Obstacles in developing technical english materials for electricity section at *Nyahanga* secondary school

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Abstract

This research has focused in the field of English Language Teaching Technical English especially in Electricity Section. It goals at depicting various issues teachers of English face in the teaching Technical ones. The result, the researcher obtained on the ground was categorized and summed up through the main points which are : The teacher's problems in teaching speaking skills, The teacher's Perceptions of the Learner's problems to adapt Technical English to Learners, and The strategies that teachers use to overcome these problems. From this result, the researcher found out that teachers of English in the third form at NYAHANGA institute catholic school in Rutshuru Center apply difficultly Electricity Technical English.

Keywords : Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), communicative approach, interaction, obstacles, tools.

Résumé

Cette recherche intitulée : « *Obstacles au développement de l'anglais technique chez les élèves de troisième année à l'Institut Technique industrielle de Nyahanga à Rutshuru-centre.* » est focalisée dans le domaine l'enseignement de la langue anglaise, particulièrement en option d'Electricité. Son objectif est de représenter les différents problèmes que les professeurs d'Anglais rencontrent dans l'enseignement d'Anglais Technique. Le résultat que le chercheur a obtenu sur terrain était catégorisé sur les principaux points à savoir : Les problèmes que les professeurs font face dans l'enseignement des aptitudes orales, les perceptions des professeurs en rapport avec les problèmes auxquels les élèves se heurtent pour s'adapter en Anglais Technique et les stratégies que les professeurs emploient pour surmonter ces problèmes. De ces résultats, n'appliquent pas convenablement l'approche communicationnelle chose qui freine la progression. Le chercheur a trouvé que les professeurs d'Anglais technique dans cette

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école précitée de Rutshuru Centre appliquent difficilement l'Anglais Technique en Electricité.

Mots clés : *Enseignement Communicatif de Langue, Compétence à l'orale, Interaction, Obstacles, matériels.*

1. Introduction

Considering the impact of English in the present world, the Ministry of education has incorporated this language in its educational program at secondary level. Unfortunately, the designer of this program did not takeinto account the different school options organized in the country. He designed a single type of curriculum for all sections. The technical school department was ignored by the government. Hence, teaching English language in technical schools has become the most care problems. The teacher of English faces difficulties everyday in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

English is also taught in Rutshuru catholic schools in all classes, no matter the number of hours in each class, which depends from a school to another, teachers of English in these schools have the obligation to apply modern methodologies that would bring learners to develop easihy their four language skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. As far as speaking is concerned. Here big number of Learners in these schools end their secondary school Learning process with difficulties in expression themselves in the English Language especially in using Electricity materials in English. With survey instrument class observation, lesson attendance, documents analysis and series of interviews with tearchers and headmasters the researchers has succeeded to investigate different problems teachers face in their teaching technical process. Through these issues the researcher has proposed some factors that should be taken into consideration.

2. The aim

The reseacher's aim in dealing with the present topic is to shareTechnical and Electricity materials with teachers of English language, Thispreocupation as someone

evolving in the teaching carreer and to point out a series of recommendation helpful to inhance the teacher's activity vis – à – vis to his learners'need in Electricity section.

3. Problem statement

The designer of English curriculum has omitted the kind of English that should be delivered to learners of technical classes. That is to say, the national program says nothing about. Most teachers of English are themselves limited or poorly equiped to find materials related to the teaching of English adapted to technical sections.

4. Research questions

The researcher is aware that there is no content in English program of what should be tought in schools organizing technical sections. Therefore the following research questions are worthy to be formulated:

- Are there any English books related to technical education?
- If, yes, how do teachers proceed to select materials to teach ?
- If not, where do they find what they teach and how do they teach what they teach ?

5. Hypotheses

The assumptions of the researcher are that probably there exist books related to the teaching of English in technical schools. The difficulty may be how to use them. Likely, teachers may be used to personaly designing the program to follow.

6. Methodology

The present study centres on two aspects of NYAHANGA Technical High School: the conditions that affect how the teaching – learning is conducted and the way English language teachers conceive the notion of effective teaching in Electricity. Data collection took place from September 2020 to April 2024. The researcher is quite familiar with catholic school settings since he has experience for having worked in the system since 2012. He conducted interviews with three teachers and the headmaster of

that school as we had to meet many times in SERNAFOR like colleagues from one catholic school of Rutshuru namely: I.T.I.NYAHANGA Institute, These teachers of English were selected simply because they teach technical English at NYAHANGA school. The purpose of the interview was explained to the participants and the confidentiality of the personal information was guaranted. While most questions focused on the strategies that teachers use to teach technical English in their secondary schools, there were a number of questions that were asked about their learners' level, grammar and technical textbooks in Electricity. Anything thought to be important for this research to find the reasons behind using various strategies by the teachers. The researcher also resorted to qualitative method in the form of case study. Nunan (1992), states that the qualitative case study can be defined as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon, or social unit. Based on the quotation above, the researcher conducted that case study with the aim of providing a holistic description of different problems that English language teachers face when teaching speaking skills, and technical ones.

Accordingly, Frankle and Wallen (2012) put in that research can mean any sort of careful, systematic, patient study and investigation in some field of knowledge, undertaken to discover or establish facts and principles. From this explanation, the researcher concludes that this research method can properly refer to theoretical analysis of the method appropriate to a field of study and principles particular to a branch of knowledge.

The field notes that Technical English were taken while conducting the survey in the classrooms were descriptive. Robert (1982), argues that descriptive research added the litteralsence of describing situations of events. It is the accumulation of a data base that is solely descriptive. It does not necessarily seek or explain relationship, test hypothesis, make prediction, or get at meanings and implications, although research aimed at these more powerful purposes may incorporate descriptive methods. The description of the situation and the events were jotted down as they occured. The notes were written as narratives but later were summarized immediately after each observation. Documents such as selected texts, scheme of work, questionnaire notebook and preparation sheets were also studied.

7.   *Findings and discussions*

With the information collected in catholic secondary schools of Rutshuru centre, regarding the teaching of English speaking skills, The researcher analysed the data to highlight the relevant information relative to his concern. These data are categorized and summed up under the points namely: The teachers' problems in teaching speaking skills, the teachers' perceptions of learners' problems in speaking English, and the teachers' problem to adapt technical English to learners, the strategies that teachers use to overcome these problems.

7.1. Teachers' problems in teaching speaking skills

Different problems were identified by the participants regarding the teaching of speaking skills, The main problems that the researcher identified, here, is to be found in the way the participants teach speaking skills. Their answers to the question "how do you teach speaking skills?" match perfectly with the researcher observed in the classroom during investigation, one of the participants stated: "I can put a sentence on the black board, I read the model sentence then I invite pupils to repeat it individually then in chorus, I can also give them some drills to make them comprehending.

This answer to the question above is a clear evidence that the participant has little knowledge on the way speaking skills are taught, how can some one expect their learners to speak English with this methodology? Where the learner is centered approach in this way? Where is the place of interaction in this way of teaching? Of course, many teachers of English confuse Electricity, meaningful and communicative practice Jack, C (2006) clarifies these terms by stating the following.

- Mechanical and electronical refer to a controlled practice activity which student can successfully carry out without necessarirly understanding the language they are using. Examples of this kind of activity would be repetition drills and substitution drills designed to practice the use of particular grammatical or other items.
- Meaningful practice refers to an activity where language control is still provided by where students are required to make meaningful choices, when carrying out practice. For example, in order to practice the use of

prepositions to describe locations places students might be given a street map, materials with various buildings identified in different location. The practice is meaningful because they have to respond according to the location of places on the map.

- Communicative practice refers to activities where practice is using language whith in a real communication context is the focus, where real information is exchanged and where the language used is not totally predictable. For example, students might have to draw a map of their neighbourhood and answer questions about the location of different places such as the nearest bus stop.

a. Speaking face to face

- Most conservations take place face to face as it is the case of classroom conservations, in this situation, communication through speaking has many assests such as facial expressions gestures and even body movements, widowson (1998) states that speaking also occurs, most of the time, in situations where participants or interlocuteurs are present. Such factors facilitate communication.

b. Speaking is interaction

For communication to be effective, speaking should involve interaction, taking which is the main feature in interaction, is unconscious part of normal conversation as far as interaction is concerned. Comble and carter (2001), argue that whether we are speaking face to face or over the telephone to one person or a small group participants offering contributions at appropriate moments, with no every one talking over each other.

Teachers' problems in teaching speaking language

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- Meaningfull practice refers to an activity where language control is still provided but where students are required to make meaningful choices when carrying out practice. For example, in order to practice the use of prepositions to describe locations of places, students might be given a list of prepositions such as across from, on the corner of, near on, next to. They then have to answer questions such as "where is the book shop?" "where is the café?" etc. The practice is now meaningful because they have to respond according to the location of places on the map.

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The other participants' answers to the question above runs follows:

Safi: I ask questions and pupils answer. Pupil share time to answer questions from the teacher and this is the way teach speaking skills.

Faustin: you know our pupils are weak. We sometimes are obliged to come back on elementary notions. There are even pupils who are not able to readeven a single sentence. We can think being in front of a fourth form pupil but in reality the level is very law.

Georges: when I teach speaking skills, I interest pupils to speak freely. I also motivate everybody to give answers so that I may be sure that everybody speaks.

Janvier: I always ask questions to pupils; which may allow then to speak freely. Secondly, I always teach them reading for pronunciation to all of them. They speak freely when exploiting the text, and how to use Electricity Materials Mostly in jobs.

From the above answers regarding the way participants teach speaking skills, the researcher finds out that, beyond the confusion with the three different kinds of language practice, aspects of speaking are not cruticized and put into consideration by the participants. To communicate effectively in real life situations, the participants should consider the following aspects of speaking:

7.1.1. Speaking is face to face

Most conversations take place as it is the case of classroom conversations. In this situation, communication through speaking has many assets such as facial expressions, gestures and even body movements. Windows on (1998), states that speaking also occurs, most of the time, in situations where participants or interlocutors are present.

Such factors facilitate communication by practicing technical materials, tools, pictures – Electrical ones.

7.1.2. Speaking in interactions

For communication to be effective, speakinh should involve interaction. Turn taking, which is the main feature in interaction, is an unconscious part of normal conversation. As far as interaction is concerned, Cornble et and Carter (2001), argue that whether we are speaking face-to-face or over the telephone, to one person or a small group, the wheels of conversation usually turns smoothly, with participants offering contributions at appropriate moments, with no undue gaps or everyone talking over each other.

7.1.3. Speaking happens in real time

Another aspect of speaking in that it happens in real time. During conversations, responses are unplanned and spontaneous. These constraints affect the speaker's ability to plan, to organize the message, and to control the language being used. That is why there are false starts, hesitations and changes of words when communicating.

To strengthen what is stated here, Miller (2001) put it that speakers often start to say something and change their mind midway; whitch is temed a false start. The speaker's sentence also cannot be aslong as in writing. Similarly, speakers occasionally said, and so they repeat themselves.

The other problem that teachers of English face when teaching speaking skills is the lack of resources. Three out of the five participants argue that their schools do not make English books available to them. To teach English and particularly speaking, they resort to their personal experiences, university notes or previous notebooks from other schools. This fact makes the teching of speaking very difficult. Isangi painfully expresses this concern. She says: "First, there is no documentation. Even when making research, we find almost nothing. When having a lool at neighboring schools, they also experience the same problems." The wish of the participants towards their schools authorities is to make grammar books available to them. This may sound very complicated for a school which has nothing in its library; but is simply a matter of will.

If every year, the school can bury a book, teachers of English would detain the required books within a few years.

7.2. The teachers' perecptions of the learners' problems in using electricity meterials

The participants identified different problems regarding the learners' speaking skills in English. All the five participants mentioned the learners' level as one of the main problems they face in developing learners speaking skills. One participant stated: "I can say that the task is very heavy. Pupils are not used to speaking English by using technical terms. They want me to translate for them everything I say or what I write on the blackboard. And this affects our methodology." This is, indeed, what the researcher witnessed on the ground during class observations. The learners' low level in English vocabulary bring them feel shy. They do not want to speak aloud in the classroom. Insteat, they want their teachers to translate every thing they teach in French. When their teachers push them to speak, they only pronounce isolated words and disconnected sentence making their production poor and meaningless. One will, for example hear learners' say something like: "Teacher toilet" accompanied with gestures when asking for the permission to go to the toilet. To be more precise and specific , when teaching sortsof wires pinces third form Electricity NYAHANGA school, the researcher, heard a learner saying "I need of classroom when formulating a sentence with light" in need of". A disconnected sentence like this one is very difficult to understand and does not facilitate teachers to develop their learners' speaking skills.

The other problem the participants have identified regarding the leaners' skills in speaking English in the consideration of English in the educational system. Most of participants blamed the Congolese educational system for the learners' lack of courage to speak English at school. They argue that the system puts much emphasis on the learning of French language and very little mphasis is placed on English. With this Congolese educational system, learners do not have the chance to interact in English at school, which is, unfortunately, the main objective of inserting English at secondary schools by the Congolese Government. As a simple demonstration to justify this little emphasis on speaking skills, the participants have attested that speaking skills Technical ones are not officially to be tested both with local and official or national examinations.

School authorities, on their side, do not facilitate the teaching of the English speaking skills as well. One of the participants puts it that: "They have to emphasize on having pupils speaking English as it happens with French." Faustin goes on: "School authorities should provide punishments for those pupils who speak other languages than French and English inside and outside the classroom."

Rewards and punishment are the two learning techniques that are always used in many environments including education, work, and life. Many learning activities in ourlives are impacted by these techniques. As far as punishment is concerned, school authorities have to vulgarize learners sorts of punishments they are to receive in case they violate some instructions related to the learning of English in general and speaking skills in particular. The punishment can behold be preventive or repressive depending on the violation a learner has committed.

Sticking on school authorities, Georges suggested that: "The school authorities can show leaners the importance of the English language. Second, they can help learners to hold the hand out for texts. Third, they can support the organization of an English practice their speaking skills", touching Electrical tools.

The participants' declarations, here above confirm that there is very little facility that the educational system together with the school provides to the teachers of English to help their learners communicate by showing them the Teaching Aids, they neither think of organizing a language laboratory nor an English club in any of the targeted schools the researcher investigated. English book from their schools. They either use previous English notebooks from their schools or borrow notebooks from other schools, a few Technical books.

7.3. Strategies used by the teachers of english to improve learners' speaking skills

Despite difficulties teachers of English face when teaching speaking skills, they apply some strategies to overcome these problems. All the participants mentioned the low level of their learners as one of the main difficulties they face to teach speaking skills. To come up with this insufficient proficiency, the participants encourage learners to speak, no matter the mistakes they will be committing. **Safi** mentioned:" I always senitize to break abound their fears and to talk even when making mistakes." This

sensitization is very important in the language learning process. It helps to reduce learners' overall shyness nervousness and inhibition in speaking while using Technical terms.

The other sttategy I investigated that teachers apply to develop their learners' speaking skills is to focus more on weak learners. Participants concentrate much of their efforts on those leaners who difficulty express themselves in the classroom because of their low levels. Faustin said:"Normally when teaching, we are not interested on strong pupils. We pay much attention on weak pupils. Some weak pupils respond well to technical questions and orientations; but unfortunately, some others need enough attention and extra time to deal with their speaking."

Four participants out of five mentioned that they motivate weak learners to speak English despite their weaknesses. In the field of second language learning, motivation has been acknowledge as a remarkable factor in language learning success. Hammer (2002) states that motivation is a type of initiative that encourages someone to things to reach a goal. Furthermore, this is fundamental to succeed in most of fields of learning; without such motivation, we will not able to make the effort to learn. In the same respect, Gardner (1985), claims that motivation is perceived as a goal-directed factor since it involves for aspects: a goal, efforful behavior, a desire to reach the goal, and favorable attitudes toward an activity.

8. Recommendations

Although there are strategies that participants continue to apply, the speaking skills ability of learners in Rutshuru centre NYAHANGA catholic school is showing unsatisfactory result. Teachers in school, their school authorities and the DRC Government have to change their attitudes toward the teaching of English in general and of the speaking skills in particular.

Teachers, on one hand, should keep the idea of communicative language teaching in their minds. Withthis approach, teachers assume the role of facilitators and monotors placing the learners at the centre of their learning.

The maximum of time in the learning process should be devoted to learners' interations through various sorts of well-set communicative activities. They should also put out of

their minds that their learners can do what they want them to do immediately. It takes, of course, time to have learners achieve their goals.

Communicative activities should bring a great positive impact here. The Government through its Ministry of primary, secondary and technical Education in DRC, together with school learders, on the other hand, should take the initiative of testing speaking skills in both local and national examinations. This sould also put teachers of technical English in conditions that would allow them to teach English effectively and consciously. In doing so, the researcher is certain that the learners will improve their English speaking skills and technical relating to their electricity materials.

9. Conclusion

This research has developed a topic around difficulties teachers of Technical English in Rutshurucentre catholic school face when teaching speaking skills. Thanks to differents methods used, the researcher has succeeded to point different obstacles that participants meet in developing their learners' speaking skills. These difficulties were categorized into two groups which are : difficulties teachers of English personally face when teaching speaking skills and these teachers' problems in speaking English.

In addition to this, the researcher also pointed out different strategies participants apply to improve their learners' speaking skills. From difficulties to strategies, the researcher has come to the conclusion that the speaking skills ability of learners' in Rutshurucatholic school is showing unsatisfactory result. Thus, he has suggested some recommendations not only to teachers of English but also to school authorities and the government. In case these recommendations are put into actions, the researcher is certain that there will be positive impact in the learners' speaking skills in English and how apply Electricity materials to our English domain through teaching Aids.

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Appendix 1 : Profile of the participants

Names	Age	Gender	Academic qualification	Teachingexperience
Safi SUKAKA	30-40	F	Undergraduate	8 years
Georges KAMARA	40-45	M	Graduate	13 years
BAHATI RUKIRANDE	30-35	M	Graduate	6 years
Faustin SENDUGU	25-30	M	Undergraduate	3 years

Appendix 2 : Interview questions

- Which tools do you focus when teaching technical English ?
- How do you teach speaking skills ?
- How do pupilsrespond ?
- What are their levels in language learning ?
- What matter do you personaly face when teaching technical English in Electricity ?
- What do you do in with passive learners in the classroom ?
- How many times have you been inMatebe for touching electrical tools ?
- What do you think are the reasons for their passivity ?
- Which facility does the school provide you to make learners' communicate by using technical terms ?(Group work, pair work, language club, laboratory)

Appendix 3 : Profil of Rutshuru Nyahanga catholic school

School	Registration number	Organized section	Number of hours/week	Number of teachers of English
Nyahanga Institute	6142982	Electricity Mecanic Construction	3hours 3hours 3hours	3