



LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES IN LEATHER TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Nigerian Institute of Leather and Science Technology (NILEST) Zaria is the only tertiary institution in Nigeria that is engaged in the training of manpower for the leather and allied products sub-sector of the Nigerian economy. It is therefore paramount to develop its language programme to cater for these unique professionals with their unique technology. The language curriculum should be drawn and taught based on the target situation and function according to these trainees specific language needs. To achieve that, it takes the collaborative efforts of the NBTE curriculum planners and teachers of communication skills in this institution for the proper implementation. It is the wish of this paper to highlight the position of communication skills in this institution and to suggest a proposal for these professionals in training.

Key words: Leather, Language, curriculum, communication

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INTRODUCTION

Language can be defined as a communication system that is capable of transmitting new information (Lieberman 1975). To buttress the above definition, Hakes et al (1978) see language as the most important tool of communication that individuals have at their disposals. The above is the operational definition of Language, which places no inherent restriction on the nature on the nature of the quality of the information transmitted. Language is not only employed as a means of effective communication but also a vital link in the process of creativity which gives meaning to a work of art. Language undoubtedly plays a crucial role in the pursuit of any educational development. It is a master key in technology development.

Language occupies a very strategic place I educational process. It is not an overstatement to say that language is an indispensable tool in

education. Okonkwo (1980) asserts that "society is impossible without language; therefore, the place of language in our educational system must not be toyed with".

OBJECTIVES OF NILEST

The following are the objectives of the college:

- The production of high level and middle level manpower in leather and chemical Technologies necessary for the Leather and Chemical industries for the Economic development of Nigeria.
- The identification and solution of technological problems and the needs of the leather and chemical industries in Nigeria.
- The Production of Technicians and Technologists for direct employment in the leather and chemical industries in Nigeria.
- The production of Technicians and Technologies who have sufficient knowledge in their field and

confident to engage in self employment through entrepreneurship.

To attain positive achievements of these objectives the college has established general academic requirements for the various programmes of studies:

- i. To satisfy the educational and vocational requirement for the various programmes of study.
- ii. To prepare the trainees for a variety of employment situations they may be faced with in the future.
- iii. To provide an awareness of the fundamentals, potentials and importance for the growth and sustenance of chemical and leather Technologies towards the bnoyancy of national economy.

Both the objectives and their achievements cannot be attained without language to pass across all the desired training and skills acquisitions by the trainees. Language, especially the specific language is what these trainees with unique technology require. From all indications, the institute (NILEST) has its aims in line with that of technical education and Polytechnics as highlighted in the National policy on Education.

LANGUAGE POROGRAMMES IN LEATHER TECHNOLOGY

Language has been an important instrument in the propagation and development of technological ideas. (It is through language that new ideas and inventions of scientists are recorded: 10) Okonkwo (1980; stated that;

Language in the written form is a means of preserving invention knowledge...without language, most inventions and discoveries will be difficult to preserve and transmit form generation to generation’.

NILEST can only contribute to development of Nigeria via the Leather technology when the right items are used in the proper context.

To achieve the NILEST aims and to contribute positively, language is right in the center of all its programmes. Not only that National Policy on Education (NPE 1981) recognizes the important role of language hence a caption the importance of

language as a medium of instruction in education. Thus the aims for NILEST can be achieved through the most popular medium of instruction language.

Use of English and communication skills is taught in NILEST to assist trainees at acquiring the necessary skills in mastering their content subjects. It was introduced to replace General English. Used of English and communication skills was introduced to improve communication in English for increase in effective manpower development and technology transfer (Ubakwe1990) because of the general nature of English taught in NILEST, much has not been achieved. The trainees have not been able to have the proper and appropriate grip of their disciplines hence the learning and teaching processes have been hampered.

In terms of the specificity of the policy in relation to the school curriculum in tertiary institutions. Apart from being a language of instruction, what to be taught was ignored hence the general nature of what is taught. Even in the syllabus (NBTE, 1990), the course titles and codes are as follows:

National Diploma I	GNS 101 - Use of English I, GNS 102 - Communication in English I
National Diploma II	GNS 201 - Use of English II, GNS 202 - Communication in English II
Higher National Diploma IGNS 301 - Use of English III, GNS 302 - Use of English III.	
Higher National Diploma IIGNS 401 - Communication in English IV, GNS 402 - Literary Appreciation and oral composition.	

Even though the course titles have changed slightly from what they used to be, the course content indicates general English. The course contents do not depict the trainee’s language needs. It is then important to look inward to what will benefit these unique trainees in a unique institution.

CURRICULUM ISSUES: FOCUS ON EST IN NILEST

Considering the aims of NILEST, the National Policy on Education in Nigeria has placed more emphasis on technical subjects in the school curriculum with long term aim of making Nigeria technologically self-sufficient. NILEST needs language programmes that can actualize the technician’s desired language in target situations. This has called for a more cautions teaching of science, technical subjects. Language is the medium of instruction in Nigerian schools. Has specific language in focus, this is English language. It is then important to encourage the use of appropriate

language content to cater for the needs of the trainees which would prepare them for their professional assignments. The trainees are expected to learn technical and non-technical terms in the school that will be very useful on the job after the completion of their course. A course that will enhance this is therefore advocated for in this paper.

English for science and Technology (EST) were originated by Selinker (1976) to mean a written discourse of scientific and technical English. Mackay et al in Robinson (1980) suggested that EST serves educational and occupational purposes integrating training and practice. The trainees learn the basic needs needed for their course in the school and at the same time get prepared for the field. NILEST language programmes need to focus on EST in order to propagate its programmes in general.

Alaezi (1990) points at the usefulness of a new school curriculum that emphasizes lifelong education which encourages horizontal integration. EST fits perfectly to the lifelong education curriculum. It thus prepares the technical learners for a lifelong education thereby integrating the school subjects with labour market. Here the aim is to prepare the trainees for a functional life in their professional field, thus it is only EST that really guide for the professionals in their various fields. EST further removes the problem faced by young employees on how to cope with their job because of lack of necessary equipment in terms of language of the profession. The functionality of EST in terms of prospective use of the job is very high because it link school with labour market.

Selinker (1985) points out that one of the most effective functions of language is to discover experience. Human experiences are also modified by new ones. The modification comes through language. EST therefore plays a curial role in technological advancement. It is a new trend in language that will go a long way to contribute positively towards enhancing technological advancement (Palu et al 1996) with NILEST contributing in leather technology. EST course contents are linked with the trainee's professional needs.

REGISTERS IN LEATHER TECHNOLOGY

Registers are peculiar terms and expressions in specific disciplines. Such terms and expressions usually have meanings. Which are understood only in relation to the particular disciplines? At times some of the registers are common terms; in such cases it is necessary to study the meaning and context of use of such terms and expressions..

As the saying goes variety is the spice of life. The peculiar use of language in various occupations and disciplines is part of the varieties of life. Based on this, therefore, register can be described as a variety of language which differs according to use and the purpose of use (Otagbarnagu, et al, 1996).

Having see clearly what a register is, it is only proper to suggest some of the registers in leather technology into the GNS curriculum; the list may not be exhaustive but could serve as a guide:

REGISTER	MEANING
Hide	Outer covery of bigger animals, e.g cow, elephant
Skin	Outer covery of smaller animals, e.g goat, sheep, snake
Tamius	Extracts from plant sources that do the actual conversion of raw hide and skin to leather.
Tanning	Processing of hide and skin to leather
Soaking yard	Section of the tannery where skins are soaked
Insecticide	Used for pre-serving the skin form infection by pets
Re-hydrate	Re-introduction of water into the skin
Liming	Chemical process that does the removal of hair and cause the skin to swell and plumb
Wooden drum	Large wooden drums used in the tannery
Stake lime	Chemicals used for the liming process
Sodium sulphate	Removal of hairs from the skin
Revolving knives	In built in machines to perform the function of fleshing /shaving

	where the knives are shape, while blunt, they are used for samming and setting out
Samming	Is an act of squeezing out water form a tan skin
Pelt	Is a skin under process deeming on the process
Alkalinity	Concentration of lime in a solution
Ammonium chloride	Salts of strong acids that reduces the
Sulphate	Balladry of the lined pelt
Enzymes	Biological catalyst that speeds up chemical
Pickle	Method of preservation using solution of salts and acid
Lattice door	Allows water to pass through the mouth of the drum
Fat- lequor	Treated oil that goes into solution with water that increase the sonless of resultant leather
Leather	Permanent, reserved hide and skin gotten through the tanning process.

	designs are printed by the use of heat and pressure
Skiving	Is the reduction in thickness of certain edges of materials
burnishing	Is the rounding off of the grain surface of a raw edge by means of a heated iron
Sticking	Sewing of the materials
Riveting	Hold the leather materials together so that it holds firmly.

SOURCES: Banjo, A et al (Editors) (1985: 15 – 16)
 Tomori and Howe (1982: 100...101)

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CURRICULUM IIMPLICATIONS OF EST IN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES IN LEATHER TECHNOLOGY

Having known the uniqueness of NILEST, advocating for EST in this institution, there are some curriculum implications that need to be given considerations:

Firstly, the NBTE curriculum planners must endeavor to include the communication skills and content subject teachers especially those teaching in their controlled institutions in the planning process. This is because the teachers are

Practitioners who know the language words of their trainees and the curriculum must focus on trainees needs.

Secondly, the labour markets industries, factories and ministries have to be included so that expectations of the learns on the job will be taken care of. Policy makers that are not practicing professionals should not be involved in curriculum designing.

Thirdly, the teaching /learning procedures and materials have to change. The teacher needs to change their teaching methods because the teaching content has changed. The teachers need to prepare for the challenging role. They need to work with materials relevant to the needs of the students. Extracts in the field to getfirsthand information about the language of leather technology are needed. And a situational functional approach is

FINISHED LEATHER PRODUCTS

Leather sandals, Belts, Footballs, Purses wallets, suite cases, gloves, Coats, hand bags

UPPERS

Shoe uppers
 Snede uppers
 Nubuck uppers
 Side leather

FANCY LEATHERS

upholstery, chairs, car seats.
 gas meter diaphragm/industrial
 industrial seals/leathers
 picker

Register used

In footwear manufacture

Design	Producing the design and sketches on paper
Pattern cutting	Proofing the design in section and pattern
Cutting/decking	Cutting the sections on leather materials
Lasting and	Putting the closed upper over the last to
Making	Form the shape of the shoe
Finishing	Cleaning sole attaching polishing. Etc
Shoe rooming	Packaging for sales
Embossing	It is an ornamental treatment whereby

necessary to encourage communicative language competence.

Workshops in language programmes for technical institutions should be jointly organized by the institution and NBTE, the controlled body; seminars for language teachers to train them on the new trends. In language teaching. (EST) there is no doubt that some of the communication skills teachers lack background knowledge their students fields of study. They are arts trained, with little knowledge of the social sciences and less of science and technology. Diploma and post graduate course opportunities should be made available for language teachers to improve their lot.

CONCLUSION

The contribution of language to every facet of education has asserted language as an instrument for technological advancement. The importance of a new trend (EST), in language programme in leather technology cannot be underestimated in enhancing adequate teaching and learning processes for teachers/learners in leather technology institution. It is believed in this paper that, a higher satisfaction achievements by the students will be achieved. The writer of this paper thereof, advocates that the content and the language teachers should be represented in national Board for Technical education committee in drafting the EST of language programme in leather Technology, which is their joint effort to improve the language programmes. In doing this, the language needs of the trainees will be met and the link between myth and reality will be achieved.

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