Full Length Research Paper

English language teachers' choice of second language teaching and learning theories in Eldoret municipality, Kenya

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Abstract

This paper discusses secondary school teachers' interpretation, choice and use of second language theories and approaches in the teaching of English. The main purpose of the study was to determine how teachers situated their teaching on both conventional and personal theories. This was achieved through the study objectives which were to evaluate the factors which influenced teachers' choice of theories and approaches to teaching and evaluating the theories and approaches commonly applied in teaching English. Data was obtained from 30 teachers of English in 10 selected secondary schools within Eldoret Municipality which at the time of the study had 22 secondary schools. This study employed a descriptive survey design. Data was collected by use of structured interview with selected teachers, tape-recording and observation of teachers in classes, and structured questionnaires. The study concluded that several factors including teacher personality and training and the caliber of learners influenced teachers' choice of the various theoretical approaches that were used.

Keywords: Teacher personality, Choice of approaches, Second Language Teaching, Learning Theories and approaches.

INTRODUCTION

Specific and strong theoretical frameworks of language acquisition, learning and practice should be able to provide insightful teaching. Webb and Kembo (2000) observe that teachers of English should possess attitudes that allow for flexibility and should have a knowledge base that is both theoretical and practical. These should enhance in them skills that allow for a trial of various approaches before deciding on the one that works.

In language teaching, according to Harmer (1991), nature is intractable and reason intervenes in the form of linguistically organized syllabuses, sociologically responsible curricular and psychologically well-organized methods. These result in an educational system full of restrictions, examinations and regulations which are blamed for the intermittent success that natural approaches in language acquisition have met (Richards, 1994). How teachers weave these realities into their teaching defines their beliefs in how language should be taught and learnt.

Similarly language teaching is a practical rather than a theoretical activity. It draws insights from many fields notably linguistics and socio linguistics. The need to interpret this activity in relation to theoretical developments that have significant bearings in linguistics and socio-linguistic disciplines is significant. Such interpretations could reflect different teaching dimensions. Richards (1994) identifies teachers and learners as enduring dimensions that meaningful trends in second language teaching recognize. Teaching could therefore be seen as either being learner or teacher centred depending on what dimensions teachers emphasize.

Many times language teaching has emphasized the mastery of language structures. This has led to language teaching being associated with the teaching of structural items that learners can handle. Success or failure both in

language teaching and learning is interpreted through judgment of the learners' ability to manipulate the structures of the language and through examination results.

In teaching English the tasks that confront a teacher include; the selection of language learning activities, checking student's learning and providing opportunities for practice of new items (Richards, 1994). To perform these tasks teachers are informed by their theoretical beliefs (Borg, 2003). Differences in theoretical beliefs often result in differences in the nature of language instruction. To understand how teachers discharge their functions, it is necessary to examine the theories, beliefs and thinking processes, which underlie classroom teaching. Granted that what teachers do is a reflection of what they know and believe (Onchera, 2011), teacher knowledge and teacher thinking provide the underlying framework which guide teachers' action in classrooms (Borg, 2003; Richards et al., 1994*).

The current study, attempted to put various theories and their applications in a perspective that sought to determine teachers understanding of the frameworks out of which their teaching of English was informed. If the knowledge of theory is taken as a necessary ingredient of one's professional knowledge, then interpretation of theory and practice is a problem worth researching.

Study Objectives

The objectives of the study were: to evaluate the factors which influence teachers' choice of the theories, examine approaches which influence their teaching and evaluate the theories and approaches commonly applied in teaching English.

Literature Review

The Place of Theory in Second Language Teaching

The acquisition of a second language is such a complex phenomenon that no two learners will get there by the same route. In spite of the differences, it is possible to describe the processes that are common to large numbers of people struggling with a new language by understanding more about the processes that learners share. It is possible to develop second language teaching principles and plan classroom experiences that are conducive to second language acquisition. In so doing, we develop the means by which language is made accessible to second language learners. It is these principles, experiences and processes that theories embrace.

Sainsbury (1992) defines theory as a classification backed by a stable structure of explanations enabling one to predict with reasonable accuracy the course of events that will be consequent upon one's interaction with the world. McLaughlin in Lorsen et al. (1991) look at theory as a way of criticizing, interpreting and unifying established generalizations. He considers theory as flexible and pliant in that it allows its generalizations to be modified to fit into data unforeseen in their formulation. Besides, a theory provides a way of guiding the enterprise of finding new and more powerful generalizations.

Educationally, the term is used in its widest sense to refer to the systematic study related to a topic or activity. A theory not only looks at phenomena as something coherent and unified but divisible into parts as well. For example, Krashen's monitor theory (1978), which is one of the most influential SLA models, explains second language performance ability as resulting from separate knowledge systems. These are: the acquired system and the learned system. The former is regarded as a product of application by learners of the same language learning abilities children use for their first language acquisition, whereas the later is the product of second language grammatical rules such as those for pluralizing noun phrases in English.

Language teaching and learning theories are products of theories of linguistics. In the current study, it was conceived that where teachers advocated personal theories, these should still be defined within the general realms of linguistics and psychologists.

A theory of language teaching has several characteristics. These include its usefulness, its applicability, its explicitness, coherence and consistency, its comprehensiveness, verifiability, simplicity and clarity. In relation to the current study, the usefulness of any theoretical approach employed by teachers would be assessed in terms of its usefulness to bring about good results in the teaching of English.

The reasons for indulging in theory are numerous. Language teaching does not merely involve going to class. It calls for assessment of learners' entry behaviour since not all classes put similar demands on a teacher. Teaching one group of learners could call for totally different skills from teaching another class within the same environment. By questioning themselves the teachers need to know how certain activities contribute to language learning. Further, they should consider the nature of language, how it is acquired and used as a means of conceptual thinking and social action, and how language abilities interrelate, the nature of language learning and how it is achieved.

Theories are transformational; this is because new theories change the relationship between laws and facts (Sainsbury, 1992; Savignon, 2003). They enable the utilization of empirical data to draw conclusions that are not evident from the data taken in isolation. Theories therefore transform the meaning of what is known beyond

the given information hence changing both the context and form of knowledge. Theories guide prediction. This is achieved by stimulating research as they form the springboards of hypotheses. They generate new hypothetical laws, which are put to empirical tests. These hypotheses embody predictions about where the theory is leading.

Second Language Teaching and Learning Theories/ Approaches

a) Behaviourism

Behaviourism is associated with conditioning, which is based on the theory that an animal can be trained to do anything as long as a three-stage procedure of stimulus, response and reinforcement is followed. Skinner applied the theory in relation to how humans acquired their first language. He considered language as behaviour, and maintained that the model of stimuli/response/reinforcement accounted for how human babies learnt a language. Performance for language learners was seen as being largely the result of either positive or negative reinforcement.

Behaviourism was adapted by language teachers in America and it resulted in the audio lingual method of teaching. The method used constant drilling of the learners followed by positive or negative reinforcement, which was a major focus of classroom activity. Language habit was formed through constant repetition and reinforcement by the teacher. Mistakes were immediately criticized while correct utterances praised. Audio-lingualism was fairly successful especially in the training of military personnel.

b) Cognitivism

The term refers to a set of psychological theories which are attributed to the psychologist Noam Chomsky, and which are highly critical of Skinner's view that language is a learnt behaviour. According to Chomsky in Harmer (1991), language is an intricate rule-based system. A large part of language acquisition involves mastering the rules of the language. The knowledge of those rules, which are finite, enables one to perform an infinite number of sentences in the language. A child gradually acquires competence in these rules; this competence allows children to be creative users of the language.

Language teaching though has never adopted a methodology that is based on Chomsky's work since the theories did target adult language learning. The idea that a language has a finite set of rules which learners master in order to be creative in their use of language has been responsible for the adoption of many teaching approaches and methods such as structuralism. In classrooms, learners are encouraged to use rules to create new sentences of their own. For example a subject + verb + object, sentence construction. Creating new sentences or mastering the rules is always the main objective in language teaching. Some teachers who subscribe to this theory always consider rule learning in language as the main motivation for language teaching.

c) Structuralism

Structuralism was greatly influenced by behaviourism such that in some literature the theory is referred to as structural-behaviourist. McLaughlin (1987) identifies structuralism as one of the leading theories of second language learning. The structuralists view language learning as a process of habit development to be incalcated by varying contingencies of reinforcement. The model is classified as structural since it is concerned with patterns or structures of the spoken language. The structuralists emphasized overt-patterned behaviour of responses to stimuli.

Structuralism is mostly concerned with the spoken language, which the learners require for communications. They were the first grammarians to provide an analysis of the phonological systems, which could later serve as the basis for the systematic teaching of pronunciation. Granted its presentation of linguistic structures or patterns, it allows for the use of different types of transformational exercises and the use of substitution. The structuralists also emphasize the formal properties of a language. These were to be learnt in order to encode and decode speech (Finnochiaro, 1986).

The main weakness with structuralism was that the over learning, the attention to form and the exhaustion of teachers did not produce large numbers of learners who could communicate with, either the teacher, their peers or native speakers. The theory tends to give syntactic relations very little attention. The structuralists provide insufficient explanations to guarantee clear comprehension and correct usage by ignoring grammaticality. The structuralists do not provide an adequate descriptive instrument in error and stylistic analysis. Any teacher who uses the structural approach only, may end up not exposing the learners into mastering language that may enable them to communicate effectively.

d) Functionalism

Functionalism looks at language as a vehicle for the expression of functional meaning. It emphasizes the semantic and communicative dimensions of language rather than the grammatical characteristics of a language. This view leads to specification and organization of language teaching content by categories of meaning and

functions rather than by elements of structure.

According to Salimbene (as cited in Finnochiaro, 1986), in a paper presented to a forum of English language teachers, the functional approach does not deny the importance of mastering grammatical system of the language nor does it abandon systematic development of structural mastery in the presentation of language materials, it causes a re-evaluation of traditional linguistic priorities by reviving interests in discourse analysis and semantics. Grammatical form is not taught as an end in itself but as a means of carrying out communicative intent. The change in emphasis has obscured the concern for grammatical aspects of the language because it does not apply the traditional concepts of grammatical progression (Finnochiaro, 1986). Structural patterns considered advanced because of relative complexities are presented at the beginning of functional course as they are used to perform communicative functions being

The functional approach is considered learner-centred since learners are given opportunities to discover the answers for themselves in groups, pairs or individually. To achieve this, the physical arrangement of the class changes to encourage communication between the students hence the need to give them room to face one another as they would in normal conversation. The approach provides for a nurturing of each student's self esteem because students are not made to feel totally dependent on the teacher as the giver of knowledge. Though die teacher may know the language, only the learner knows what he wants to express through that language (Finnochiaro, 1986).

Teachers applying the functional approach require knowledge of the grammar of the language they will be teaching besides being able to analyze the language to establish how communicative acts are carried out. They need to be sensitive to the way native speakers ask for information, make request, and express their opinions among other things. They need to discriminate how each of these ways is appropriate. Teachers of a functional syllabus will develop task-oriented activities, which motivate' learners to learn the language by doing and discovering. They use strategies, which students have already mastered in the acquisition of the first language. These strategies emphasize the use of thinking strategies and exercises from authentic texts for building communicative strategies.

e) Transformational Generative Grammar

This refers to a variety of theories which view additions to sentences, changes in the order of words or word deletions due to the application of given rules as transformations. In this manner the view gives detailed instruction for producing sentences. The transformational generative grammar (T.G.G.) seeks to describe the native speakers' competence. The principles that govern transformations enable the speaker to produce and understand an infinite number of sentences of his language. These concern the underlying systems that make verbal behaviour possible.

The T.G.G. presents an overall conception of the system of language hence providing a better linguistic foundation for language teaching. The rules that it provides are ordered, clear and formally explicit. It also provides information for structural exercises of the transformational type, which should be useful in language teaching. The T.G.G, equally, provides rules, which allow for systematic construction of complex sentences thereby forming an excellent basis for the teaching of writing.

It distinguishes between surface and deep structure of an utterance. The grammar recognizes the existence of linguistic universal and analogies between languages at the level of deep structure. It characterizes the notion of grammaticality and ungrammaticality, which are useful in language learning.

f) Acquisition/learning Model

To explain how people become language users, some studies have drawn a distinction between language acquisition and language learning. Krashen (1987) defines acquisition as a subconscious process, which results in the knowledge of language whereas learning only results in knowing about a language. Acquiring a language is viewed as more successful and longer lasting than language learning, which is a conscious activity (Harmer, 1991, p. 33).

Krashen argues that, second or foreign language learning should be more like the child's acquisition of its native language. Children are never consciously taught their mother tongue, although there may be some limits on the language that they hear. Children similarly do not set out to consciously learn their first language. They instead hear a considerable amount of the language in situation: where they are involved in communicating with an adult, usually a parent (Harmer, ibid.). The ability for children to use language, in Krashen's view, is the result of many subconscious processes. Language learning is as a result "if the input they receive and the conditions that accompany this input.

Krashen further argues that successful acquisition is bound up with the nature of input the learners receive. The input should contain language that the student already knows as well as language they have previously not heard; that is the input should be of a slightly higher level than the students are capable of using, but at a level they are capable of understanding. The use of such language which Krashen refers to as rough tuned, is compared to the way adults talk to children. Parents simplify the language they use for children to understand. If language students receive input that is rough tuned,

they will acquire the type of language that they did not previously known without making a conscious effort to do so.

Applied to teaching, the model raises a number of issues depending on the objective of learning the second language. It could be used in choosing the experiences to be acquired, however, in a general sense it is not easy to determine what a learner has acquired as a basis for selecting experiences that are to be taught given that individual differences could be experienced by the learners, who have been going through the same programme. Since acquisition is a mental process, distinguishing the learnt from the acquired input, is a difficult task to determine.

g) Humanistic Approaches

These approaches do not just restrict themselves to the teaching of language but also emphasize the helping of learners to develop themselves as people. This has led to the development of teaching methodologies and techniques that stress the humanistic aspect of learning. The experience of the learners, the development of their personalities and encouragement of positive feelings are viewed as important as the learning of language. The methodologies that subscribe to this approach include; community language learning, suggestopaedia, the silent way and total physical response.

The community language learning is based on counseling learning in which the teacher sits outside the circle of learning and does translations to the learners. Tapes can also be used. Suggestopaedia is a method in which the learners sit in relaxed atmosphere listening to music. They are given new identities as they listen to dialogues. The relaxed atmosphere, the new identities and listening to dialogues will enable students acquire the language.

The silent way hinges on very little input being given by the teacher. Teachers neither criticize nor praise the learners until success is achieved. Sticks of different colours and lengths are used to signify grammatical units, stressed and unstressed parts of words or whole stories. In total physical response the teacher gives students instructions, which they have to carry out. Students have to learn the language through actions. Community language learning and suggestopaedia concentrate heavily on students and their states of mind. Total physical response allows for a pre-speaking phase where students are not forced to speak until they feel confident to do so. The silent way forces learners to rely on their own resources as even when under the teachers' direction.

Teaching English in Conditions of Theoretical and Approach Pluralism

Theoretical approach pluralism is what Indangasi (as cited in Okombo and Nandwa, 1992) views as contending theoretical frameworks (concepts) in second language teaching. The business of recommending a particular theory and approach at the expense of others might not be straight forward. This is because at every stage in the history of language teaching, theoretical approaches and methods have been suggested. These have often reflected the changing values, in ways of knowing, in assumptions about meaning and many other forms of paradigm shifts, which cannot be captured by any curriculum design, since theoretical systems are not static. The teachers could be faced with the dilemma of choosing the best theory for use in teaching (Sainsbury, 1992).

The first question to be addressed is whether we could talk of approaches in competition and what this entails. Similarly the parameters for assessing the most suitable theoretical approach are necessary. Sainsbury (1992) contends that theories can be said to be in competition in so far as they share aims, where they cannot be said to be held simultaneously and consistently. As noted about the theories of second language already reviewed, the theories are about second language teaching and learning but they all appear to be stressing different aspects of the language which are considered as the primary focus by their proponents. In Kenya, language is taught to enable the learners communicate with different users of English in various contexts. This implies that the theory chosen will focus less on changing structures in the language and more on functional communication.

In selecting appropriate theory and approach, the teacher is guided by the objectives he wishes to be attained (Hammersly, 1990). The objective of teaching English in Kenya's secondary schools is to provide learners with the opportunity to realize language in context. (KIE, 2002:3). The theory and approach thus selected should be able to foster the realization of this objective.

Given the foregoing discussion and in view of the plurality of second language teaching and learning theories and approaches, it would be possible to teach language by tapping from the body of theoretical knowledge that has developed within the discipline. Similarly, applying the recommendations of experts as contained in different subject syllabi would ensure that there is uniformity in teaching and learning. If teacher training, as argued by Kembo (2000), Barasa(2005), is geared towards producing teachers whose attitude allow for flexibility, whose knowledge base is both theoretical

and practical and who possess skills that allow for a tryout of various approaches before deciding on the best, then the task of selecting a theory and an approach that is both current and practical cannot be a nightmare.

In choosing a particular approach for teaching, a teacher will have to consider the beliefs about teaching and learning, goals attitudes and decisions which learners bring into the learning situation. These have a lot of bearing on how learners approach learning (Richards & Rockhart, 1994). Learners bring into the classroom very specific attitudes about how to learn language and about the kind of activities, which they consider useful in learning. It is possible for them to value learning strategies which principles of good learning and teaching discourage. A good example is the use of memorization, which promotes rote learning. Whereas learners could favour it, teaching discourages it for its passivity. This is emphasized by Widdowson in Brumfit and Johnson (1979) who argue that in teaching language a teacher has to continually make compromises to adjust his approach to the requirements of students and the exigencies of the teaching situation.

With this in mind, the present study argues that a language teacher expresses his theoretical conviction through classroom activities. This places a heavy burden on the teacher's choice of classroom activities, which should reflect his theoretical disposition. Language teaching is basically an expression about the nature of language or how language is learnt. No language teaching can take place in a theoretical vacuum,(Okombo,1988) even when not overtly stated. All teaching is influenced by theory as implicit in the teaching practice. Theory reveals itself in the assumptions underlying the practice of teaching, in the planning of the course of study, in the routines of the classroom and in the decisions that the teacher makes daily

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out among selected teachers within Eldoret Municipality of Uasin Gishu County. Eldoret municipality was selected because of the researchers' conviction that teachers within the municipality have similar characteristics with teachers from any other region within the country, and this guaranteed the selection of the county for this study.

The research adopted the descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey was chosen as dictated by the nature of study which was to describe the state of affairs as it exists, (Kombo and Tromp; 2006). At the time of the study, Eldoret municipality had 22 secondary schools. Proportional stratified sampling was used to stratify the schools into three categories of girls, boys and mixed schools. From each of these schools, three teachers of English were picked for the study. The 30 teachers were selected from the 22 schools that were

found within the municipality at the time of the study. Researchers argue that at least 30% of the target population can be considered ideal as this would facilitate generalization of the findings, (Orodho and Kombo; 2002).

To sort out the teachers' opinions and competencies about their conceptualization of second language theoretical concepts and approaches, the current study made use of various research tools and techniques i.e. a structured questionnaire, class observation schedule, structured interview and tape recording to collect data for this study. All the instruments were tested for validity and reliability before administration.

DISCUSSION OF STUDY FINDINGS

Teachers' Choice and use of Second Language Theories and approaches

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the factors which influence teachers' choice of the theories and approaches in the teaching of English in Kenyan secondary schools. As such, the study found it paramount to audio-tape, observe, interview and question information from teachers of English. The revelation was that various factors have been established that contribute to teachers choice and use of theories and approaches that facilitate the teaching of English in secondary schools. These include; teacher related factors, the learners, the school practice, the materials used in teaching and the syllabus.

The interviewees gave several teacher related factors that influence the choice of theory and approach. These included factors such as the level of one's training, the institution where one trained in especially if second language teaching theories were ever taught. This finding seems to be in line with Barasa's (2005) assertion that teachers of English are trained to perform teaching functions influenced by certain conditions. One of the respondents, who had taught for 14 years and had trained as a teacher of English/ Literature and Geography, felt that he, was not able to identify any theories because he only remembers being taught general theories of learning in psychology during his training. On the other hand, the second respondent remembered being taught second language theories in college and therefore underscores their usage in the teaching of English but is not sure which one he uses. They also cited teacher's own interests in the teaching of English and what teachers want the learners to learn as determining how they teach. The learners are a significant determinant of what approaches and theories to use in teaching. The figure below demonstrates the reasons teachers give for choosing a theory (Figure 1).

It can be noted from the figure above that majority of the teachers choose theories and approaches that are
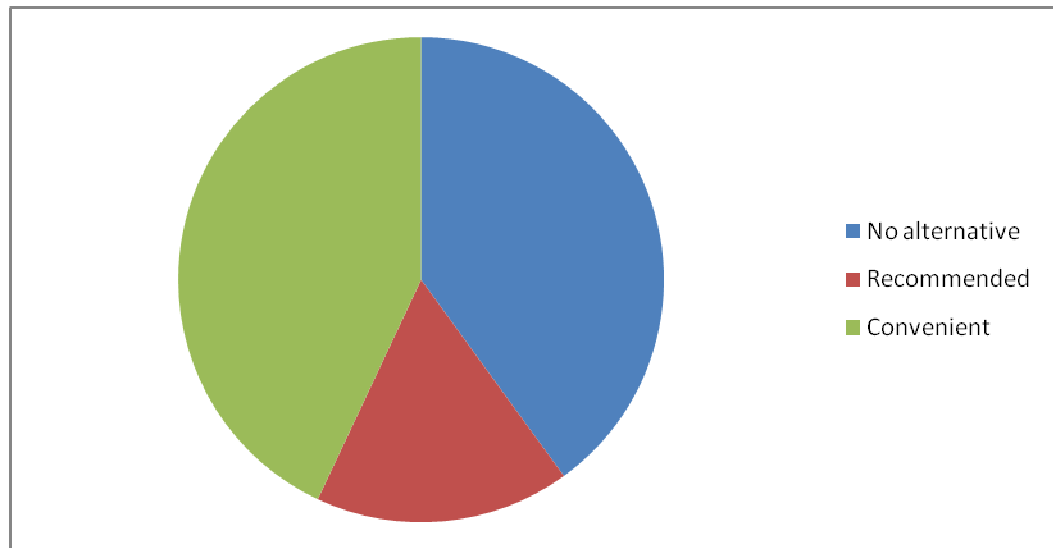
Figure 1. Reasons for teachers' use of theories and approaches

convenient to them while very few choose those theories that are recommended b policy bodies. This study found out that each teacher in a way had a belief or a theory regarding the teaching and learning of English. Whether these theories are acceptable was viewed to be outside the scope of the current study. Different as they were, the theories explained why teachers gave prominence to certain aspects of language teaching at the expense of the others while planning the teaching and learning experiences Whereas in the junior classes it was reported that they were interested in language activities that freely engaged them such -as debates, singing and drama, at form three and four, many learners only wanted to be taught to pass the impending exams. Teachers are therefore forced to use approaches that are geared towards satisfying this need in the learners. Similarly, learners come from various backgrounds with different attitudes for learning a language. Those who come from urban areas were said to be freer when using the language because they already had some competence in using it. On the other hand, those who came from rural set up may not engage in language activities freely because of their limited English. Teachers would therefore be forced to use approaches and theories that reflect the diversity of learners' backgrounds. Learners were also said to have different attitudes that have led them to develop attitudes that portray girls as having a better aptitude for language as opposed to the boys. These make teaching English to girls much more learner centred than teaching boys alone or teaching both boys and girls. The researchers were able to observe girls and boys being taught differently and also those who were taught in a mixed set-up. Most of the teaching in mixed schools involved teacher explanations whereas girls were seen to be eager to take up reading activities, answer

questions and even perform demonstrations in class. The researchers argue that girls are freer than boys and where the two learn together both tend to shy away from participating in class activities.

School administrators lay a lot of emphasis on passing exams. This is because education system in Kenya is largely and has been exam oriented (NT 2012). It was established that to satisfy this need teachers were forced to abandon techniques and approaches which led to language proficiency at the expense of those that ensured that learners were drilled to pass exams. The questionnaire analysis reported that all teachers designed activities which evaluated the learners' mastery of various linguistic points which they taught.

The current English language curriculum is integrated. Thus all skills are seen to facilitate the learning and acquisition of other skills. This explains why many teachers reported using the integrated approach even though some talked of integrating theories when it was meant using a mixture of approaches. The three most widely used textbooks, namely the integrated series, head-start in Secondary English and New Horizons are noted to adopt this approach. It is therefore true that the curriculum objectives and the textbooks used all influenced the teachers' choice of theories and approaches.

Teaching / Learning Approaches and Theories Used in Teaching English

Different theories and approaches were reported to be used by teachers. Whereas the interviewees talked of using theories that involved the learner more (learner centred) the respondents who filled the questionnaire

Table 1. Teaching/ learning theories used in teaching English

Approach/Theory	No. of Teachers	% (Percentage)
Structuralism	15	52.2
Behaviourism	5	16
Functionalism	3	08.8
Cognitivism	2	07
TGG	2	05
Humanistic	1	04
Acquisition/learning	1	04
others	1	03
TOTAL	**30**	**100 %**

listed structuralism and the structural approach (52.2%); functionalism and functional approach (7%) and behaviourism (16%) as the most widely used approaches. Table 1 above describes this:

Parrot (1993) looks at teaching and learning approaches as either those that entail teachers' in giving or those that entail teachers in guiding learners. Many teachers used approaches that portrayed them as givers this is because it was observed that in a majority of cases, 75% of the time used in class, the learners were listening. This means that during this time it was only the teacher who was talking. Only 15% and 20% of the time did teachers, engage learners in writing and reading respectively. Apparently talking is only done minimally by learners during lessons as it accounted for only 5%. This finding corroborates other observations on the amount of time teachers talk in class in relation to that given to learners (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Flanders, 1970; Onchera and Mwamba, 2009)

Teachers appeared to have problems with distinguishing between the concepts of theory, approach and methodology. Some reported classroom activities such as sentence constructions as an approach. These terms were used interchangeably though they refer to different concepts in teaching and learning. The study established that the theories the teachers used were formal ones. No teacher reported using a private theory. This situation could be attributed to the teachers' personality. They do not like experimenting with their ideas. They may also not be aware of the experiments they make with their beliefs.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that teachers are aware of the theories which lead to the use of particular approaches. Also the Caliber of learners that teachers taught equally demanded that teachers adjusted their teaching beliefs to suit learners. The study also concludes that too much premium is placed on the syllabus which is not only rigid on what is to be taught but was also too demanding. A teacher whose aim is to cover the syllabus will be reluctant to experiment with theories that do not recognize that second language learning in a classroom set up is guided by what has already been prescribed.

WAY FORWARD

• Following the conclusions reached, the following suggestions and recommendations were made: Teachers of English should adjust their teaching to suit their own personal beliefs. These should guide them 'in selecting appropriate approaches and experiences that should arouse the interests of their learners in learning the language.

• Teachers need constant retraining and assessment to make them confident enough to be able to put into practice their own beliefs. Most of the theories that teachers use are products of studies that were carried out on learners from different environmental realities such that the application of these on the present learners might not bear the same result.

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