

Code Mixing and Code Switching as an Effective Pedagogical Strategy Approach in Teaching and Learning: A Case Study of French as a Foreign Language in The Yorubaphone Community.

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Abstract

This paper examines the role of language teachers and the instructional strategies used in delivering the subject matter in their classrooms. It also aims to address the perception of neglecting the use of indigenous languages in classroom instruction. Thus, the study advocates the use of code-mixing and code-switching pedagogies as an instructional approach to enhance teaching effectiveness and learner comprehension. A descriptive survey design was used to examine the teaching practices of selected lecturers and students were also interviewed through semi-structured interviews in conducting the study in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo State, Nigeria. This is the scope of the study.

Keywords: Language, Teaching, Teachers, Methods, learners mother tongue- condemning, code switching.

Introduction

Africa described as “black, Arabs and Jew continent” metamorphosed and divided into three major foreign languages: English, French and Portuguese (Spanish).

According to the policy of partition of Africa and after the colonization, African languages were recognized and considered as vernacular and barbaric. This aspect of Africa languages is seen, since the introduction of the colonial master’s language in the continent of Africa as an aspect that should not be considered in all aspects of human endeavours unless if translated into European languages. However, the African continent has been seen as a continent without origin and languages. That is one of the reasons why René Dumont said in his book: *l’Afrique est mal partie* “Meaning Africa does not have a good start (our translation).

In addition, reel development cannot occur without the local languages of his people. Language therefore has a vital role to play in the life of a people. In fact, there is no life without language, language be it local or foreign is a vital tool that can change the landscape of a community or a nation. Thus language is a sine Qua non to the survival of human and natural phenomenon. Therefore, in this

topic we try to define the following key words. Language, learning, Teaching, pedagogy, code mixing, code switching, methods and teacher.

Language education and teaching belong to the same repertoire of acquisition of knowledge.

African parents have suffered a lot in the hands of the colonial educators who forced our forefathers to learn their languages be it: English, Spanish, Portuguese etc., in Africa. See the partition of Africa during the Berlin Conference in 1885-1914.

But in this 21 century our mode of education or teaching should take a new dimension in our different classrooms in Africa. Thus our mother tongue should have a vital role to play in disseminating the subject-matter in our classrooms. However, modern man can hardly fit in the society without using languages. The mastery of the language speaks about the personality of the speaker. For the teacher in this case, his credibility is more or less fixed on communicative competence and ease in which he is scattering his ideas while stimulating the teaching and learning through the means of language.

For the teacher who easily expresses himself and has mastered the language more often earns the admiration and respect of his learners through the methods he uses in the classrooms. It is good to lay more emphasis here that the primary objective of a language teacher is to put more accent on the communicative competence of a learner i.e. oral comprehension, oral expression, Written comprehension and Written expression,

In general, Literature is considered as an applied language. It groups the political institutions of people and the world's nation. Thus, Language is defined as the use of words and rules that people use to communicate to one another in a specific environment, it is a system of communication among people. It is also a system of communication using codes and symbols. According to Oye Taiwo (2017)

‘Language is the human use of spoken or written words as a communication system. It is a system of communication that enables humans to exchange verbal or symbolic utterances. Language is the system of words or signs that people use to express thoughts and feelings to one another. It can also refer to the speech of a country, region, or group of people, including his vocabulary, syntax and grammar; the words or expressions used and understood by a large group of people’...

The study of language has always been on two basic premises which are "langue and la parole" "the former sees language as a mentalistic (psychological) dimension while the latter studies language in use (that is the sociological dimension). Language is fundamentally a way of behaving and making others behave, and then language is a human-sociological dimension rather than psychological. This is because the only way to get to the root of language is to see it in use. Firth (1933), Whorf (1956).

Indigenous Language or Mother Tongue

Mother tongue is the first language of a child which is learnt from his parents. According to Ofurum C. C. (2000: 79) "Mother tongue of a learner interferes in no small measures with the new language he is learning, involving all the components of the new language the phonological patterns, the syntactic patterns, the lexical as well as semantic patterns of the second language or mother-tongue affect those of the second language because the learner transfers these patterns to the second language." The above is showcasing the mental language surgical operation the African child has to undergo before expressing his thoughts.

According to Oye Taiwo (2017:29) "mother tongue is a language that originated in a specified place and was not brought to that place from elsewhere. For example, Yoruba, Edo, Efik, Igbo, Ibara, Izon, Hausa, Pidgin, etc., are languages that originated from Nigeria, and are therefore, indigenous languages or mother-tongues in Nigeria. On the other hand, Arabic, English, French, Portuguese,

Spanish, Chinese, Russian, German, etc. did not originate from Nigeria, they are not indigenous languages or mother-tongues in Nigeria." they are foreign languages in country. They were brought to the educational curriculum for the purpose of learning, politics and global interaction.

Method

A method can be defined as a way of teaching in the classroom or doing things in the workshop or it is a principle of doing certain things to achieve a desired goal in a classroom or in any enterprise.

According to Adepoju (1999:100-101) Method refers to a way of doing things or an approach adopted or a position adopted to explain a subject-matter to a group of learners. In the teaching learning process, however, a method refers to an approach in which teaching is organized by a teacher to effectively impart or explain the subject-matter to his pupils. Debey and Barth (1980) also add that a method offers a general guideline on the purpose of teaching the content.

A specific way a teacher organizes himself to achieve the objectives of instruction. It is a teaching device Adepoju (1999) adds it is a short-cut within a teaching method in order to make teaching more effective. Using mother-tongue can serve as stimulus and ingredient to ward which the teacher can accomplish instructional objectives and which the teaching learning process can be interesting to the learners and there are many methods: Traditional method, Communicative method, Audio-visual method, Inquiry method, Activity method, Questioning method, Discussion method, Project method etc. According to Ajere (2021: 2) "Teaching method and strategies are developed and derived to enhance academy improvement and assist in the delivery and transmission of tutelage and pedagogy in the classrooms. They are also for better comprehension of subject-matter by the learners, although many of the teaching methods and strategies were developed by foreign experts without the consideration of the Nigerian cultural setting and learning environment".

In any teaching and learning situation, interaction between the teacher and students can only be fruitful through the adoption of appropriate strategies such as code-switching and code-mixing. However, one of the reasons of the poor performance of our students in their tests or examination may include the poor understanding by students of the subject-matter and the poor delivery by "the teacher themselves owing to their non-possession of the skills required for effective impartation of knowledge" (Babalola, 2013)

In this regard, five teachers were observed in their different classes and it was discovered that three of them were code-switching while teaching in their classroom, while two were code-mixing. After the class, a questionnaire was distributed to five students to express their view about the approach of teaching of the *teacher i.e* code-mixing and code-switching used by the teachers.

What is Code-Switching?

Code-switching can be defined as language or languages in contact. According to Farinde and Ojo (2001: 19-21). When two or more languages come in contact, they are bound to influence each other.

One of such influences is code-switching. Code-switching comes about as a result of languages in contact.

Code-switching has been variously defined by scholars Ilori (1992) defines it as "a situation whereby one finds at least two or more languages functioning side by side for the individual each representing a different cultural and linguistic world view.

Also, Bloomfield (1933) sees it as the use of more than one language by speakers on the execution of a speech act.

Adeniran (1980) adds and maintains that it is the alternation of two languages or as the use of two or more linguistic variations in the same conversation or interaction.

It really occurs when a speaker alternates between two or more languages or language varieties.

Examples:

	Greetings	
French	English	Yoruba
Bonjour	good morning	E e kaaro <input type="text"/>
comment ça va?	How are you?	se daa da ni?
ça va bien	I am fine	daa da ni
au revoir	Bye, bye	o dabo

	Proverbs	
French	English	Yoruba
Ventre affamé n'a point d'oreilles	An hungry man is an angry man	Ebi ki pani ki oro mi o wo
La charité bien ordonnée commence par soi-même	Charity begins at home	Ile lati ko eso rode

Tout ce qui brille n'est pas de l'or	All that glitters is not gold	Gbogbo ohun to ndan ko ni wura
Phrases		
Il a tout fait pour la rendre heureuse	He did everything to make her happy	O se gbogbo agbara re lati mu inu re dun
Je suis désolé pour le retard	I am sorry about the delay	E ma binu pe mo pe de.

The teacher uses all these variables to impart knowledge and to make learning conducive in the class.

What is Code-Mixing?

The concept of code-mixing was established in West Africa by Ansre (1971). He describes it as "inserting varying chunks of English into the performance of West Africa language".

It is a common feature among Nigeria bilinguals who are competent in English and one or more of Nigeria languages.

In essence, code-mixing can be defined as the mixture of lexical items of two or more languages within a single sentence. It is necessary here to distinguish between code-switching and code-mixing. The realm of code-switching is usually the text above the sentence unit and also within the sentence at major constituent boundaries such as verbal group, nominal group, adverbial group and clauses. Examples:

J'essaie de te voir hier but o difficult (I tried to meet you yesterday but it was difficult)

Est-ce que tu as remis ton assignment fun lecturer yen (Have you submitted your assignment to that lecturer)

Agbara ma ngun won ni at that stage meaning (Power usually intoxicate them at that stage) (English language)

La force de pouvoir les rend arrogants. (French language)

Le match sera dure a ma na won ni. (The match will be tough; we shall win them)

This approach of teaching can be used to make learners understand and learn more about the subject matter while explaining the subject with different languages that can aid learning activities.

From the above we discover that, more languages are functioning side by side (Ilori, 1992) to make learning conducive in the classroom.

The Language Teacher

The language teacher in the classroom as a guide, has a vital role to play among students. Thus, how the language teacher must teach in the classroom? Teachers are the light of the world that brighten and nurture the vibrant lives of individuals with useful knowledge, practical skills and proper value orientations within the national expectations. Teachers are just the soothing sun which shines and energizes all transformation of the learners' potentials into beneficial manpower resources. Fafunwa (1967) described the African competent teacher as a

good citizen, a community leader, and innovator or an enlightened parent with pervasive influence beyond the confines of the classroom. (Oyekan: 2001:106)

In the teaching and learning of a subject, the teacher should make use of the mother-tongue to impact knowledge. Knowledge of a foreign language is best acquired only in the context of one's own language or mother-tongue. According to Taiwo (2017: 33) "It is more difficult to absorb and understand a concept in a second language than in one's first language". Therefore, it is logical and comprehensive that the language teacher should allow the mother tongue and foreign language to Work together in our classroom.

Methodology of the Study

A survey method of students in the class and interview were used to find out whether or not code-mixing and code-switching are the learner centered methods in the classroom to improve the learning activities through a thematic analysis.

A thematic analysis is to identify things e.g. patterns and data important or interesting and we use these terms to address the research or say something about an issue. According to Brown and Clark (2006) it allows for a systematic way of seeing, as well processing qualitative information using coding (Google 2022)

Findings

The results of the questionnaire show that 60% of the students are for the use of code-switching in the classroom. While 20% are for code-mixing and 20% are neutral about the use of code-switching or code-mixing in the classroom.

After the observation and the interview, we discovered that learners interviewed, understand better while the lecturers using the code-switching in the class, according to learners interviewed, they understand the subject-matter while it is also explained in the mother tongue. Than in a foreign language only.

Conclusion

In this 21st century it is important that the teacher should use the mother-tongue in teaching and learning. Our Mother-tongue should not be relegated to the background in the learning activities because learners learn and comprehend very well in their mother-tongue than only in the foreign language.

Learning proceeds more effectively if you allow the mother-tongue to have a say in the classroom. Therefore, we discovered that most of the teachers are using code-switching and code-mixing in the classroom without knowing that they are using a method.

But that approach We call (mother tongue approach) should be emphasized while teaching a subject-matter in our classroom, but it should not be abused in the learning activities just for explanation sake and for the better understanding of the subject matter. The lesson should not be turned to a Yoruba or Hausa or Igbo class. The mother tongue comes in to clarify, to remove the obstacles that clock the understanding. Thus, sometimes using the mother tongue in teaching will help the learner to be present in the learning activity.

Recommendations

1. Teachers of foreign languages should teach the subject-matter by using the language of instruction (French) with official language (English) as well as the mother tongue(MT).
2. Teachers of foreign languages should not see the mother tongue as a vernacular language.
3. Teachers should not lay more emphasis on the official language while teaching the subject-matter.
4. Teachers should know that the mastery of the language will earn them the admiration and respect of their learners through the method they use in the classroom.
5. Teachers should know that a French class is a special environment where the learner's interest should be put first in the learning activities i.e. The understanding of the subject-matter should be his own priority in the class.

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