



## ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AS VITAL TO THE ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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### Abstract

*Language is basic to the process of learning in education. This study examined the relationship between education and integrated strategies in the language classroom. Language in education has gained in importance as a result of changes taking place within the global cultural-economy such as the impact of microelectronic technologies, and mass migration on the sociocultural and economic base of different societies. The study is qualitative in design and used historical method of study. A considerable number of past studies totaling twenty five were examined. Forty classroom teachers in selected secondary schools in Ibadan were equally observed. Consequently, this paper discovered that these developments generate tensions and conflicts related to the maintenance of local language ecologies, on the one hand, and the hegemony of international languages and para-national lingua franca on the other hand. Undue emphases are placed the importance of foreign languages at the expense the local languages. It also hampered the integration of electronic teaching devices with the learning process. Hence, less importance should be placed on the role of foreign languages in the learning process. --- (not lesser than 20) was reviewed on the subject matter. State your findings. Draw conclusion and recommends.*

**Keywords:** Education, language, context, integrated learning, sociocultural.

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### Introduction

Communication takes place with the aid of language. A phenomenon that distinguishes human from other animals. Language and of course any language exists with people and for the people (Egbe, 2019). In fact, language is said to be carrier of memory and culture. It is a means through which people identify and define themselves in time and space. The history of language is a function of its speakers. Trends in teaching and learning of English has taken different dimension as The focus of English language teachers is turning towards empowering their students to become independent learners beyond the classroom (Troncale, 2002). Language educators have started realising the close link between language learning and content instruction (Lessow-Hurley, 2000). This concern has led to the adoption of content and language integrated learning instructions (CLIL) in English. It is widely believed today that content and language integrated learning instruction helps in improving the teaching/learning of EAL at all levels (Madrid & Sanchez, 2001). Teaching and learning context has also gained the attention of English language researchers and teachers. Context is considered to be one of the pivotal factors in learning another language (Chapman & Pyvis, 2006). Haworth (2011) maintains that several practical theories and models have been developed during the past three decades that have created connections between EAL curriculum concepts and learning. Similarly, teaching strategies being used in EAL classrooms have not only improved but are now given more importance in successful EAL teaching and learning (Haworth, 2004). The current Literature Review focuses on the topic of teaching language learning strategies in teaching/learning EAL at Higher education level both internationally and in Pakistan and has been organised thematically.

The post-modern age has witnessed a transition in the educational theories and practices across the world that have become more learner-centred now. Gujjar, Noareen and Aslam (2010) posit that successful learning now chiefly depends on addressing the interests and learning needs of learners. Abbasi, Ahmad and Khatak (2010) and Shamim (2008) report that there exists a gap between the objectives of National Language Curriculum Policy and the English language learning practices in Higher education institutions in Pakistan. Teachers have been observed mainly focusing on “doing a lesson” or “doing grammar”. They concentrate on finishing the text on time as they are accountable for that at the end of an academic year (Shamim, 2008). Moreover, English language teachers in Higher education are not trained to use teaching strategies. Therefore, once a teacher enters the teaching profession, she starts teaching the way that suits her and continue following the same teaching methods and strategies throughout her career. She focuses only on delivering the lecture and finishing the lessons. Mustafa (2005) points out that Pakistani language researchers, curriculum developers and teachers have been unable to acknowledge the close relation between language and cognitive development. They need to focus on this theory while developing English language



curriculum and teaching methods and strategies. Language is an extremely difficult word to characterize. It is difficult because of the various perspectives, uses, users and symbols for operation. It is almost as difficult as it is to characterize "life". Subsequently, a safe method for doing this task successfully is by attempting to consider language's various characteristics. Language is an imperative means of communication used to impart ideas or express ideas, emotions, beliefs or feelings to another user of that specific language. In spite of the fact that, there are numerous different means of communicating these feelings such as gestures, smiles, nods, winks, street signs, acting, hand symbols, shorthand, moving or notwithstanding emulating, they are fairly restricted and still to a great extent rely upon the use of language for compelling communication.

Moreover, they are not as adaptable extensive, comprehensive, or impeccable as language is. Language has turned into an essential type of communication among individuals to the degree that it is exceptionally hard to consider having a society without language. Language gives shape to peoples thought guides and control their whole movement. Language is the human limit for acquiring and using complex system of communication, and a language is a specific case of such a system. The scientific study of language is called linguistics. Language is a system of vocal symbols which have a typical significance among its users to each other. Human culture depends on the language principally for communication and for other related purposes.

According to Osisanwo (2003), language is human vocal noise or the self-assertive realistic representation of the noise used systematically and traditionally by members of a speech group for purposes of communication.

The philosophy of language, such as whether words can represent involvement, has been wrangled since Gorgias and Plato in Ancient Greece, with later thinkers such as Rousseau contending that language originated from emotions, while others like Kant held that it originated from consistent idea. Twentieth century philosophers such as Wittgenstein contended that philosophy is extremely the study of language. Real figures in linguistics incorporate Ferdinand de Saussure and Noam Chomsky.

Language is not restricted to speech alone as it also has its own type of communication however the most successful and easy approach to understand it, is through sounds and sound symbols. Language is used among individuals who trade roles as speakers and listeners inside a given group who can assign importance to the sound they make and use this channel of communication to express ideas and feelings as well as to control their day by day activities.

Language is a vital means of communication in the human society; because there can't be a valid and significant society without language. The means of communication used in a group includes diverse languages, distinctive provincial and social dialects of at least one languages, distinctive registers and distinctive channels of communication which might be oral or composed.

Language is seen as an instrument of thought or idea. It gives a distinctive and clear expression to human idea. Language along these lines has an extraordinary influence on human reasoning and human intension. Language is the mind boggling and subtle action that people take part in, using the vocal cords and realistic representation in an intelligent communication or when one converse with oneself. In other word, language serves as an instrument of offering expression to our idea either for others to hear and respond to, just listen without responding, or in a situation of soliloquy.

Language is self-assertive in the sense that there is no natural association between the words of the language and what they mean or the words of the language and what they mean or the ideas they pass on. In this case, the decision of the words used or selected is usually exceptionally self-assertive because there would have been just a single language in the whole world or perhaps single word for each reference. Language is not a disorganized or tumultuous mix of sounds and symbols. Languages are fairly masterminded in specific systematic request to frame significant words or sentences. These systems of request are extremely conspicuous at the phonological and syntactic levels. The property of language as a system of system also gives it another characteristic alluded to as "duality" by some linguists.

### **Education**

Education becomes very well-known to people. Perhaps, some people cannot state the definition of education precisely, however they must have known what education is in general. Lexically, education means a process of teaching and learning to improve knowledge. The main purpose of education is to bring human beings to enlightenment, so that they know what is right and what is wrong. We must remember that intelligence is not enough? Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education. The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate.



Generally, people get their first education since they are 3 or 4 years old. Then, they go through each level of education with their efforts. The time that they spend for getting education is not little. It often takes longer time than other activities do. Some people somehow consider education as a must-thing to have, and they cannot live without it. Hence, they can spend almost their whole lives to get education from some institutions. There are many factors that affect the education system. Culture, technology, and economical matters give much impact to the education system of a country. And also, the regulation made by the government affects how the education system works in a country. Brown and White (2013) even stressed the need for students since early childhood to become familiar with alternative practices in other countries. As time goes by, education system changes dynamically with the intention of improving it.

### **Content and Language Integrated Learning**

Originated and developed in Europe can be traced to the German-Franco programmes' interest in bilingualism and supranational education (Lorenzo, Casal, & Moore, 2010, p. 419). In 1994 David Marsh introduced the acronym CLIL (Eurydice 2006, p. 8; Lucietto, 2008, p. 29). CLIL is an approach in which various methodologies are used to achieve a dual-focused form of instruction in language and content. Furthermore, CLIL researchers use the term umbrella and several definitions (Costa & D'Angelo, 2011; Haataja, 2007a, p. 9) to refer to the curricular variations prescribed in Europe.

Marsh's generic concept was welcomed by the European Union. The Council of Europe has included CLIL projects in its medium-term programmes due to the interest in developing the plurilingual competence of their citizens (Dalton-Puffer, 2007) through inter comprehension, interculturalism, and plurilingualism (de Carlo, 2009; Sudhoff, 2010). This plurilingual competence may be developed through a framework which facilitates the interrelationship between subject-matter knowledge and language knowledge through communication, culture and cognition. Coyle, (2006 pp. 8-9) puts it; through a philosophical stance which has given rise to her practical and overarching 4Cs framework integrated by content, communication, cognition and culture where these four are holistically considered in various models. However, Dalton-Puffer (2011) argues that most international implementations are in English and therefore it would be better to speak of CEIL (content and English integrated learning) instead of CLIL.

### **Sociocultural Theory**

Sociocultural theory perspective is usually developed to understand the relationship between learning, language, and content. It tends to underscore the close relationship between language and the society: how the two affect one another in one way or another. Language is the mediating tool through which content and language are co-constructed in a learning environment (Moate, 2010). This integration could also become more complex when learners focus on language-focused talk as well as content focused talk. It is through these interrelations that learners begin to engage in tasks which require complex language derived from curricular complex relations (Kong, 2009, p. 239-248).

However, a word of caution is advanced by Pica (2002). In a well-grounded empirical research study, the author sought to identify ways in which teachers modified interaction about content. Although integration may become successful when it responds to learners' interests, Pica states that a strong focus on meaning and function, an activity which may presuppose the overlook of form, could deprive learners of improving their language proficiency. What Pica (2002) fears is that language learning will be incidental and errors may never be corrected. In turn, this may affect learners as they will acquire new curricular content without receiving language feedback and support so that both components of the integration benefit from each other. If this does not happen, at some point, poor language development will block content learning.

When considering the links between sociocultural theory and second language acquisition, authors such as Lantolf (2000), Lantolf and Thorne (2006), and Warford (2010) assert that the human mind is mediated through physical and symbolic tools, such as language, which mediate the relationship between us and the objects of our experience. One example of mediation is teacher talk in interaction (Kong, 2009; Moate, 2010, p. 40-41; Short, 2002; Tasker, Johnson, & Davis, 2010, p. 130), which scaffolds the appropriation of scientific concepts, cultural knowledge, and linguistic knowledge (BarrancoPérez, 2007; Mohan, 1986, p. 2; Mohan & Slater, 2005). Gibbons (2002, p. 10) defines scaffolding as a special kind of help by which the teacher temporarily assists learners while they perform different tasks so that, in the future, they Integrating content and language in English language teaching in secondary education: Models . . . can become autonomous and work on their own. Scaffolding can take the form of asking questions, activating prior knowledge, creating a motivating context, encouraging participation, offering hints, and feedback. It may also include adapting materials to respond to learners' needs (Guerrini, 2009, p. 74; Reiss, 2005, p.



6-8) while fostering students' higher order mental capacities and cognitive content engagement (Hall, 2010, p. 213; Kong & Hoare, 2011, p. 310; Lyster & Ballinger, 2011, p. 283).

Within CBI-CLIL, for example, Llinares & Whittaker (2009, p. 78-85) suggest that content could be scaffolded when it is linked to students' personal experiences, previous content taught in their L1, or through skills work in tasks (Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols, 2008, p. 139-140). Along these lines, CLIL and CBI are examples of reversing the focus on language to urging teachers to attend to the role of content in scaffolding second language learning (Bailey, Burkett, & Freeman, 2010, p. 615). This assistance occurs in what is known as the zone of proximal development or ZPD (de Guerrero & Villamil, 2000, pp. 51-52; Mehisto, 2008, p. 109; Ohta, 2005, pp. 505-506). However, I believe that teachers need to ensure that scaffolding only acts as a safe net for the introduction of new content (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). If the CLIL lesson is only reduced to the repetition of the L1 curriculum in another language, motivation and cognitive engagement may be threatened.

Lastly, Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 204-215) agree with Freeman (2000) on the fact that people learn another language more successfully when they acquire information through it. Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 215) also point out that CBI has two major goals: autonomous learning (cf. Wolff, 2003, p. 211-215), and the adoption of different roles by learners such as interpreter, explorer, source of content, and joint participant in content and activity selection. By advancing these aims, the idea that learning and teaching content and language should be seen as collaborative work between educators and learners is once again established on solid ground.

### Conclusion

This paper has reviewed the literature available on language learning, education, the effectiveness of integrated strategies in language classroom. Language learning strategies are vital to the acquisition of EAL. They help to enhance the language learning and make it more effective and efficient. Current trends and research in language learning strategies call for including language learning strategies instruction training as a part of teachers' training programmes. Teachers also need to awaken to the importance of language learning strategies for the achievement of teaching/learning goals. The current situation of language learning strategies practice in Nigeria calls for using language learning strategies explicitly and making teachers aware of the importance of language learning strategies in teaching/learning EAL. The literature studied points out the importance of language learning strategies and the weaknesses and strengths of existing language learning strategies. Hence, effective and planned instruction of language learning strategies in CLIL focused classrooms of EAL learners at higher education level will result in effective and efficient teaching and learning.

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