English language education. Over the centuries, different methodologies have evolved in the teaching of English as a second or a foreign language (ESL or EFL), and indeed in the general field of language teaching. Some of these teaching methods include Grammar-Translation, Direct, Audio-lingual, Functional Notional Approach, Communicative, and the 21st Century teaching strategies. These methods, however, seem to revolve around a basic understanding of educational theory and classroom management of language teaching. But the researchers' interest in this paper is on the 21st Century teaching strategies.

Effective teaching in the 21st Century, according to Simmons (2010), requires more than the understanding of educational theory and classroom management. Teachers must learn to collaborate with other educators; to implement new technology in the classroom; and to prepare students to enter a global economy. This implies that emphasis must shift from teaching to cover the curriculum content to teaching to ensure that students learn the appropriate concepts and ideas to aid understanding. There should be a shift from 'transmitting knowledge' to 'creating understanding'. One of the greatest strategies in the teaching of the English language is the use of the ICT. For Churches (2008), the ICT, combined with the emphasis on skills and the communicative methods of delivery, has implications for the teachers of English, who are now required to behave in certain ways, such as:

- (1) Adapting the curriculum and the requirements to teach in imaginative ways. They must be able to adapt software and hardware designed for a business model into tools to be used by a variety of age groups and abilities.
- (2) Leveraging on collaborative Web tools, such as Blogger, Wikispaces, LinkedIn, Zoom, YouTube, to enhance teaching and learning.
- (3) Sometimes, surrendering oneself to the students' knowledge.
- (4) Continuing to absorb experiences and knowledge, staying current and adaptable as the horizons and landscapes change.

Perceptions of the Implementation of the English Language Curricula

The perceptions of teachers, students, parents, programme coordinators, heads of institutions, government, and society, at large, on the implementation of a school programme, course or curriculum are usually important. Such perceptions help to guide the researcher to discover what can

be improved on or maintained in the curriculum. Here, we shall concentrate on the perceptions of the teachers and students of English on the implementation of the English language curricula, particularly in second language situations. Factors usually considered while evaluating the perceptions of the teachers of English on the implementation of the English language curriculums include: teachers' involvement in curriculum development, teachers' proper training and knowledge, their work load, class size, teaching materials, class time limit/ credit units, accuracy of students' needs analysis, and, lastly, extent of respect for the English teacher.

Again, while evaluating students' perceptions of the English language curricula, particularly the General Studies English or English for Specific Purposes (ESP), studied in the tertiary institutions, factors or questions to be considered usually include: students' thoughts on the value or significance of the course in their life, motivations for the study, drawbacks in the implementation of the English language curriculum, teachers' teaching method and learning environments.

Research Methodology

The research design employed for this study is the descriptive survey, interfaced with the evaluative design. The area of study is Enugu State, for reasons of patriotism, interest and utility, in addition to that of proximity, on the part of the researchers. Six government-owned tertiary educational institutions in Enugu State were chosen for analysis: 2 universities; 2 polytechnics; and 2 colleges of education: the University of Nigeria, Nsukka; Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Ebeano-City; Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu; Enugu State Polytechnic, Iwollo; Enugu State College of Education (Technical), Enugu; and Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu.

The population for this study consisted of all the students who studied the 'Use of English' courses in the 2018/2019 session and the lecturers who regularly teach the 'Use of English' courses in the six institutions studied. The population of these students summed up to 18,587, while that of the lecturers was 71, both summing up to 18,658. Using the Yamane's (1967) proportional sampling technique method, the sample size was determined as being equal to or greater than 392, proportionally. The researchers therefore opted to increase the sample size to 500 (33 lecturers and 467 students), because an increase in sample size enhances robustness and reliability of a study. The quota sampling proportion to size technique was further adopted due to high variation in the number of lecturers and students in the institutions and to ensure even representation of the population.

The instruments used for data collection in this research are two questionnaires, the QSTAR and QLTAR; that is, respectively, Questionnaire for Students for Tetfund-Assisted Research, and Questionnaire for Lecturers for Tetfund-Assisted Research on 'Critical Appraisal of the Use of English Curricula as Used in the Tertiary Educational Institutions in Enugu State, Nigeria'. While

QSTAR contains 50 questionnaire items specifically addressed to students, QLTAR contains 60 questionnaire items specifically addressed to the lecturers of the ‘Use of English’ courses. They were duly validated and reliability pretests carried out on them before use. It should be noted that 80 questionnaires meant for the students of the Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Ebeano-City, could not be administered because the school joined the ASUU strike and students disbanded, as the researchers were still making efforts to meet the students, after their lecturers had completed their own questionnaires. Yet a total of 420 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and 400 (consisting of 370 students and 30 lecturers) were collected back after they have been filled. This indicated a return rate of 95% and highly acceptable. Four questionnaires were not properly completed and hence discarded. The study was, therefore, based on 396 (consisting of 366 students and 30 lectures) respondents. The arithmetic and score mean was used to analyse the data collected and responses were arranged and summed up. The questionnaire was structured along with the scale response. It has the four-point Likert modified scale ranging from “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Disagree”.

Presentation of Results, Findings and Analyses

The results, findings and analyses of the research are presented in line with the research questions that guided the study. In presenting the results, six relatively long tables were employed. Due to space limitation here, only the table numbers and titles would be shown, using another table, here termed “Table of Presentation Tables”.

Table 1: Table of Presentation Tables

Table Number	Table Title
Table 1a	Mean rating of lecturers on core contents of the ‘Use of English’ curricula in the institutions (N=30)
Table 1b	Mean rating of students on core contents of the ‘Use of English’ curricula in the institutions (N=366)
Table 2a	Mean rating of lecturers on appropriate English language teaching methods (N=30)
Table 2b	Mean rating of students on the teaching and learning methods of the ‘Use of English’ curricula in the institutions (N=366)
Table 3	Mean rating on lecturers’ perception of the implementation of the ‘Use of English’ curricula (N=30)
Table 4	Mean rating on students’ perception of the implementation of the ‘Use of English’ curricula (N=366)

Findings and analyses, in line with the research questions, include:

Research Question 1: What are the core contents of the ‘Use of English’ language curricula in the tertiary educational institutions in Enugu State?

The lecturers and students highly agreed that most of the identified and listed core contents of the English language curricula are adequately covered in the 'Use of English' curricula. They include the key areas of linguistic and communicative skills; the four basic language skills, including the objectives and philosophies of the courses. The details include concord rules, parts of speech, punctuations, sound and symbols, pronunciation, intonation and stress patterns, and appropriateness in language and speech acts. These findings are therefore in accordance with the expectations of the second language theorists, including Le (2016); Nunan (2013); Gray and Klapper (2009); and Williams (1990). However, as revealed in Table 1a (for lecturers, No. 24), the lecturers disagreed that practical exercises on pronunciation and intonation are given adequate attention in the courses. The disagreement was with a mean rate of 2.43 and a standard deviation of 1.01. The lecturers also agreed (in Table 1a, No. 3) that the course contents emphasized more of linguistic (grammatical) competence than communicative (practical) competence. These additional findings for Research Question 1 are in line with the findings of Rodrigues (2015), on the need to pay more attention to communicative skills in the English language classroom. In Table 1b, with a cluster mean of 3.14 and a standard deviation of 0.58, the students agreed entirely that the identified and listed core contents of the 'Use of English' curricula are covered in the course. This result is not far apart from that of the teachers.

Research Question 2: Are appropriate English language teaching methods applied in the tertiary educational institutions in Enugu State?

The lecturers and students highly agreed, with a cluster mean of 3.12, and a standard deviation of 0.63, that all the identified and listed teaching methods were appropriately applied in the teaching and learning of the Use of English courses in the tertiary institutions in Enugu State, except the application of electronic and internet tools such as Blogger, Wikispaces, Whatsapp, Instagram, Linkedin, Twitter, Zoom, and the Interactive White Board, for teaching, sharing information, or assessing of the students. The finding on the adequacy of qualifications of the lecturers of English in the subject of English language teaching, for example, is at variance with the findings made by Bidabadi et al (2016) that most faculty members in the higher institution they studied, in Iran, were largely ignorant of teaching pedagogy and not trained for their teaching role. Conversely, the non-application of electronic and internet tools in instruction, as found, is similar to the findings of Tom-Lawyer (2014) that the college of education in Ogun State, Nigeria, which he carried out a study on the implementation of the English language curriculum was technologically deficient.

Research Question 3: How do the English language teachers in the tertiary educational institutions in Enugu State perceive the implementation of the 'Use of English' language curricula?

The lecturers, with a cluster mean of 2.77 and a standard deviation of 0.67, agreed that there is proper implementation of the 'Use of English' curricula in the tertiary institutions in Enugu State, in

almost all the areas of concern. The only areas of disagreement were in adequacy of class time and credit units, class sizes, workloads, and administration and marking of students' exercises. The lecturers also agreed that there may be need to add more topics to improve communicative competence of the students. Their agreement, for instance, that some lecturers in the institutions were invited during curriculum development and reviews is at variance with the reports of Nunan (2013), TESOL (2013), and Dearden and Macaro (2016) that the ESP teachers saw themselves as often an afterthought in curriculum development, rather than the principal agent that they are. Meanwhile, the issue of insufficient class time or credit units has also been reported by Onjewu (1999) as one of the impediments to the implementation of the compulsory English language course curricula in selected polytechnics in the northern states of Nigeria.

Research Question 4: How do the English language learners in the tertiary educational institutions in Enugu State perceive the implementation of the 'Use of English' language curricula?

With a cluster mean of 3.03 and a standard deviation of 0.59, the students generally agreed that there is proper implementation of the Use of English curricula in the tertiary educational institutions in Enugu State. Specific findings, for example, indicate that the students are well motivated in studying the Use of English courses, and they are aware the course is needed for career development and opportunities. These findings are in line with the findings of Earls (2016), as it concerns English as a medium of expression (EMI) in Germany, that both the lecturers and students of EMI are convinced about the inevitability of EMI in the context of globalisation of goods and services.

Further findings/ observations

From preliminary information in the questionnaires, it is observed that the codes and titles for the 'Use of English' courses vary among the different tertiary institutions and even among some departments within the same institution. It is also observed, from the preliminary information, that some departments in some institutions offer the 'Use of English' courses only in one semester of their first year of study.

Conclusion

In light of the findings above, it can be generally concluded that the 'Use of English' curricula in the tertiary institutions in Enugu State are largely being properly implemented: the core contents cover both the linguistic and communicative skills; appropriate English language teaching methods are applied in instructions; the course lecturers are qualified and regularly update themselves on the course and the teaching of it; all the first year students of the different departments in the tertiary institutions study the 'Use of English' courses; teachers and students found the course contents adequate and addressing the students' needs; and some lecturers were involved in the development of the curriculums. However, there are inadequacies in the following areas of the curricula:

pronunciation and intonation exercises; electronic and internet learning/ teaching; class time and credit units; manageable class sizes and workloads; and effective administration and marking of students' exercises. Most importantly, more emphasis should be placed on communicative skills of the language.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommended:

1. Language laboratories and virtual learning environments (VLEs), which include electricity supply, computers, internet access, interactive white boards, and projectors for the lecture hall should be provided by heads of institutions to enable the lecturers of the 'Use of English' language courses to teach the practical exercises on pronunciation, intonation, and speaking.
2. Lecturers of the 'Use of English' language courses should innovative ways of teaching the communicative skills of the English language. The ICT and internet should be useful resources here; hence, lecturers should improve on their knowledge of the ICT.
3. The curriculum developers of the different professional programmes in Nigeria (in the main, the NUC, NBTE, and NCCE), and the heads/ administrators of tertiary educational institutions, including the heads of academic departments should appreciate the importance of the 'Use of English' in the students' personal, social and career development, and so should actively involve the 'Use of English' lecturers/experts while developing course materials and schedules involving the 'Use of English'.
4. To reduce lecturers' workloads and the difficulty of managing extra-large class sizes, which exist in some of the institutions, the employment of more lecturers of the 'Use of English' courses may be considered in these institutions.
5. There is need to unify the codes and titles used for the 'Use of English' courses among institutions within the same sector – the universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education – in Nigeria, and, particularly, among the different programmes or departments of the same university, polytechnic or college of education.

Acknowledgment

This research was funded by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) Nigeria through the Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) Enugu, Nigeria.

References

- Adewunmi, F. O. A. (2012). Pertinent issues in the “Use of English” programme in Nigerian tertiary institutions. *Part II: Educational Sciences*, 3(2), 293-297. Retrieved December 12, 2017, from www.journals.savap.org.pk.
- Adult and Community Learning Services. (n.d.). Retrieved March 12, 2019, from <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/components.html>.
- Aduwa-Ogiegbaen, S., &Iyamu, O. (2006). Factors affecting quality of English language teaching and learning in secondary schools in Nigeria. *College Student Journal*, 40, (3).
- Anidi, O.C. (2018). *Advanced communication in English*. Enugu, Nigeria: Environcare Nig. Enterprises.
- Bamgbose, A. (2001). *Language and the nation: The language question in sub-Saharan Africa*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bidabadi, Shirani, N., Isfahani, N., Rouhollahi, A., &Khalili, R. (2016). Effective teaching methods in higher education: Requirements and barriers. *Journal of Advanced Medical Education*, 4(4), 170-178.
- Bygate, M. (2009). Teaching and testing speaking. In M. H. Long & C. J. Doughty (Eds.), *The handbook of language teaching*. (pp.413-440). West Sussex, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Churches, A. (2008). 21st Century Teacher. Retrieved March 28, 2019, from Wikispaces Web. http://edorigami.wikispaces.com/21st+Century+Teacher.
- Dabalen, A., Oni, B., &Adekola, O. A. (2001). Labour market prospects for university in Nigeria. *Higher Education Policy*, 14 (2), 141-159.
- Dearden, J.,&Macaro, E. (2016). Higher education teachers’ attitudes towards English: A three country comparison. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching* 6(2), 3-34.
- Dubin, F., &Olshtain, E. (1990). *Course design: Developing programs and materials for language learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Earls, C. W. (2016). *Evolving agendas in European English-medium higher education: Interculturality, multilingualism and language policy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Gray, C., & Klapper, J. (2009). Key aspects of teaching and learning in languages. In H. Fry, S. Ketteridge, & S. Marshall. *A handbook for teaching and learning in higher education: Enhancing academic practice* (pp. 323-344). New York: Routledge.
- Jansen, J. D., & Reddy, V. (1994). *Curriculum analysis*. Paper presented at a workshop entitled "Curriculum Development", held at Peninsula Technikon, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2009). Teaching and testing grammar. In M. H. Long & C. J. Doughty (Eds.), *The handbook of language teaching* (pp. 518-542). West Sussex, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Le, L. P. (2016). Aligning specialist English language curriculum in higher education with development imperatives and workplace communication needs in Vietnam: A case study of the Vietnamese petroleum industry.
- Modebelu, M. N. (2015). Curriculum development models for quality educational system. *Handbook of Research on Enhancing Teacher Education with Advanced Instructional Technologies*. Retrieved August 28, 2017, from <https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/curriculum-development-models-for-quality-educational-system/133818>.
- National Universities Commission: *Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard for Undergraduate Programmes in Nigerian Universities, Arts* (2014)
- Nawale, A., & Mothe, P. (2013). An interview with an ELT expert Professor Dr. Dilip Barad on role of ICT in English language teaching and learning. *Research Scholar: An International Refereed e-Journal of Literary Explorations*, 1(1), 27-32. Retrieved January 10, 2019, from www.researchscholar.co.in.
- Nnadi, J. E. (2015). *The English Language as a tool for wider communication and development in Nigeria*. Conference paper presented at the English Language Teachers' Association of Nigeria National Workshop/Conference, held at ASCON, Badagry, Lagos State, on Monday 29th August – Friday 2nd September, 2015.
- Nunan, D. (2013). *The learner-centered English language education: The selected works of David Nunan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nwodo, N. L. (2012). Grammar: Definition, types and features. In E. J. Otagburuagu, E. O. Okwor, C. L. Ngonebu, F. O. Orabueze, & L. C. Ogenyi (Eds.), *Basic Grammar and Composition Course for University Students* (pp. 1-20). Enugu: Snaap Press Ltd.

- Onjewu, M.A. (1999). A process of evaluation of the “Use of English” course in selected polytechnics in the Northern States of Nigeria (Ph.D. thesis, University of Jos-Nigeria, 1999).
- Oribabor, O.A. (2014). An evaluation of the current English language curriculum in Nigerian secondary schools. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 4(6), 295-300.
- Otagburuagu, E. J., Anidi, O. C., Ogayi, M. C., Kadiri, G. C., Nnamani, O. C. (2016). *Essays on language & literature: An introductory approach to the study of stylistics & applied linguistics*. Enugu: Nsukka, University of Nigeria Press.
- Pearson, J., Nelson, P, Titsworth, S, & Harter L. (2003). *Human communication*. New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education.
- Pinto, S. A., & Vithalrao, M. S. (2017). A critical analysis of the primary school curriculum. Retrieved January 4, 2019, from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321868966>
- Polio, C., & Williams, J. (2009). Teaching and testing writing. In M. H. Long & C. J. Doughty (Eds.), *The handbook of language teaching*. (pp. 486-517). West Sussex, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Rodrigues, E. N. (2015). Curriculum design and language learning: An analysis of English textbooks in Brazil (Ph.D, thesis, Andrews University, 2015). Retrieved January 20, 2019, from <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dissertations/1>
- Simmons, C. (2010). Teacher skills for the 21st Century. Retrieved March, 20, 2019, from http://www.ehow.com/list_6593189_teacher-skills-21st-century.html.
- Smith, R. T. (2015). A qualitative analysis of the English language teaching practices of Latter-day Saint missionaries (M.A thesis, Brigham Young University), Retrieved 20 March, 2019, from <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/6174>.
- Stotsky, S. (2013). An English language arts curriculum framework for American schools. Retrieved June 10, 2018, from [ELA_standards.pdf](#).
- TESOL (2013). “Implementing the common core state standards for English learners”. Retrieved October 10, 2018, from <http://www.tesol.org/docs/default-source/papers-andbriefs/professional-paper-26-march-2014.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

- Tholappan, A. (2015). Knowledge and curriculum (B.Ed thesis, Bharathidasan University Centre for Distance Education, 2015).
- Thompson, C. J. (2017). What does “Critical Appraisal” mean in evidence-based practice? Retrieved May 10, 2019, from singeducationexpert.com
- Tom-lawyer, O. O. (2015). An evaluation of the implementation of the English language Nigeria Certificate in Education curriculum: A case study of three colleges of education, Ph.D thesis, University of Central Lancashire. Retrieved September 20, from 16727 Tom-Lawyer Oris Final e-Thesis (Master Copy) Sept...
- Vandergrift, L, & Goh, C. (2009). Teaching and testing listening comprehension. In M. H. Long & C. J. Doughty (Eds.), *The handbook of language teaching*. (pp.395-411). West Sussex, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Williams, D. (1990). English language teaching: An integrated approach. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited & Safari Books (Export) Ltd.
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis*. 2nd Ed. New York: Harper and Row.