



ECLECTIC APPROACH IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU EDUCATION ZONE OF ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: This study sought to find out the Eclectic Method adopted in teaching English as a second language in senior secondary schools in Enugu education zone. The population of this study consists of all the 10,478 students and 68 English language teachers in the 31 senior secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. Disproportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select 120 students and 47 teachers. An observational schedule and Likart-type questionnaire were developed and validated for the purpose of data collection. Data were arranged according to research questions and analyzed. Among others, findings of the study were that: not much eclectic approaches are adopted in teaching English as a second language. Based on these findings, the conclusion is that with adoption of the Eclectic approach, it is easier and more possible for the learners to understand second language. Hence, the major educational implication of the findings of the study is that as teaching and learning activities get more complex and dynamic with respect to heterogeneous classroom, adherence to traditional single method of teaching English as a second language will become a big challenge to the classroom teachers and an impediment to achieving the instructional objectives of the subject. It was therefore recommendation that policy makers and curriculum planners should advocate the Eclectic approach to teaching English communication skills at all levels of education.

Keywords: Eclectic Approach, Teaching English, Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Learning

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, the English language is one of the subjects studied by students from primary school to tertiary level. As an indispensable subject in Nigerian schools, the English language serves as the official language of communication and also the language of instruction in the teaching and learning process of other subjects. It has been found out that poor performance recorded in English directly affects the performance of all other subjects offered in the school curriculum whose medium of instruction is English (Mwanza, 2017a). Teaching and learning of the English language have therefore become

important and has received considerable attention in literature. Nonetheless, with the increasing development of economy, people throughout the world get in touch with each other more frequently than ever, learning English as a second and foreign language has become more and more essential. As such children need to be fluent in oral and written English, hence, teaching of the English language needs to focus on the development of children's language skills, that is, the skills of Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing (SLRW).

In the long history of English teaching, teachers have tried various methods and approaches to facilitate

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language learning skills of SLRW. According to Li (2012), language teaching means teaching of listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary as one single unit that cannot easily be separated into bits and parts. As observed by Kumar (2013), language should not be separated into chunks like pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. In a classroom both teaching and learning are executed simultaneously. So, it is important to have an effective method or a set of methods to accomplish teaching objectives. Hence, with respect to the evolution of teaching English as a second language, a number of different teaching and learning methods and strategies such as Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-based learning have been experimented by language scholars in education (Nanayakkara, 2018).

From all the above methods elucidated, it could be deduced that each individual method has suggestions on what learning and teaching is and how therefore, teachers should teach. Consequently, many methods and approaches appeared one after another, trying to overcome the flaws of their earlier ones. Still, none proved to be complete or useful in teaching EFL learners efficiently (Agboghorom, 2014). According to Adeyemo and Babajide (2014), though most of them have been successful in the conduction of the language teaching process and productive language reception contexts against the traditional methods of teaching, none of them have been fully successful to produce a competent language learner. Though teachers employ these methods, approaches and techniques in EL classrooms, still there is a gap between teacher and learner (Rao, 2018) as there is no single method that is perfect for different types of students in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. The failure of one may lead to the emergence of the new one. Every Method is unique on its own, but with its exclusive advantages or disadvantages in implementing it. Since none of the methods mentioned above could be used effectively in isolation from other

methods, the idea of Eclecticism – a conscious blending of different methods - was developed.

The eclectic approach was born out of the realization that each of the individual approaches had strengths and weaknesses and that no one approach was responsive to the dynamic classroom context. Thus, based on the shortcoming of the approaches, Mwanza (2017b) argues that eclecticism provides the solution because the approach allows the teacher to select what works within their own dynamic contexts. Hence, the justification for the eclectic approach lies in the weaknesses of the single approach because a single method has a narrow theoretical basis and has a delimited set of activities and is therefore inflexible. Gao (2011) described eclectic approach as a method which combines listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and includes some practice in the classroom. Eclecticism is a multi-sensory language approach which involves different language learning methods rather than sticking to one approach (Ovitegama and Premaratna, 2020). Kumar (2013) stated that the purpose of advocating eclectic methods is to connect life experiences to the ideas presented in learning of language.

The Eclectic approach changes the role of teachers significantly. This implies that teachers need to possess the required competencies and skills to apply the method in multilingual classroom with learners of diverse abilities and language backgrounds. In the practice of it, teachers are encouraged to work out a method which suits their own specific teaching situation. One of the premises of eclecticism is that teaching should serve learners' need. Thus, teachers should feel free in choosing techniques and procedures inside the classroom (Alsayad, Ali and Alhafian, 2019). For this reason, one may consider that the Eclectic approach is the most suitable in teaching English to beginners, because it is a variety of teaching techniques and curricula to accomplish educational goals. It is also useful to promote curiosity, creative thinking, enjoyment of learning, make active participants in the classroom and to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities



that help in solving problems that emerge in the classroom. The eclectic approach has several advantages. It connects classroom experiences to the daily life activities of the learners. This helps learners to understand new knowledge by drawing on what they already know. Thus, learning is not strange because the activities are life-like (Mwanza, 2017b).

Apart from being dynamic, the Eclectic approach appears to be very authentic in ELT classrooms as it makes the learning existent and engaging. The teacher's role here is that of a facilitator and a delegator. This approach bridges the communication gap between the teachers and the learners. Thus, the Eclectic method of language teaching has been found to be effective in studies (Abu-Baha, 2021; Irfanullah, 2018; Nanayakkara, 2018; Alharbi, 2017; Suleman & Hussain, 2016). For instance, after implementing an Eclectic Method in the language classroom, Sarifa (2020) finds that it helps in blending multiple activities of language learning; allows students to receive individual attention amid a populated class; makes the students feel more motivated and confident. Sarifa's findings also indicated that the eclectic approach help learners improve significantly in all the four language skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Similarly, Jebiwot's (2014) study established that Eclectic method in teaching of English was important as it made teaching innovative and enjoyable and learning objectives easily achieved; makes the teaching of English to be practical as it facilitates retention and builds confidence in learners; increases the achievement of teaching English and stimulate language development and aids in knowledge retention; builds various skills and good relationship between teachers and pupils in teaching English. Cognizant that different learners learn differently and have different preferences on what factors and methods promote effective learning, the teacher should consider learner characteristics before choosing the method/s of teaching. In other words, methods should respond to the needs of the learners and not learners

responding to the needs or demands of the methods., this study examine the Eclectic Approach in Teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone.

Statement of the Problem

The history of language teaching has been characterized by a search for more effective ways of teaching language. The teaching of the English language is made more important by the fact that it is the medium of communication across the board of curriculum and thus playing a central role in overall teaching and learning. Hence, in teaching English, teachers need to vary their teaching methods in order to help each child realize their learning potential. The eclectic approach to language teaching is understood to be the use of several methods in one lesson. It is also argued that it is a reaction against a single method owing to the fact that each of the individual methods has strengths and weaknesses.

The eclectic approach to language teaching has thus become common and fashionable in modern language teaching. It has been proven that eclectic method helps teacher to teach effectively by drawing on the strength of various methods and avoiding their weaknesses (Sarifa, 2020); Ula, 2018; Alam & Sultana, 2017; Jebiwot, 2014). However, there are still a number of questions around the conceptualization of the method. For example, in order for the eclectic approach to be appreciated by both the teacher and the learners, the teacher should have thorough understanding of the approach. The teacher should know the various methods and techniques of language teaching, and have the ability to choose appropriately which methods and techniques to integrate in a lesson which can lead to the achievement of the learning and teaching goals. However, despite the importance attached to the effectiveness of the method, there is a considerably limited literature addressing the issue of what constitute or the applicability of the method on teaching English as a second language in Nigerian classrooms. With an attempt to address this gap in the context of L2 language skills of



speaking, listening, reading and writing, the problem of this study is finding an answer to the poser: What Eclectic approach are amenable in Teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to find out the Eclectic Approach in Teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. find out the eclectic approach that are adopted in classrooms by teachers in teaching English as a second language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone
2. ascertain the benefits of adopting eclectic approach in teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone
3. find out the hurdles of adopting eclectic approach in teaching English as a second language

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What eclectic approaches are adopted in classrooms by teachers in teaching English as a second language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone?
2. What are the benefits of adopting eclectic approach in teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone?

Research Method

Design of the Study

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. This research design is considered appropriate by the researcher because it allows the researcher to collect data from a sample and make inference about the population.

Area of the Study

The study was carried out in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria which is one of the five States in South East. The Enugu Education Zone has three Local Government Areas (LGAs). The zone consists of Enugu North, Enugu East and Isi-Uzo LGAs. Enugu Education Zone was chosen for this study because the researcher being a teacher in the zone has observed the importance placed by the English language teachers on practice and delivering quality learning experience. The zone has also been observed by the researcher to be rigorous in creating enabling environment for successful implementation of secondary education programmes as evident in recent and ongoing mass recruitment of the English language teachers by the state government.

Population of the Study

The population of this study consists of all the 10,478 students and 68 English language teachers in the 31 senior secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. This is made up of 4588 students and 29 English language teachers in the 10 schools in Enugu North Local Government Area, 4368 students and 21 English language teachers in the 9 schools in Enugu East Local Government Area and the 1522 students and 18 English language teachers of 12 schools in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area. (Post Primary Schools Management Board (PPSMB), 2021).

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for the study is 167 respondents. This comprised of 120 students and 47 teachers. Disproportionate stratified sampling technique was first used to select 5 schools from each of the 3 LGAs. All the English language teachers in the selected schools were used because their sub-population is manageable. Disproportionate stratified sampling technique was also used to select 8 students from each of the sampled schools.

Instruments for Data Collection

A researchers developed instrument entitled: Eclectic Approach Instrument (EAI) was used to collect



data to answer the research questions formulated to guide this study. The EAI has two sections - A and B. Section A is demographic while section B is in four clusters, one for each research question. The clusters have a checklist on approach of teaching the English language; observational schedule on eclectic approach adopted in classrooms by teachers and; two questionnaires on benefits of adopting eclectic approach and hurdles encountered by teachers in adopting eclectic approach in teaching English as a second language.

Validation of the Instrument

To ascertain the validity of the instrument, it was given to three (3) specialists, two in the English language and one in Measurement and Evaluation at the Godfrey Okoye University and University of Nigeria, Nsukka to ensure that the items relate to the purpose of the study and research questions. When the entire instruments were collected back by the researcher their comments and corrections helped in the modification and final development of the instruments.

Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure the reliability of the validated instrument, it was trial-tested outside the study area. Two (2) urban and two (2) rural schools were used for this purpose. For the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha was used to establish the internal consistency and a reliability index of each cluster. The overall reliability index was ascertained at 0.78. This figure was considered high enough to attest to the reliability of the instrument. The choice of Cronbach Alpha is appropriate because the items of the questionnaire are polytomously scored.

Methods of Data Collection

With a letter of introduction, the researchers and 3 research assistants visited the selected secondary schools

that constitute the sample for the study. In each of the schools visited, the classroom was monitored during classes for direct observation of the English teachers. In doing so, the status of the variables of interest were observed and checked by the researcher. The questionnaire was administered to the sampled students and teachers in their various schools and collection was made on the spot after completion with the help of a research assistant in each of the schools visited. These research assistants were hinted on the variables and methodology of the study. The essence of on the spot collection was to ensure that the entire questionnaire administered and completed were collected. This method helped in reducing loss of the questionnaire and undue influence from those not involved in the study.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools with SPSS version 20.0. To answer research questions that used questionnaire, data obtained were interpreted using the limit of real numbers. Hence, mean scores and standard deviation were used for the questionnaire items. For these items, a mean score of 2.5 and above was accepted. For the observational schedule, a bench mark of 70% occurrence was taken to show significant adoption.

RESULTS

The results of this study are presented in this chapter. The findings are analyzed and presented in tables according to the research questions that guided the study.

Research Question 1: What eclectic approaches are adopted in classrooms by teachers in teaching English as a second language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education zone?



Table 1: *Observational schedule report on eclectic approaches adopted in classrooms by teachers in teaching English as a second language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education zone*

S/N	In teaching the English language as a second language, teachers apply Eclectic Approach in several ways that include:	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Selecting techniques based on the learner and context.	1.77	.54	Not Adopted
2	Flexibility in teaching approach	1.25	.65	Not Adopted
3	Juxtaposition of both the inductive and deductive strategy to teaching languages	1.49	1.13	Not Adopted
4	Focusing on motivation and learner autonomy	1.32	.33	Not Adopted
5	Variety in adapting language teaching aspects	1.37	.77	Not Adopted
6	Allowing new ideas and applies certain method, approach or technique which is suitable to the classroom environment	1.40	1.03	Not Adopted
7	Integrating all methods, approaches and techniques	1.94	1.10	Not Adopted
8	Encouraging dynamic classroom facilities	1.57	.51	Not Adopted
9	Encouraging learners to learn not only from teachers but also from fellow learners by working together or as a group	2.53	.63	Adopted
10	Adapting variety of classroom activities and tasks	1.91	.61	Not Adopted
11	Making learners aware of what is expected of them	2.61	.62	Adopted
12	Enhancing teachers' and students' respect for cross-culture and multi-lingual classroom	2.09	.58	Not Adopted
13	Teachers proposing a variety of exercises, both written and oral, in order to improve the learners' communicative abilities with accuracy and fluency	1.46	.50	Not Adopted
Total		1.74	.69	Not Adopted

Table one presents observed data on the eclectic approaches adopted in classrooms by teachers in teaching English as a second language. Findings indicated that the only eclectic approaches adopted by teachers are with respect to items in number 9 and 11. The cluster mean was seen to be 1.74 which indicates that eclectic approaches are seldom adopted in teaching English as a second

language in Senior Secondary Schools of Enugu Education Zone.

Research Question 2: What are the benefits of adopting eclectic approach in teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone?



Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of respondents on the benefits of adopting eclectic approach in teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone

S/N	Benefits in adopting Eclectic Approach in teaching English as a second language include that:	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	It enables secondary school teachers to react to various learning needs of the learners	2.79	.50	Accepted
2	Teaching through eclectic method is interesting	3.12	.83	Accepted
3	It enhances learners reading skill	2.67	.94	Accepted
4	There is rich combination of multiple activities	2.50	1.02	Accepted
5	It increases the rate and amount of learning which takes place in the classroom	2.94	1.01	Accepted
6	It effectively works for any kind of learners irrespective of age and standard	2.57	.81	Accepted
7	learning is innovative due to the unique nature of learning process	2.23	1.00	Not Accepted
8	It helps teachers to teach effectively by drawing on the strength of various methods and avoiding their weakness	2.54	1.09	Accepted
	Total	2.67	0.9	Accepted

Table two highlights findings on the benefits of adopting eclectic approach in Teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools. Data shows that respondents accepted all the items as benefits of adopting eclectic approach but item 7. Cluster mean of 2.67 indicates high acceptance of the items as benefits of adopting eclectic approach in teaching English as a second language.

Discussion of Findings

Eclectic Approach Adopted in Classrooms by Teachers in teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone

Findings on the eclectic approach adopted in teaching English as a second language show that teachers only practiced eclecticism with respect to encouraging learners to learn not only from teachers but also from fellow learners by working together or as a group and making learners aware of what is expected of them. This observation suggests that these are the only fusion of distinctive techniques of teaching and language learning approaches practiced by teachers. Hence, class room teachers were found not to place priorities in selecting techniques based on the learner and context; flexibility in teaching approach; juxtaposition of both the inductive and

deductive strategy to teaching languages; focusing on motivation and learner autonomy; variety in adapting language teaching aspects; allowing new ideas and applies certain methods, approaches or techniques which is suitable to the classroom environment and; integrating all methods, approaches and techniques. Other eclectic approaches observed by teachers are with respect to encouraging dynamic classroom facilities; adapting variety of classroom activities and tasks; enhancing teachers' and students' respect for cross-culture and multi-lingual classroom and; teachers proposing a variety of exercises, both written and oral, in order to improve the learners' communicative abilities with accuracy and fluency

Nonetheless, in English as a Foreign Language class, teachers are at liberty to adopt specific teaching style to accomplish teaching goals. This is to enable the language teachers to make it to all the learners despite the heterogeneity in their learning styles and intelligence. Hence, adopting such eclectic method of language teaching in the class could improve the communication skills and the academic performance of the learners. This is in line with the findings of Irfanullah (2018) study which



aimed at seeing the comparative effect of the Eclectic Approach of teaching on English communication skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing at Elementary Level, concluded that students who received experimental treatment (exposed to eclectic method) outscored the ones who received routine treatment. This efficacy of adopting eclectic method is also consistent with the findings by Nanayakkara (2018) who investigated the effect of the application of eclectic approach as a teaching pedagogy on the performance of the tertiary level learners following English as a second language in Sri Lanka. The results of the study indicated that the eclectic approach has a significant effect on the learner performance against the traditional method of teaching.

Benefits of Adopting Eclectic Approach in teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone

Findings of this study indicated that benefits derivable from adoption of eclectic approach in teaching English as a second language include that it enables school teachers to react to various learning needs of the learners; teaching through eclectic approach is interesting; it enhances learners reading skill; there is rich combination of multiple activities and; it increases the rate and amount of learning which takes place in the classroom. Other benefits are that it effectively works for any kind of learners irrespective of age and standard and; it helps teachers to teach effectively by drawing on the strength of various methods and avoiding their weakness. These findings are related to those made by Suleman and Hussain, (2016) in a study which purpose was to investigate the effect of eclectic learning approach on the academic achievement and retention of students in English at elementary level. Suleman and Hussain found out that eclectic learning approach has a positive effect on students' academic achievement and retention. Eclectic learning approach was found more productive, effective and successful in teaching of English as compared to traditional learning approach at elementary level.

Such benefits are also echoed in a similar study by Jebiwot (2014) that sought to investigate the use of the eclectic method in enhancing the teaching and learning of English in Primary Schools. The study among others established that Eclectic Method in teaching of English was important as it made teaching innovative and enjoyable and learning objectives easily achieved; the Eclectic Method make the teaching of English to be practical as it facilitates retention and builds confidence in learners; private school teachers identified that Eclectic Method increases the achievement of learners and stimulate language development and aids in knowledge retention; public school teachers identified that Eclectic Method builds various skills in reading and speaking English as it helps in attaining objectives and; it also builds a good relationship between teachers and pupils in teaching English. On the other hand, findings of this present study indicated that with adoption of eclectic method in teaching English as a second language, learning is not made innovative due to the unique nature of learning process. This is in contrast to the findings of Jebiwot's (2014) study that established that Eclectic method in teaching of English was important as it made teaching innovative and enjoyable and learning objectives easily achievable.

Conclusion

This study ascertained the Eclectic Approach in Teaching English as a Second Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone. It was concluded that not much eclectic approaches are adopted in teaching English as a second language. Similarly benefits of adopting eclectic approaches in teaching English as a second language allow teachers to make use of all the best technique of all well-known language-teaching methods into their classroom procedures.

Educational Implications of the Findings of the Study

1. Not much eclectic approach are adopted by teachers in the classroom, this implies that



teaching of English as a second language serves methods and not learners.

2. The Eclectic approach changes the role of teachers significantly. This implies that teachers need to possess the required competencies and skills to apply the method in multilingual classroom with learners of diverse abilities and language backgrounds
3. Benefit of eclectic approach takes cognizant that different learners learn differently and have different preferences on what factors and methods promote effective learning, the teacher should consider learner characteristics before choosing the method/s of teaching.

Recommendations

Bearing in mind the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made towards improving adoption of eclectic method in teaching English as a second language.

1. Policy makers and curriculum planners should include the eclectic approach in education policy and curriculum planning and ensure that they are implemented for teaching English communication skills at all levels of education.
2. Teachers who use eclectic approach should be equipped to be familiar with and able to adapt and employ a variety of teaching techniques in addition to having an appropriate knowledge of the language. These techniques of teaching include classroom behavior or classroom activities and procedures which employ specific strategies selected by teachers to achieve their objectives

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