

Re-Engineering the English Language Education in Nigeria for Sustainable Knowledge Economy in a Digitalized World

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Abstract: *The increasing rate of digitalization and globalization has created serious needs for people in the workforce who can communicate in multiple languages gives an edge in a multilingual and digitalized world and also creates varied opportunities for development. To achieve the set goals and objectives of this work, it seems necessary to reengineer the English language Education especially in Nigeria. The paper therefore presents "Reengineering the English Language Education in Nigeria for Sustainable Knowledge Economy in a Digitalized World. The paper also explores the concepts of English Language Education, Reengineering the English Language Education, sustainable knowledge economy and English language education for sustainable knowledge economy in a digitalized world. The researchers also introduced or used two suitable theories such as: Cummins' Theory of Language Proficiency and Behaviorist theories in the English language learning to highlight the work. More popular empirical studies related to the topic were expressed. Conclusion and recommendation was finally made by the writers on how and the needs for reengineering the English language education in Nigeria for sustainable knowledge economy in a digitalized world.*

Keywords: reengineering, English language education, sustainable, sustainable knowledge economy, digitalized world.

INTRODUCTION

Umera-Okeke (2009) defines language as a group of symbols used by a particular race to communicate themselves both verbally and in written forms. It is obviously a vital tool, a communication of thoughts and feelings through a system of arbitrary signals such as voice sounds, gestures or written symbols. Language is not only a means of communicating thoughts and ideas, but it forges friendships, cultural ties and economic relationships. Anagbogu, Mbah

and Erne (2010) Defined language as a means which human beings have devised for communicating ideas, feelings, emotions, desires etc through complex vocal or written symbols. To communicate effectively, message is sent with words, gestures or actions which somebody else received. So, communication can be said to be in two-way processes ie with the sender and the receiver. So, both listening and speaking are important for communication to take place.

In educational context, which is the major focus of this paper, language is important for comprehension and making use of knowledge. So, language can be reengineered to suit a particular situation. This is actually what motivated the writers of this work to present a topic "Reengineering the English language Education in Nigeria for Sustainable Knowledge Economy in a Digitalized World. The aims and objectives of the work are to outline and poor implementations and unsuitable policies found in Nigeria Educational system today. The researchers therefore deemed it a better approach to start by reengineering the English language education in Nigeria.

In Igiri et al (2021). "In Nigeria the English is used as an instructional language in her educational curriculum, it is also used in political, economical, social and religious fields. Igiri et al (2021) maintain that Nigeria as a multilingual country decided to adopt the English language to solve the problem of communication, so, in all these explanations above, the solution should be to reengineer the English language Education in Nigeria for sustainable knowledge economy in a digitalized world.

The paper highlights some related concepts and definition of terms: English Language Education, Reengineering the English Language Education, Sustainable Knowledge Economy and English Language Education for Sustainable Knowledge Economy in a Digitalized World. Two suitable theories such as "Cummins' Theory of Language Proficiency and Behaviorist Theories in the English Language Learning were presented by the researchers for better understanding of the work. Finally, conclusions and recommendations were made by the writers.

Conceptual Clarification and Definition of Terms

English Language Education

In Igiri et al (2021), language in its natural or functional perspective has many unique features which one can conclude that it plays dual roles or functions in a well-known formal educational system. In the first place, it can be seen as a school subject on the school scheme of work or curriculum. In this case, it can be referred to as language education just as we can see in other disciplines like economics education, religion education, political science education, mathematics education etc. However, the second role or function of language according to Igiri et al (2021) is actually what made it different and unique to other school subjects. The writers explained that the English language is used as a medium of instruction or teaching in all other disciplines including the language itself all over the world. As a result of this second role, one can comfortably coined out the title of language in education. From the explanations above,

one can see language education and language in education being referred to as the two unique and distinct roles or functions that language naturally plays in educational system, in any case, the researchers are majorly talking and touching the former, which is "language education" in this paper.

Concept of Reengineering and the English Language Education

From Okoye (2023) in his work, "Reengineering Language Education through the teaching of English as a second language in Nigeria schools as retreated on 12th Feb, 2023 from <https://www.globalacademicgroup.com/Journals/pristine>. The researcher lucidly highlights the above concept "Re-Engineering". "The Word, "re-engineering" obviously makes one think of the existence of problem and possible solution for remedy. Re-engineering is the process of changing strategy and, or design of a faculty or non-working system so as to enable it to improve efficiency. Offoma (2011) as cited by Okoye (retrieved, 2023), was of the view that the term re-engineering means one which is aimed at taking education out of the catch-up mode and placing it at the edge of the development process. In a nut shell, re-engineering implies changes of various types in a system from a slight renovation to a total overhaul. Okoye in his work maintains that the purpose of reengineering is to improve the system's security, stability, performance etc.

Anyadiegwu (2009) talking of language education had it that language education has to do with learning a second language or a foreign language. According to the writer it is concerned with the factors that affect success or failure in the language. The researcher insists that language education looks at the teacher's methods, attitudes and motivation of the learners, how individual differences among learners can influence the teaching outcome. Language education reinforces the work of the organization in favour of linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingual education. Language education is one of the fundamental aspects of personal development and languages are the main vehicle for educational and teaching activities. The researcher continued his expression and says that language education is based in the notion that language is the key vehicle for inculcating knowledge, skills and competence. Because of this, according to the writer, there is the need for teachers to understand the knowledge and mechanism of language. He also says that it aims at supporting the action of member states in preparing and implementing language policies designed to promote language teaching. He propounded that science cannot advance if specialized vocabularies are not developed.

Anyadiegwu (2009) it helps to develop a learner's linguistic skills thereby promoting educational growth inside the school as well as social and personal development outside the school. The writer added that language education develops learners' communicative competence and guides them in the study of the rules of pronunciation and grammar of a language so as to enable a practical command of that language. With the highlights on both the concepts of reengineering language education by some researchers as cited above, the writers of this paper now express the main focus of this paper which is thus:

Reengineering the English Language Education for Sustainable Knowledge Economy in a Digitalized World

- i. Reengineering the English language education
- ii. Sustainable knowledge Economy in a digitalized world.

From Ekah (retrieved on 7th march 2023 from <https://www.globalacademicgroup.com/journals/pristine/re-engineering>, on 14th February, 2023, "Re-Engineering of English language education", English language, although a second language in the Nigeria situation, is also the first language which talking about formal education needs. So, it requires re-evaluation and re-assessment in terms of approaches and methods of teaching, because of its relevance and importance to the social, economic and political situations in Nigeria. English language education has been influenced by the discipline of linguistics not only in contents but also in method of language teaching.

Williams (1990), in recent times, the nature of psycholinguistics has yielded insights into the way in which language is learned by both native and non-native speakers. Moreover, English language education in actual fact has benefited much from the discipline of its influence in the societies which facilitate or impede language education. As a result of all these facts, the writers presented or outlined and explained some vital strategies that can be termed as ways of reengineering the English language Education a thus:

Varieties of Classroom Methods of Teaching the English Language: The varieties of situation in which messages are conveyed, have been integrated into teaching purposes in the classroom. The modern inventions and the changing nature of the society engineer changes in language teaching and learning.

Extension of the Objective of Communicative Language Education beyond Grammatical Competence to Socio-Cultural and Inter-personal Purposes: As a new vocabulary emanates from these scientific, technological inventions, innovations and digitalized world, so does the societal changing nature brings improvements in teaching and learning because of the new approaches to language usages in the society. So, in classroom interaction, the teachers should not be limited to the structural pattern of drills and speech practice but to a wide range of varieties of new vocabulary or dominant vocabulary which only existed in the dictionaries without the learner's knowledge of their usage.

Reengineering the English Language Education through the use of Computers and other ICTs in Teaching and Learning the

English Language: Ezeude (2007), in response to English language reengineering concept, postulated that many current issues in language teaching are not particularly new, but keep on changing and improving in approaches and methods. Also, modern language teaching methods which makes use of computers and other ICTs have brought some innovations in language education. These have re-engineered English language education because of sophistication in computer aided programmed in the English language teaching.

Conventional Style of the target Language According to William (1999) should be used while Teaching the English Language: Another strategy to be used to reengineer the English Education according to William (1990) should be by using dialogues or brief anecdotes spoken by the teacher in the conventional style of the target language William maintains that oral activities are prompted and assisted by the use of actions, gestures, and morning with the aid of pictures, diagrams and illustrations.

Use of Competent by English language Graduates can also help to Reengineer the English Language Education:

Aboderon (1996:85) postulated that an average Nigerian generally has problems with spoken English because of the differences in the phonological systems of English and Nigerian languages. Since English is an intonal language while Nigerian languages are tonal, the Nigerian speakers of the language have problems in the suprasegmental features such as stress, rhythm and intonation. All these can only be corrected if the teachers of the English language are competent in oral English and would teach the students using the direct method effectively.

Effective use of Integration Approach where Literature in English is Incorporated in the English Language Education:

Ekah (1998:61) stated that using integration approach where literature is incorporated in English language teaching serves as a major element in effective use of words and expressions, improvement and acquisition of new vocabulary, techniques of description, narration, and comparism of words. To add to the words of Ekah, it is vital to note and state that syntactic structures of sentences, words combination and stylistic use of language in form of variations according to field of discourse are better learned from prose, drama and poetry literature textbooks.

Sustainable Knowledge Economy in a Digitalized World

In the first place, what is a digital world? Gunn A. (2020), "In order to discuss the implications of living in a digital world, it is important to actually clarify what we mean by it. In this day and age, for almost all individuals in developed countries, digitized technologies are involved to some extent in most aspects of our lives, even if we are not aware of it. In the majority of cases, these digital technologies have developed out of a desire to make our lives easier, or more efficient. So, with the brief explanations from the writer, one can simply say that digital world means an improvement of lives of men in the society with the use of technologies such as a smartphone or computer

Coming to the concept of the knowledge economy and sustainability, Lidia Aviles H.E (2021). The knowledge economy is a term coined by professor Peter Drucker in 1959. He defined knowledge as "the body of knowledge available or created by humanity. The writer maintains that a knowledge-based economy is an economy in which the means of production are largely or entirely knowledge, information, and intellectual driven. He says that the knowledge economy is often used to represent economic activity involving university research, knowledge generation through research and development activities, knowledge distribution for marketing

purposes, and knowledge spillovers from company interaction with other companies in a knowledge field.

Lidia Aviles, H.E (2021) continued his explanation says “This form of economic organization has become more prevalent in modern times as advances have made it possible to outsource creative work across national boundaries resulting in new models of entrepreneurship that capitalize on shared insights based on knowledge integration. According to the researcher, the terms “knowledge economy” and knowledge society” are at so being used to describe what is known as the “post – industrial” society by many social scientist. That knowledge and information are becoming a central commodity of economic growth and trade. The emerging knowledge economy chaing in the world we live in, it also has improving implications for sustainable development in a digitalised world. As a result of all these, the writers were motivated to engage on the work of “Reengineering the English language Education in Nigeria for sustainable knowledge economy in a digistalised world.

Theoretical Frameworks

The works of both International School Tutors, English German mathematics computer science (2021) as retrienced on 7th March, 2023 from international school tutors. De was first indexed by Google July 2021 and Amazon AWS (2015) as also retrieved on 7th March, 2023 from <https://curikicdn.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com>, first indexed by Google May, 2015 were fuly coined by the writers of this paper hence the two theories formally used by other scholars were found by the researchers to be suitable for their work.

1. Cummins theory of language proficiency
2. Behaviourist theories in the English language learning

Cummins theory of language proficiency

This is the language learning theories of professor Jim Cummins is one of the world’s leading authorizes on bilingual education and second language acquisition. According to the common underlying proficiency model, Cummins (1981) “as children acquire academic knowledge and skills in their first language independent information about those skills that can be applied when learning a second language. This theory was developed by Jim Cummins, in the early 1980s. it stated that the two-language used by an individual, though on the surface apparently separate, function through the same central cognitive system

Cummins’ theory of language proficiency implies and instruction model that breaks with quicks exit, transitional bilingual education. It entails several years of native language instruction not only literacy but concept development in all subjects.

From the same international school tutors (indexed by Google July, 2021), Cummins makes the distinction between two differing kinds of language proficiency. BICS are **Basic interpersonal communication skills**. These are the “surface” skills of listening and speaking which are typically acquiered quickly by manly students from language backgrounds similar to English who spend a lot of their school time literacting wilt native speakers.

CALP is **cognitive Academic language proficiency**, and as the suggests, is the basic for a student's ability to cope with the academic demands placed upon her in the various subjects Cummins states that while many children develop native speaker fluency (ie BICS) within two years of immersion in the target language, it takes between 5-7 years for a child to be working on a par with native speakers as far as academic language is concerned.

In other words, the non-native speakers in mainstream classes who have exited from the ESL program are still, in most cases, in the process of catching peers as far as CALP is concerned.

Behaviourist theories in the English language learning

Amazon AWS, a work retrieved on 7th March, 2023 from <https://curriedn.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com> as indexed by Google May, 2015. The behaviourist theory believes that "infants learn oral language from other human role models through a process involving imitation rewards, and practice. Human role models in an infant's environment provide the stimuli and rewards", Cooter & Reutzol (2004). When a child attempts oral language or imitates the sounds or speech patterns they are usually praised and given attention for their efforts. Thus, praise and affection becomes the rewards. However, the behaviourist theory is scrutinized for a variety of reasons. If rewards play such a vital component in language development, what about the parent who is inattentive or not present when the child attempts speech? If a baby's language learning is motivated strictly by rewards, would the speech attempts stop merely for lack of rewards, Cooter & Reutzol (2004)? Other cases against this theory include "learning the use and meaning of abstract words, evidence of novel forms of language not modeled by others, and uniformity of language acquisition in humans" Cooter & Reutzol (2004).

Behaviourist theory, which is basically a psychological theory in its essence, founded by J.B. Watson, is actually a theory of native language learning, advanced in part as a reaction to traditional grammar. The supporters of this theory are Leonard Bloomfield; O.N. Mowrer; B.F. Skinner; and A.W. Staats. Behaviourism was advanced in America as a new approach to psychology in the early decades of the 20th century by making a particular emphasis on the importance of verbal behavior, and received a considerable amount of trust from the educational world of the 1960s.

Basic principles of behaviourist theory

The following principles illustrate the operating principles of behaviourism

- 1. Behaviourist theory dwells on spoken language.** That is, primary medium of language is oral speech. This is because, there are many languages without written forms, we learn to speak before we learn to read and write. So, language is primarily what is spoken and secondarily what is written. That is why spoken language must have priority in language teaching.
- 2. Behaviourist theory is the habit formation theory of language teaching and learning, reminding us the learning of structural grammar** – Language learning concerns us by "not problem – solving but the information and performance of habit". Nelson Brooks, (1960:46-47). In other words, language learning is a mechanical process leading the

learners to habit formation whose underlying scheme is the conditional reflex. Thus it is definitely true that language is controlled by the consequences of behavior.

3. **The stimulus – response chain, 5 – Response, is a pure case of conditionality.** Behaviourist learning theory “emphasizes conditioning and building from the simplest conditioned responses to more and more complex behaviours”, David S. Palermo, (1978:19-20). This comes to mean that clauses and sentences are learned linearly as longer and longer stimulus – response chains, produced in a left to right series of sequence like S1 – S2 – S3 – S4, as probabilistic incidents, which are basically markov’s process. Each stimulus is thus the case of a response and each response becomes the initiator of a stimulus, and this process goes on and on in this way.
4. **All learning is the establishment of habits as the result of reinforcement and reward.** Positive reinforcement is reward while negative reinforcement is punishment. In a stimulus situation, a response is exerted, and if the response is positively augmented by a reward, then the association between the stimulus and response is itself reinforced and this the response will yield conditioning. When responses to stimuli are coherently reinforced, then habit formation is established. It is because of this fact that this theory is termed habit – formation – by- reinforcement theory
5. **The learning, due to its sociocally – conditioned nature can be the same for each individual.** In other words, each person can learn equally if the condition in which the learning each place are the same for each person.

Discussion of the Framework

In the two theories presented by the researchers, each of them have their own explanatory power. However, each of them also remain partial in its ability to grasp the whole, especially when evaluating such a complex endeavour as an education for sustainability. So, proper implementation of the above information helps in reengineering the English language Education in Nigeria for sustainable knowledge Economy in a Digitalised world.

Empirical Studies

Research topics like “Reengineering the English language Education in Nigeria for sustainable knowledge Economy in a Digitalised world” as a title of this paper or other closely related paper topics have been presented by so many researchers and educationists in both national and international levels. In this work, the researchers have carefully selected some of those closely related topics to express their paper better for their readers and other scholars or researchers.

In Nsikan O.J, Anayo A.I., and Ekpeyona O.E (2015), Factors instituting against Engineering Education in Nigeria and how to develop technology using Educational Tools were carefully highlighted in this article. However the expression is closely related to the topic “Reengineering the English language education in Nigeria for sustainable knowledge economy in a digitalised world”.

Factors Militating Against Engineering Education in Nigeria

According to Uwaifo (2009), a country is said to have a setback in Engineering education when the product from engineering institution cannot produce capital goods such as tractors, lute machine, electrical and electronics devices, drilling machines, cars, iron and steel, train and

other earth moving equipment as well as natural resources except with the help of foreigners who will normally provide the engineering skills and expertise to undertake the exploitation of her natural resources. However, those problems facing effective technology development as the researchers outlined them below can as well militate against reengineering the English language education in Nigeria.

1. Obsolete Curricula –

The major setback that is hindering effective Engineering Education in Nigeria is the issue of curriculum design, Onwuka (1989) asserted that the Engineering Education curriculum in Nigeria universities can be said to be obsolete and there is need to reshape Engineering education curriculum to accommodate the current needs of Nigeria technological development. This writer was actually pinpointing on the case of Engineering as a discipline but the same thing is applicable to the English language education the curriculum be reshaped, revamped for sustainable knowledge economy in this digitalised world.

2. Problem of Staff Qualification and Experience – Labe (2008) asserted that for Engineering Education to take its rightful place in the country, government should pay attention to engineering programmes by sponsorship through training and retraining of engineering personnel. Wise in English language Education, qualified and experienced teachers are needed in all levels to be sure of reengineering of the English language education in Nigeria.

3. Inadequate Funding of Education in Nigeria. No native can develop technologically when the formal education sector that drives the technology is not adequately funded. Okoro (2014) maintained that the Federal Government yearly according to the Education sector has for over the years been far below average. Ekundayo (2009) submitted that Nigerian government over the years has not been meeting the united nation educational scientific and cultural organization (UNESCO) recommendation of the 26% of the total budget. This indeed effects Nigerian Educational system which the English language education as a subject suffers the most pains of it as a language used in facilitaily others.

4. Infrastructural Challenges Wodi (2009) observed that the educational sector is a subsystem being influenced by other sectors (such as energy, financial institutions, politics, and other socio economic factors) that are dysfunctional, then the educational system cannot function in isolation. For example it is impossible for engineering education to function effectively in the absence of stable power supply to operate the various laboratories, machines, power, computer etc.

5. Poorly Equipped Laboratories The nation's technical colleges, monotechnies, polytechnics and universities that are supposed to train proficient technicians, technologists and engineers are now filled with out dated and in most cases non-functional equipments. Sofolohan (2008) contended that shortage of workshops and laboratories in technological institutions hinders the realization of the goals and objectives of technology education curriculum. The writers of this work were making references on engineering education as a discipline but when we talk of poorly equipped laboratories in schools, the English language education is always in zero percentage.

Ekah E.M (retrieved 2023) in his work “Reengineering English language teaching for better education in Nigeria” State that English language, although a second language in the Nigeria situation, is also the first language when talking about formal education needs, so it requires re-evaluation and re-assessment in terms of approaches and methods of teaching, because of its relevance and importance to the social, economic and political situations in Nigeria. According to Williams (1999), English language teaching has been influenced by the discipline of linguistics not only in contents but also in method of language teaching. He maintains that in recent times the nature of psycholinguistics has yielded insights into the way in which language is learned by both native and non-native speakers. With all these highlights by researchers, one can say that language teaching has benefited much from so many disciplines including sociolinguistics, because of its influence in the societies which facilitate or impede language learning. Ekah E.M (retrieved 2023) the varieties of situation in which messages are conveyed, have been integrated into teaching purposes in the classroom. The modern inventions and the changing nature of the society engineer changes in language teaching and learning as it actually motivated the writers of this paper to present the topic “Reengineering the English language education in Nigeria for sustainable knowledge economy in a digitalised world.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion and recommendation was finally made by the writers on how and the needs for reengineering the English language education in Nigeria for sustainable knowledge economy in a digitalized world. These the researchers did by using both the conclusion and recommendations made by Emmanuel M. Ekeh (retrieved 2023) in his work reengineering English language teaching for better education in Nigeria.

Conclusion

According to him Re-engineering of English language teaching in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria, is a way of re-evolution of the approaches and methods of teaching English language in order to achieve maximum benefits for the learners. It is a well known fact that pupils and students often fail external examinations in English language because of inability to understand what has been taught. Perhaps the methods used were ineffective or the learners were unable to cope with the demands of the subject. The various approaches and methods that the teachers of the subject should use, so as to help the learners to study and make use of the skills acquired in language learning effectively are incorporated in his paper. As a result, he insisted that what is necessary now is for the teachers to change their role and rules learning of the language to functional and participatory approach where the learners should be involved directly in the speaking, reading and writing in language classes regularly. He concluded that the texts should literary be used to aid effective communication through reading, analysis and interpretation.

Recommendations

The writers continue in the work of Ekah E.M., and listed down his ideas or recommendations as thus:

- (i) For effective teaching' and learning to take place government should provide appropriate learning environment and facilities necessary for the pupils and students to study properly,
- (ii) The teachers should bring new innovations in terms of using appropriate instructional materials as learning aids for the students and pupils to understand the lessons effectively,
- (iii) In order to teach the four basic skills of language exhaustively, both the teachers and learners must possess the recommended English language textbooks and literature textbooks, so as to make use of them effectively during lessons.
- (iv) English language classes and lessons should only be taught by well qualified English language professionals, not just by anybody that can read and write so that the students and pupils would benefit immensely.
- (v) Government should provide ICT systems to all primary and secondary schools to facilitate teaching and learning of the language in a better way, since it is the key to all other subjects at all levels of formal education in Nigeria presently
- (vi) Students and pupils should be exposed to constant and frequent usage of the language in schools so as to improve their pronunciation skills and speaking properly through dramatic and debating clubs and press clubs.

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