

COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS AS A CATALYST FOR PROMOTING TEACHER EDUCATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

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Abstract

This paper discusses communication effectiveness as a catalyst for promoting teacher education and national development. This becomes imperative because of the noise surrounding the falling standard of education. Such cankerworm extends its tentacles to national development. Therefore, this study touches concepts of effective communication, teacher education and national development. Recommendations are also given on what could be done to save teacher education programme and by extension promote national development. There is the need for adequate funding of teacher education while capable candidates should be given admission.

Keywords: Communication effectiveness, Catalyst, Teacher education and National Development

Introduction

Communication is a process by which a message gets to another person. It is very important in everyday activities of people as it could make or mar the existing peaceful atmosphere. Many authorities have given various views concerning what communication is. According to Alimi, (2009) communication is the act of making facts, news, opinion requests and feelings known to people. It is the exchange of information, message, opinion or feeling between an identified source and a receiver. It is also a vital means by which people exchange information, share ideas and feelings, describe and project their inner and outer world, as well as create and recreate things.

Akinpelu (1988) sees education as a process of developing knowledge in learners in such a way that they use this knowledge to improve themselves and their society. The people who will communicate this knowledge to the learners are teachers. This makes teacher education imperative. Extract from National Policy on Education (2004) section 1 & 2 offers that for effecting true national development, development of individual and the general development of the society, education is therefore a great instrument. Longman Dictionary of language teaching and Applied Linguistics (1996:64) sees communication as the exchange of ideas, information, between two or more persons. This implies that in communication process, many things/actors are involved but the major ones are the two persons i.e the speaker and the receivers.

Many elements are involved in communication. These elements are sender (encoder, the presenter), the message (code) the medium the receiver. The stimulus, channel, feedback, medium and noise. Stimulus is about the psychological motivation needed by the sender to deliver the message. Message is the idea being packaged or being put across. Feedback is the reaction (verbal or non-verbal) of the receiver to the message received in the communication process. Alimi (2009) adds that the feedback may indicate understanding or lack of understanding of the message on the parts of decoder, giving the presenter / encoder the need to encode further messages, informing the sender to choose other linguistic items that are more appropriate, sending signals to the sender that the receiver is still interested or no longer interested.

Language is the major instrument needed in the communication process. Language will therefore serve as a great instrument in communication process. Students in Colleges of Education and other tertiary institutions register for many courses which they have to pass before they can graduate. The extent of success of such academic pursuit is determined by effective use of language and by extension its interest in effective communication. Communication would only be made manifest if students in tertiary institution can adequately

internalize and use efficiently various skills of language. Interestingly, the official language of communication in our education sector is English.

Statement of the Problem

The interactionist/social theory proposes that language exists for the purpose of communication and can only be learned in the context of interaction with adults and other children. It stresses the importance of the environment and culture in which the language is being learned. Interactionists acknowledge the presence of innate biological mechanisms but emphasize the critical role of social interactions (Jense & Arnett 2017; Levine & Munsch, 2018). The focus of this study is slightly different as it is aimed at communication effectiveness as a catalyst for promoting teacher education and national development.

Conceptual Clarifications

Fortunato and Theodore (2023) discussed interactional theory as what shaped how we view and work with communities in the hopes of supporting a purposive, reflexive and democratic practice that fosters innovation, creativity, and learning with the ultimate intention of supporting community members as in academics in their journeys to improve their own collective well-being. It is good in shaping our scholar practitioner-educator's mind set, how our observations from dozens of communities have nuanced our understanding. Jamilah (2023) examines Vygotsky's (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) interactional theory in L1 and L2 acquisition. To assess whether Vygotsky's (1978) theory of language is effective, selected articles were critically examined. The research indicates that the articles under review prove the validity of Vygotsky's (1978) argument.

Theoretical Framework

Interactional model served as a guide in this study. It is a model that adds feedback to the linear process, turning it into two way loop where receivers respond to senders. Interactional theory focuses on micro-level, face-to-face human communication. It highlights individual free will, explains how people build, shared meaning in daily life, and shows how social environment shape behaviour and learning. This is the reason why this theory, if used effectively will ensure adequate communication in the school. it therefore focuses on Real-Life Agency, deep micro-level insights, dynamic view and strong Contextual Application.

Communication and Language

"Language is a vital tool through which human beings communicate with one another. It is the medium through which we express our feelings, opinions, emotions and inner thoughts. From this, Alimi, posits that language is: closely related to human communication; is rule governed; consists of symbols and is used by group of people in a community. Alimi's position implies that certain language skills have to be displayed by our students in tertiary institution for effective communication. These major skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In using these skills, effective communication is attained for phatic communication i.e social regulators, ceremonial purposes, as an instruments of action, to keep records, to convey orders and information, to influence people, to enable self-expression, and to embody an enable thought. The above shows all actions or expressions that are embedded in communication and this has to be expressed with a chosen language. It could therefore be deduced that language is a means of communication. It offers a way of transmitting man's societal value from the older generation to the new generation. It serves as a means of expressing one's feelings, emotions, opinions, and it is used for informative purposes.

Communication and Teacher Education

It is on a common statement that no nation could rise above the quality of her teachers. It is therefore pertinent to say that the quality and the training of teachers must be taken seriously by all concerned. The training of teachers is the major concern of Colleges of Education and some Universities in Nigeria. Part of the objectives of teacher education in Nigeria is to produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient teachers for all

levels of our educational system (NPE, 2004). Thus the training deserves all it requires so that the education sector and the other sectors do not collapse.

Atanda, Adeyemi & Adebisi (2006) "the school system does not exist in a vacuum. The major activity for which schools are established is to impart knowledge through teaching-learning process". Some people have to impart the knowledge and these are teachers. These scholars teaching, as a process (major factor in teacher education) requires some knowledgeable personalities who offer the necessary knowledge and skills to another person. These personalities are teachers. The professionals who will impart knowledge in various disciplines must be those who are truly competent to do so. Such people must have sufficient language items needed to impart the knowledge. If the teachers in training are not well trained, it could be an ominous sign to education sector and other sectors. A lengthy period of theory and practical is required for different training programmes in teacher education. In order to enhance professionalism, training requires adequate touch of effective communication for proper equipment of teachers for the task of national development.

Issues in the Teaching Profession

Atanda, et al posit that the major flow in teaching profession is the lack of high degree of autonomy. Autonomy implies the degree of freedom enjoyed by a group or an individual. While legal profession, medical profession and others enjoy full autonomy which helps in regulating the entry into the profession, this is not so in teaching. Thus, the teaching profession is seen as an alternative by anybody who is a "victim" of failure in other professions. The door of the profession is open to every job seeker who could not secure job in his area of initial specialization. This makes teaching a dumping ground. This submission makes teaching a place for every dick and Harry to sojourn. The irony of it is that as some of these misfits are making progress, they always abandon teaching to take a better offer as soon as one is cited.

It is imperative for teachers' association like Nigeria Union of Teachers to please come into the open and assert its role as a truly efficient and effective body. Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria should not be busy collecting money from the teachers and issuing certificates to them as members, the council should protect the interests of the teachers in all ramifications.

Need for an Effective Communication in the Colleges of Education

The operation of Colleges of Education is primarily synonymous with providing quality teachers education. Teachers in training are to face numerous academic challenges which require that they must display a great deal of competence in practical skills and good grasp of their chosen disciplines for this group of students to make appreciable impact as teachers. Effective communication is a license that is needed since they would use this in future for the next generation of learners.

Effective communication in teacher education could also be attained through effective use of study skills. (Once a learner or a teacher in training has enough word power, the next thing is to translate this into effective study skills. Van word (1992) defined study skills as the techniques which learners employ to assist them in the efficient of the task or material at hand. Parts of what may make study skill effective and enhance quality of teacher education are: Using examples and discussion of study skills, Intensive reading as a study skill, Critical listening during the delivery of lecturers. Extensive reading in order to broaden the scope of knowledge; Comprehension monitoring strategies /SQRZ (Survey, Question, Read to answer the questions, recite the answer to questions and review the answers). Organizing times, Uses of the library and Reading Textbook.

Teacher Education and National Development

Ogundiran & Oni, (2006) quoting Agagu (2004:4) see development as an escape from under development. The term is seen as an all encompassing change, a process which builds on itself. Interestingly Nigeria as developing nation is still groping in darkness. Development is also seen in terms of frontier collision between man and nature which man applies himself to in his environment. Development should not be talked in terms

of physical environment changes alone but also the adequate intellectual development. The adequate intellectual development as a parameter is appropriate for this piece as a sound teacher education programme is an indicator of adequate intellectual development. In such a condition, the following situations will surely manifest:

- i. There will not be incidence of corruption as it is evident in most African states;
- ii. The African states will show leadership traits that can be at par with America, Europe and Asian countries like China and Japan. Leadership is very crucial to national development. This is still a ruse in Africa;
- iii. A sound teacher education which engineers a national development will consider Agriculture as the mainstay of the economy and will bring it out of the wood.
- iv. A teacher education which is well funded and utilized would frown at inadequate funding of tertiary education.

"Ojebode (2006) sees National Development as the changes or progress which enhances better questions of life for the generality of the people in the society. It is both social and political. Interestingly, teacher education has a role to play in these changes that are qualitative and quantitative for the progress in the lives of people and in social desired directions. Thus, teacher education that guarantees National Development would be such where highly motivated, respected and professionalized teaching services exist manpower needs of the nation is fully met; standard of living is raised and national goals are inculcated in students so as to prepare them for future challenges. Crimes are reduced through adequate teaching of civic education by the teachers; unity, progress, growth and survival of the nation are taken more seriously by citizenry even above other issues; viable education industry exists and viable health sector is available.

Conclusion

It has been discussed that communication is inevitable for a teacher education that is viable. It is also imperative to say that teacher education is the much needed tonic for national development. In this vein, it is submitted that all hands must be on deck to save teacher education programme or else the national development will continue to be a mirage. Everyone concerned must stop paying lip service to it.

Recommendations

In order to have a true national development arising from effective communication in teacher education, the following recommendations are made.

1. There must be adequate funding of education sector. There must be admission of capable candidates into teacher education programmes. Teachers at all levels must be well remunerated.
2. Government should embrace more intervention from international agencies like United Nations Organization, United Nations International Emergency Fund, United Nations Development Programme etc
3. Private individuals and corporate bodies should be encouraged to invest in teacher education. Publicity must be made through relevant agencies as a way of making them feel the impact of or multiplier effect a quantitative and qualitative teacher education programme would have on the nation.
4. Prohibition of quack or auxiliary teachers from teaching services. Government has to provide good environment for schools.
5. Teachers must see teaching as requiring regular self training to meet new challenges.

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