Examining the Inadequate Integrative Motivation and Language Skills Acquisition by Bauchi State Students (Nigeria)

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Abstract
This paper aims at finding out the efforts of a double problems, the lack of interest and consequent poor performance of students in English Language at the Primary and Secondary levels of our Educational System. It urges that apart from Nigeria causal factors, the lack of integrative motivation is a strong factor hampering students acquisition of language skills. It has identified these factors and the effect and offered very useful suggestions for improvements.

Keywords: Examining, Inadequate, Integrative, Motivation, Skills Acquisition, Students.

Introduction
Mankind in his daily Endeavour principally sets his mind on success before attempting to facilitates that success in a bid to plan ahead. The successful transmission of our cultural heritage calls for effective articulation of principles practices, procedures and standards that could be applied to enhance effective learning. It is the importance of this notion that led Andrey (1978) to state that teachers need to establish very clearly what they are trying to achieve with their pupils, then they decide how they
hope to do this and finally decide to what extent they have been successful in their attempt.

Learning is vital both in ensuring man's biological existence and his Intellectual development. If man's biological existence and his intellectual development is not to be jeopardized, man has to be taught a great deal different from what he learns spontaneously. These facts call for the examination of problems confronting the leaners of English language.

The present achievement rate of students in English language in our primary and secondary schools obviously generate concern to well-meaning Nigerians and poses a problem for language teachers. The necessity therefore arises for the examination of factors relating to the learning and teaching of English Language in our schools with the view of attempting to reverse the trend from its present position for better. This paper therefore, attempts to examine the inadequate integrative of motivation and related factors affecting student’s ability to acquire the skills basic to the question that arises from the above include:

1. Are students interested in learning the standard form of the language used in the classroom?
2. If otherwise, then what factors could be responsible?

The English Language is not native to Nigeria. For most of Nigerians who learn and use the language in Nigeria, it is not a mother tongue. However, by sheer accident of history the language has come to take roots here, having been inherited through our colonial experience, of course, English is an international language. Nigeria's educational development owes so much to the use of English as a medium of formal education with its various functions particularly in our multi-lingual setting and our link with the outside world.

Because the language is learnt through the school system, learners are usually faced with a number of problems. Secondly, because it is usually learnt and taught as a second language (after the learner's mother tongue or first language) it also presents a number of problems for both the learner and the teacher.

**MOTIVATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

As you may have learnt from your courses in educational psychology and concepts of learning, the term 'motivation' is used to describe the conditions or states that account for the human being's (organism's) attempt at knowing
certain things, acquiring certain skills, performing certain tasks or achieving certain results.

Motivation may be defined in simple terms as the urge that propels the human being to act in order to obtain some result or reward. 'To act' here also includes attempt to 'learn'. Psychologists define motivation in various ways. According to Owen, et al (1978:387) 'motivation includes the operations that energize behavior toward some goal.

There are two main sources of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation may be described in terms of natural urge, need, drive, which may be physiological or psychological, that is based within the human organism. Extrinsic motivation relates to the conditions of the external environment which stimulate the human organism to do certain things, to act. It is not easy to separate intrinsic motivation from the extrinsic because when you observe the individual child, you will find the two at work.

Much of motivation in learning comes from perceived needs. Abraham Maslow (1968) identified a number of such needs stated in order of hierarchy as follows:

- Physiological needs, (or biological needs)
- Safety needs, (or needs in self-preservation) Love and belonging needs (social needs)
- Esteem needs (the urge to feel being valued)
- Need for self-actualization (self-concept, achieving) Desire to know and understand (intellectual quest).

**MOTIVATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

As you have already learnt, language is a natural gift to the human being. Every normal child at birth is endowed with the capacity for language. That is the reason the child acquires the sounds and the grammar of his native language or mother-tongue as he grows up in the environment of the particular language.

However, the child is also prompted or motivated to learn his mother-tongue by some environmental needs which he must meet in order to maintain both biological and social existence. Gardner and Lambert (1972) have identified two types of motivation in language learning. They are instrumental motivation and integrative motivation, which are related to the extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in learning already discussed above.
Integrative motivation relates to the individual's need to identify with, or relate to, those who already speak the language the individual is learning. To identify with is to show affinity with the speaker. Naturally the child's greatest need in this respect is to identify with his parents and older relations within the household. Thus love and belonging needs listed above belong to this group of integrative motivation. Esteem needs is also related to integrative motivation. A child usually holds his parents in high esteem and would want to imitate, emulate or copy them. He also wants to be valued.

Instrumental motivation has to do with satisfying utilitarian needs. A child is motivated to learn a language in order to use it to achieve practical purposes. The other needs listed above fall within this class. A hungry child soon outgrows crying to meet his physiological needs, and learns to make utterances to express demand for food. In the same way a sick child soon learns to describe his ailment using language.

Although language learning is a natural process for any normal child, several factors help to motivate him to want to learn, to learn quickly or fast, to learn efficiently and use language to meet every day practical needs.

The question you need to examine or ponder over is whether or not there could be lack of motivation or absence of any of the motivational factors described above in the situation of a child learning a native language or target language.

**MOTIVATION IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE IN NIGERIA**

The motivation for learning a second language (after the mother tongue) is Usually instrumental. A person may be motivated to learn a second language in two major circumstances: (L) If he goes to live within the community in which the language is used as mother tongue and therefore the language of everyday existence; he would need the language to survive among its native speakers. (2) If in his own native environment that language serves to provide opportunities for him to meet certain strategic utilitarian needs, which cannot be otherwise met by his mother tongue. Since the primary purpose of language learning is for communication, a person may want to learn a second language if he perceives the need or feels the urge to communicate in it.

In the case of English in Nigeria, it is foreign to the entire Community, it has however grown to become a second language over the years, since it is being
learnt and used by a good population of the people who have passed through school.

As teachers, our main concern in this paper is to examine very well the current state of motivation of our young learners for learning and using the language. In this regard, we should examine and answer the following questions.

1. Do your learners now have a higher level of motivation for learning the language, or less, than what the previous learners had, say, thirty or forty years ago?
2. What are the reasons for their higher or lower level of motivation?
3. If the level of motivation appears low, what effects does it have on the current state of learning in schools? How can we boost it? or Do we need to boost it?
4. If the level of motivation is high, what approaches could we adopt to keep it up? How can we use the high level of motivation to advantage in classroom practices? Let's consider answers to each of the questions.

**MOTIVATION**

Monolingual communities accept one another more easily than multilingual societies (Joshua 1996). They are more cohesive and integrated like one. The people are not so much afraid since a common language is used to interact, plan and carry out activities. Gen 11: 1 ff (The Holy Bible). A visitor to a community who speaks his host's language is easily accepted. This is why provincial and geographical entities are partitioned most at times according to the possession of a common language.

The above is what entices Nigerian students and motivates them to be "current" with the language in use. However, being "current" as at now means to be out of touch with Standard English. The following factors are therefore, identified as posing threats to students' acquisition of proper language skills and their subsequent poor performance in utilizing the English language.

(a) **Lack of interest in education:**

There is a general lack of interest in education in Nigeria today. This could be accounted for by the fact that children observe that most of their parents have "made it" without attaining any level at all in formal Education. Since there is this general apathy towards education, it goes without saying that our students will also develop a care-free attitude towards good ethics and manners of standard English. It is only when you are interested that you will strive to learn and learn better. This situation will invariably affect students' performance.

(b) **The Problem of adopting a foreign language:**
One point that comes to the fore almost immediately is the fact that Nigeria is a multilingual nation with varying languages and regional dialects. The effects of this variation on our efforts at gaining competence and mastery of the English Language (which is foreign) are academic facts known to all of us. It is against this background that the three major languages are now being taught in most primary and secondary schools in the country as required by the New National Policy on Education. This again pushes forward the point raised in this paragraph that the problems associated with adopting a foreign language by a multilingual community as lingua franca are colossal. For proper performance in another language, adequate attention must be given to all the phonological, syntactical and morphological rules. Of course our present-day students are not ready for this.

(e) The advent of substandard language

The advent of substandard, non-standard and "corrupted" form of the English Language popularly called "pidgin" now being popularized by such playhouses as Chief Ajas of "Hotel de-jordan" and Late Boma Ereokosima of Radio Rivers. 'Countryman English' erroneously tagged 'special English' among others. Among its users, this specie of the language has got no agreed codes i.e. morphological, syntactical and phonological patterns (rules). It thus becomes easier for students to copy or "learn" since every user is entitled to his idiosyncrasy (variety) and thus enjoys a greater popularity than Standard English. It is even more surprising that "Special English" enjoys a lot of air time in most radio houses in Nigeria now (our local Radio station cut across all over the country in both public and private Radio). This is an added burden to even the best teacher of English since Standard English is being portrayed as the language meant to be used within the confines of the classroom situation only. The students thus feel 'secure' in creating their own forms of the language.

(d) Campus 'Lingua Franca

This is another source of threat to students' acquisition of the English Language. According to Ben (1993:5): "In different institutions of higher learning, quite a number of words and slangs have been invented for internal communication ... visitors to such institutions are often thrown off balance as they battle to understand such slangs and pidgin".

Most of our students model their speech according to what obtains at school as the proverbial adage says, you cannot bend a palm tree when it is already matured; It will require super human magic to tame the language of such graduates to standard. For example, examination malpractice is branded such names as moon cited expo Omo’, Reminder, Chrome 60, 90, or 120; "bellow" or, 'wholesale'. To leave is to 'flash', 'clear', or 'fade', etc. In most schools, special
creations are made for almost every word and so unique from one higher institution to another.

(e) **The fall of educational standards:**
The popular view of the fall of education and its enormous and unwholesome impact on the status of the English Language is next. According to Achebe, the standard of education fell badly in the last 10 to 20 years. To buttress his point, he cited the example of students who know nothing about agreement between nouns and verbs and are taking honors degrees in English language Sidelines; Nigerian Tribune, 22nd January, 1983. By this, I am inferring that since English Language remains the language of instruction in our schools, it must have fallen badly along with education. The author of the passage quoted above even mention: professors in English holding their class discourses at almost an illiterate level. It is the student who bears the brunt and who is at a loss. He no longer learns the standard English and therefore, cannot communicate Standard English appropriately with full proficiency.

(f) **Lack of practice:**
Arising from the above factors is the problem of constant practice and use of standard English by our students. Practice, they say, makes perfect. It therefore, goes without saying that our students are being perfected in various substandard forms of the English Language. Students develop integrative motivation for what is current and thus, facilitate their problems.

**SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS:**
1. It is expected that by the time these students come into the four walls of a tertiary institution, they have been acquainted by their teachers with the fact that the English Language is a foreign one. This obviously, demands not only learning to make the correct "noises" of that language but also grasping the fact that there are rules that govern the combinational possibilities of the language. When once any of these rules are broken, then, the product utterance is deviant from the standard. The English language like any other, has its standard for those who wish to learn it and convey correct meanings. The knowledge of this fact by students cannot be overlooked. To overcome his errors, he must insist and rightly compel and encourage employing Standard English in all his dealing with learning activities.
2. If point No. 1 is adequately noted, then students would more easily understand why problems. Basically, the purpose of a common language is mutual intelligibility where speaker and listener derive meaning aright. It makes no sense where a broad language such as English (it comes behind only Chinese in number of speakers, (Adribigbe, 1985), is narrowed down for the use of a
few people while still hoping at general intelligibility. After all, the textbooks used by students and all academic instructions must be urge to use Standard English.

3. Arising from 2 above is the role of our Universities Senates Academic boards of higher institutions. A situation where academic discourses will hold at almost an illiterate level must be discouraged. The case must be made specifically for the English Language where (if the stark truth must be told), it is either the best teachers of English are recruited or none at all. This will invariably have positive input on the general performance of students. Such institutions are also expected to encourage English language teachers morally and fanatically as morale boosters. Such forms of incentives as sponsoring teachers to professional seminars, workshops and conferences will all have positive effects in this direction.

4. The role of the Government: Allowing Government information media and private ones to be used to advance a sub-standard form of the language while making pretence to academic standard is hypocritical. The two must be seen as parallel. The Government in order not to inhibit the teachers' efforts, should halt the spread of all forms of non-standard English now being perpetrated via its media organs, for its effects, though not yet fully computed is colossal on our educational system. As far as the programmes is been air and targeted with the English language.

5. The Teachers: The teachers of English are expected to be master artists role models well versed in the art in order to be capable of effecting positive changes in our students. This is where the possession of a degree only should conform remove the place of workshops, seminars and conferences to update knowledge on new trends in the field. From the primary school, teachers of English should be observant, identify problem areas in pupil’s written and spoken English and seek ways of resolving them. The story of English Language need to be a "round-the-clock- affair with all teachers in the school as active teachers of the language irrespective of areas of specialization, they should emphasize the worthlessness of are negative effects of any non-standard deviation of the English Language.

6. The Student:
Students on their own part must make conscious effort to accept the fact that anything does not go except what is to go. And that which is to go is only the standard form of the language. Henceforth, they must realize that the language which is being used as our lingua franca has got an accepted standard to which learners must conform. And this they have to do. After all, what they read in books is a language meant for everybody not for a select few. Their expressions should conform with the established: standard.
Our educational system is on the verge of collapse unless something urgent is done to reverse the trend. This is because the status of the language now being used as means of conveyance of knowledge and expression, is being called into question. Questions of what is right or what is wrong in users' expressions need not arise now. The standard must see and targeted.

The Impetus of this paper is the need to make students interested in the standard form of expression. The paper has been able to highlight the problems affecting learner's language skill acquisition. It is hoped that these positive efforts will bring about a tremendous reversal of situation for the better and to serve as great booster/motivation in the part of the students to aspire for standard use of the language at any points in term.

THREATS TO MOTIVATION AND THE USE OF ENGLISH IN NIGERIA

There is at present an undercurrent of feeling, or debate, as to whether the current enthusiasm for the learning and use of English as a second language in Nigeria in the near future. Such doubts have been raised by the current upsurge of interest in the development and use of various Nigerian languages at various formal functions in our schools and other public functions. Although, under the British colonial administration, schools tolerated and encouraged the learning of Nigerian languages, often called 'vernacular', Nigerian teachers themselves in those schools often imposed sanctions on students who spoke the 'vernacular' languages! You would find on bulletin and chalkboards of secondary schools and teachers, colleges of yesteryears such vernacular-prohibiting inscriptions as the following:

Do not speak vernacular here
No vernacular
Speak vernacular and pay fine
Those days the prefects and seniors listened for culprits! If you were caught speaking 'vernacular' to the next boy from your village you were fined three to six kobo, or caned! By then six kobocould buy your entire school uniform! If you were unlucky to be caught speaking 'vernacular' by a teacher you were lucky if you were asked to translate your sentence into English and fill all the pages of an exercise book with just that sentence - to write it 800 times! Could you see motivation there for English?

Today that apparent 'colonial mentality' has given way to the practice of letting all the languages exist side by side. And English continues to be learnt and used by many more people than before. The term 'vernacular' is now regarded as an abuse of the Nigerian languages. States now encourage and support the use of local languages for broadcasting, advertising, primary education and the conduct of part of the business of Local Government administration. More
threatening to English is the use of pidgin in several circles. Listen to university undergraduates outside normal lecture discussion - you hear lots of pidgin! Several television and radio programmes are rendered in thrilling pidgin! Failure is equally a threat to motivation. For some however, it constitutes a challenge. Every year thousands of young learner - users of English in schools fail to make the expected ‘pass’ or 'credit' in English at school certificate examinations. A more alarming rate of failure is also recorded at the (UTME) of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) in their Use of English paper.

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