



Teaching Model for Socio-Cultural Knowledge Delivery in Igbo Language

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ABSTRACT

Socio-cultural knowledge simple means the social norms, values and behaviors of a given society and how these norms and values are achieved through the language of the people. On the other hand, model of knowledge delivery is a design that can perfectly deliver the social and cultural values to the young ones of for cultural existence and identification status. This paper therefore looks into the models that can deliver Igbo language and culture in a socio-cultural situation. It comes up with teaching methods like dramatization, traditional and community language learning methods in looking into the challenges of Igbo language and cultural learning. The methods encourage active participation of the learners in a learner friendly situation hence interactive. The model blends Igbo cultural concepts in the teaching and learning lessons where the learners would be fully involved through puzzle, games, storytelling and role play. The main objectives of this study include; the exposure of the children and youths to Igbo culture, to encourage them to use the culture in the social context for easy identification as well as to maintain the culture of the Igbo society. The study adopts Lev Vygotsky's Socio-cultural theory of 1978. The study concludes by looking at the contributions of teaching and learning with good strategies in Igbo language for better understanding of the language and culture.

INTRODUCTION

Igbo Language is one of the three major Nigerian Languages in Nigerian schools. The study of Igbo Language just like Hausa and Yoruba as parts of the school curricular came after 1969 national conference which was organized by the NERC now the NERDC and was attended by all the stakeholders in education (Dom-Anyanwu, 2023). As a subject of study, Igbo Language is faced with so many challenges which are hindering the effective learning of the language in our schools. The challenges include lack of support from states and Federal governments, poor attitude of the elites towards the teaching and learning and use of Igbo language.

Poor attitude of parents towards the language and lack of good methodologies by the Igbo language teachers lack of appropriate instructional materials, poor attitudes of the Igbo people towards Igbo language, lack of support from the elites and so on. As a result of these challenges, the researcher decided to come up with good models that will be used in teaching and learning of the Nigerian children Igbo language in schools for better identification and for the maintenance, presentation and promotion of our cultural heritage. Our culture must not die. We must hand it over to our children just as our fathers handed it over to us. Just as the Igbo proverb says , the fire given to a child by his father will never burn him. Culture and traditions of our land will never die. And this can only be possible if they are handed over to our children who will carry on with the culture and traditions when we are no more.

Model on the other hand is a teaching and learning design that can perfectly deliver the socio-cultural values of a given society to the younger ones without much stress. This model will come up with various teaching and learning strategies that will deliver the socio-cultural norms and values of the Igbo society to the upcoming generations for better identification and maintenance, preservation and promotion of the societal culture and traditions. The strategies and methods of the teaching and learning must be learner friendly. It must also encourage students' active participation which will lead to successful and permanent learning of the community culture, norms and values. Any teaching that does not have positive impacts on the learners and societal lives is not a good teaching. Therefore, the teachers should teach the models in a way that the learners' knowledge and understanding will be of positive value to the given society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The objectives of this study include:

- To expose the Igbo children and youths to the culture and traditions of Igbo Language.
- To inculcate the Igbo norms and values to the Igbo children through teaching and learning in the schools.
- For better promotion and, maintenance of Igbo cultural heritage.
- For better identity.
- To enable our children fit-in into our society.

METHODOLOGY

The methods adopted for the study include; interactive learning methods such as Discussion, Dramatization, Community and role-play methods, using Igbo local examples that have to do with Igbo culture and social institutions. Putting in a curriculum design that has to do with the socio-cultural lives of the Igbo. The classroom teacher must be aware of all these methods and make the class lively by allowing active participation of the learners.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Study Employed the Vygotsky's (1978) Socio-Cultural Theory

Which sees the development of human as a socially mediated process in which children acquire cultural values, beliefs and problems-solving strategies through collaborative dialogues with more knowledgeable members of the society. This Theory emphasizes on the importance of social interaction in the cognitive development of a child or a learner. It is the belief of the theory that the community of a child plays a very important role in the child's language especially as it concerns the semantic aspect of the language. Vygotsky believes that learning is very important and is also part of the process of developing an organized human psychological function culturally. He argues that the child interacts socially in his or her environment before the development. As such, the child must be grounded socio-culturally before the total development. Cognitive functions according to this theory are the products of social interactions within the environment of the child. In other words, the meaning of words is created by the child or the learner as a result of the socio-cultural interactions of the child between individuals in the society or environment and by so doing, the child forms his concepts.

Socio-cultural delivery in this context means the social norms and behavioural values of a given society and how they can be transformed to the learners or the younger generations through teaching and learning for the maintenance, preservation and promotion of the societal language and culture. In this case, teacher holds the key with good teaching styles.

Review of Literature

For the review of related literature, the challenges of Igbo language teaching and learning as well as methods of teaching Igbo language were looked into thus:

Igbo language as one of the three major Nigerian languages is faced with many challenges ranging from lack of support from Igbo parents, lack of support from the elites, poor methods of teaching, ill-trained teachers and even non-governmental supports.

Lack of Support from Parents

Most Igbo parents do not allow their children speak Igbo language what more of studying it in the schools. This is too bad because the only way Igbo language or any other language can survive is by using it for day-to-day communication and activities else the language will become a dead language.

No wonder UNESCO (2022) opines that to keep a language alive, it must be used either orally or in a written form. Igbo parents prefer English and foreign languages. They see Igbo language as something worthless. Forgetting that they are killing their children's identity and heritage. It is as a result of this that the researchers came up with this teaching model for socio-cultural knowledge delivery in Igbo language. This is to affirm the belief that for a language to grow, the owners of this language must put efforts through the teaching and learning of the language (Agboola, 2011).

Lack of Support from the Elites

One of the challenges of Igbo language teaching and learning in Nigerian schools is the poor attitude of the elites towards Igbo language. In the words of Dom-Anyanwu (2023), the elites do not want to hear or support indigenous languages teaching and learning. Instead, they always see to the development of English and other foreign languages. They do not encourage their children in speaking the language instead they prefer English language. Forgetting that east or west, home is the best. Culturally, they prefer western culture to Igbo culture. Throwing away their identity and heritage. Challenge like this is one of the reasons why the researchers came up with this idea of creating model of teaching Igbo which will incorporate the Igbo culture in the teaching and learning in the classroom.

The government on the other hand only lash out theories without proper implementation. All the language policies as it concerns Nigerian languages are just mere saying. How could the government states that Nigerian languages teaching/learning should be compulsory in junior secondary schools in Nigeria yet not all the junior secondary schools are offering the 3 major Nigerian languages and the government does not care. When a policy is made, the next thing will be to follow up the implementation of that policy (Dom-Anyanwu & Iwuala, 2023). The acculturation program which is supposed to be sponsored by the federal government is just in theory.

Ill-Trained Igbo Teachers

This is one of the challenges of Igbo language teaching and learning in Nigerian schools. Some of the teachers teaching Igbo as a second language in states outside Igbo States are ill-trained. Some of them are teaching the language because they are of Igbo origin. Some of them did not study Igbo language in higher institution while some of them studied course like CRK and History. Teachers like these end up in cheating the learners instead of teaching them. With good model of teaching Igbo, a well-qualified Igbo teacher can teach the Igbo learners using their cultural milieu as examples which will help the learners in knowing their culture and traditions and being active in their societies. Government should try in training more qualified Igbo language teachers as well as encourage on the job training for those of them teaching without good qualifications. This will give them the opportunities to develop themselves thereby having the knowledge of the current ways and innovations of teaching Igbo language in particular and teaching in general 8.

Poor Methods of Teaching

This can lead to poor performance in any subjects. Teachers should have good knowledge of the language theories which help them in selecting good methods of teaching. New trends of teaching are the order of the day. Igbo teachers should embrace new methods of teaching that are learner-centered. Interactive teaching/learning should be encouraged as well as cooperative teaching and learning methods. The learners should be involved through play-way method, storytelling, dramatization and community methods. These methods when used well should be incorporated with culture of the society thereby making the learners learn the culture, norms and values of their society.

Lack of Appropriate and Adequate Instructional Material

The materials for the teaching and learning of Igbo language in schools are not enough. Most times, teachers improvise though not in all aspects of teaching. Instructional materials like charts, pictures, maps, melded objects, carved objects just to mention a few are either lacking or not enough. Teaching without instructional materials will end up in cheating the learners. Instructional materials help for better understanding, help the learners learn with ease, help them remember what the teacher said in the classroom and also help for better teaching. No wonder Okafor (2011). Says that “when a learner hears, sees and touches he understands better, learning takes place faster and retention is permanent “. It is important for a teacher to teach the learners with appropriate and adequate instructional materials which motivates the learners and arouse their interests in what the teacher is teaching. This makes them develop positive attitudes towards what the teacher is teaching.

Poor Attitudes of Igbo People Towards Igbo Language

For a language to grow, the owners of the language must positively support the language in every aspect. The owners of the language must make positive efforts to meet up with the positive innovations that can make the language stand the test of time, especially as it concerns the teaching and learning in a formal setting (Agboola, 2011). In essence, the Igbo people should make positive efforts to develop their language and culture just like the Yoruba and Hausa peoples through effective teaching models. In support of this, Ekere 2010, says that language is the vehicle for the transmission of any culture else that culture cannot be transmitted to the younger generations. In the words of Nwadike (2011), Any tribe that loses their language has lost identity and as such will not have culture and future.

Given enough opportunities in schools, the use of the indigenous languages like Igbo language in the teaching and learning of the Igbo learners will have significant improvement and as well make the learners cherish the culture of their people thereby keeping the heritage alive (Araromi, 2005).

Models of Igbo Language Delivery

Looking at the socio-cultural bottlenecks of teaching and learning Igbo language in our society - Nigeria, this model tries to bring in a solution to the

problems by coming up with teaching and learning and general way of approach that will help the learners and as well promote the culture of the learners. This simply means bringing the Igbo culture to the teaching and learning activities in the classroom thereby encouraging the learners to learn with the love of their culture. Incorporating whatever lesson, they are learning with their culture by bringing in activities that can promote Igbo culture in whatever lesson they are learning. This can be done in the classroom by the Igbo teachers by using activities like traditional teaching methods, reading, writing and speaking Igbo language in the classroom and even outside the classroom. Community method of teaching, acculturation method, dramatization and role play should also be incorporated in the classroom activities just as Iwuala (2015), opines that it will make the learners have the feelings of belonging to the cultural community and be able to reason and behave well since they know the values and norms of the community or environments.

There must be interactive activities in the classroom between the Igbo teachers and the learners. Activities such as story-telling should also be used which will incorporate the culture and traditions of the community. Riddles, idioms and proverbs should be incorporated in the stories. By so doing, the learners will be taught wisdom sayings. This will go a long way in teaching the learners the culture and social norms and values of Igbo.

This model is of the view that when the learners learn Igbo lessons based on the Igbo cultural activities embedded in the Igbo lessons, the learning will be permanent and successful. Again, the model is of the view that Igbo language can be better learned when incorporated with Igbo cultural and social activities, norms and values in the classroom. Children learn by doing and as such, we try to catch them when they are young by teaching them the beauty of their culture and language. This will be permanent in them if the teachers teach them well. The emphasis will be on the maintenance, use and promotion of the language and culture for better identification and to keep our heritage moving. The good use of the models will usher in respects to the elders by the younger generation. It will keep the culture moving so that the children will not roast the vultures in place of the kite.

Contributions to Knowledge

This article if well used by the indigenous languages teachers in our schools will be of great benefits to the learners and the society at large. It will bring bright futures to the teaching and learning of our indigenous languages. It will make our indigenous languages known all over the world thereby increasing researchers' interests in indigenous languages. Our cultures will be showcased to the whole world which will on the other hand invite tourists in our nation which will in one way or another increase our economy thereby leading to positive development. Our education system will also benefit massively from this if the models are well used and encouraged by the government and education authorities by providing good incentives to the indigenous teachers as well as providing appropriate and adequate

instructional materials for the teaching of the indigenous languages. Language is power and it cannot be separated from culture. Two of them work hand in hand to brighten the human societies and to put life in a given environment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To maintain our indigenous languages and culture, the languages must be promoted by the owners through teaching and learning in our schools. Any language that must survive must be handed over to the youths. Language and culture are inseparable. Therefore, this work has deeply looked into the teaching models that can be used in the knowledge delivery of Igbo as our indigenous language. The methods enumerated above will help the Igbo young learners not only learning Igbo language but also knowing their culture and traditions as well as knowing their identity.

Igbo language teachers should therefore carry out their duties well not only looking at the model but also using appropriate and adequate instructional materials and friendly environment for the learners. In helping the learners learn and communicate well in a given society, the teaching and learning will not flow if there is no indigenous language which is fused to the societal culture (Opara and Okere, 2021).

Our identity must not be erased. Our culture must live and we must maintain our heritage through good teaching and learning models. Just as Ikonne (2018), says Igbo language as well as other Nigerian languages can be preserved through active communications and the Igbo language teachers should plan the lesson notes to cover the cultural context of the Igbo language used in the society; and the teaching should be from simple knowledge to complex. And from known to unknown. Examples should be cited within the environment of the learners that has to do with their culture. When these are positively done, the learners will learn with ease and learning will be enjoyed.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations so further research on this topic is still needed "Teaching Model for Socio-Cultural Knowledge Delivery in Igbo Language".

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