

PARADIGM SHIFT IN NIGERIAN LANGUAGE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT: AGENDA FOR PROFESSIONAL REBIRTH

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Introduction

The Concept of Language Teacher Development

Development is a key concept in this discourse and it is a concept which social science scholars have given a panoply of interpretations based on their philosophical orientations. Development economists such as Okereke and Ekpe (2002:5) have noted that development is an instrumental process of over-coming persistent poverty, absorbing surplus labour and diminishing inequality. Walter Rodney cited in Okereke and Ekpe (2002) argues from the Marxist perspective to posit that development . . . is a many-sided process which, at the level of the individual, implies increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material wellbeing. . . . At the level of social groups, it implies an increased capacity to regulate both internal and external relations. . . . In the past, development has always meant the increase in the ability to guard the independence of the social group”. No matter from what angle anybody looks at the concept, development implies growth.

Language teacher development involves the inculcation of skills and competencies that will help the language teacher to deliver on the job. It is a process that helps the language teacher to develop the capacity to meet the daily routines in the language classroom in order to produce learners who will be proficient in the use of language skills both in and out of the school environment. Language teacher development liberates the language teacher from the poverty of the mind and activates his sense of creativity while giving him greater autonomy in the choice of skills and methodology for language teaching. Language teacher development must be understood as a deliberate policy to train, recruit, empower, and retain quality language teachers in the different tiers of a given educational system for efficient language teaching and learning based on perceived international best practices. The process of language teacher development in a society is often an educational issue which is determined by legislation. It is a process which is intricately connected with language policy and planning initiatives of a government. Language teacher development may arise

from the process of language audit. Regrettably, sustainable language teacher development as a deliberate policy is seriously lacking in Nigeria. What really exists are initial general academic training programmes in colleges and universities with the ministry of education, and a few parastatals which play occasional supervisory roles for the provision of curricula, resource materials for language teaching and the payment of teachers' salaries. In America and Europe, national governments strive to initiate and sustain policies that promote English language teaching and learning. Between 1975 and 2010, the British government set up about six commissions on how to ensure standards in English language teaching. For example, the Bullock Commission was set up in 1975 under the Chairmanship of Sir A. Bullock to investigate the quality of English language teaching and learning in Britain and make recommendations.

The Report of the Commission which was published with the title *Language for life* made far reaching recommendations which included the principal of *Language Across the Curriculum*, (LAC) and the integration of reading and writing in other subjects which students were taught in schools; Bullock (1975). Such bold and innovative attempts are lacking in Nigeria. Indeed, Nnolim (2005:1) has argued that Nigeria has a confused and unfocused language policy which has damaged national cohesion. Indeed, the poor language policy in the nation has blurred developmental aspirations and created inter-ethnic apathy, and social class struggles which now threaten our national security. There are no policies on government in-service training schemes tailored towards re-tooling and up-dating the knowledge profile of the language teacher for continuing professional development. The objectives of in-service training for serving staff have been outlined in Dankwa (1972:5) as:

- i. Eliminating weaknesses and deficiencies in the teaching and learning habits of teachers with its consequential benefits on pupils.
- ii. The re-enforcement of the academic and professional capabilities of teachers by supplementing pre-service training.
- iii. Introducing and entrenching new but useful methods, concepts and practices through the formulation and development of syllabuses sponsored or initiated by teachers.
- iv. Making the teacher more effective and productive in the classroom by raising his confidence profile through the initiation of programmes aimed at up-grading the teacher's professional qualification.
- v. Inducing in the teacher a committal to meaningful and purposeful changes and innovations through the development of professional skills and the formation of professional attitudes.

- i. Keeping the teacher up-to-date, adaptable, and flexible by making him aware of contemporary educational trends, practices and national educational goals.... As they may pertain to language teaching and learning.

Apart from the occasional efforts of the British Council in Nigeria in providing the English language teacher refresher courses in-country and overseas, and the joint communication skills project for Nigeria federal universities sponsored by the British and the Nigerian governments between 1988 and 1993, English language teachers have not had any other known platform initiated and supported by government for their professional development. The scenario may not be different from the experience of the teachers of other languages taught in the academic institutions in the country.

The Need for Language Teacher Development: Who Bells the Cat?

Language teacher development is not only critical but criteria to our national development goals. National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) in our national development agenda stress the promotion of literacy and it is common knowledge that literacy programmes are language - driven. Research and experience have shown that there is a positive correlation between learners' language proficiency profile, (LLPP) and language teacher competence (LTC) and LTC is a product of language teacher development. The frequent public outcry about the deterioration in the English language performance of Nigerian students is a factor that mandates policy initiatives for language teacher development in the country. From 1976 till now, the English language teachers, examination bodies, and primary stakeholders in the education process have bemoaned the falling standard in English language usage of Nigerian university graduates. On this issue, the World Bank Study Report (2001) cited in Aduwa-Ogiegbaen and Iyamu (2006) notes, for example, that:

Nigeria's university graduates are poorly trained and unproductive on the job.... Graduate skills have steadily deteriorated over the past decade. The poor performance of Nigerian graduates is particularly evident in two areas; poor mastery of the English language and lack of requisite technical skills.... The deficiencies in both vital areas make Nigerian graduates of the past fifteen years unfit for the labour market, and sometimes the larger society....

Aduwa-Ogiegbaen and Iyamu (2006) further opine that the World Bank Report noted “short-coming in the areas of oral and written communication and applied technical skills... and indicated that a serious disconnect exists between university training and the needs of the labour market...”. Again, public examination bodies such as WAEC, and NECO, have, through their language Chief Examiners' Reports,

raised the same alarm. Although several other variables may combine to account for this state of poor performance in English language, the language teacher factor cannot be over-looked. There is therefore the need for language teacher development to be vigorously pursued to take care of this variable in the language teaching and learning process in the country. Language is a major vehicle for human socialization in every speech community and in all ages. Through it, culture is articulated, transmitted and sustained. Language teaching affects the 168.8 million Nigerians (according to World Bank 2012 Estimates) and the rest of the global community directly or indirectly. Those affected directly in the short run include the 23 million pupils in the primary schools in the country, the students in the 14,905 secondary schools in the thirty-six states, including FCT the undergraduates in the 127 public and private universities, the students in the 50 colleges of education, the students in the 97 polytechnics and 26 monotechnics, and those in schools of nursing, agriculture, and other vocational centers. Equipping these young Nigerians for professional careers and vocations is an exercise that depends primarily on the English language. The education process is dependent on effective communication in language, and so are political, economic, legal, and socio-religious processes.

Baldeh (1990:15) cites Adeogun (1985) as quoting the famous Chinese Philosopher as saying:

If the language is not correct, then what is said is not what is meant. If what is said is not what is meant, then what ought to be done remains undone.

Correctness of language is largely the outcome of proper language teacher development. There is no tool in language teaching armoury that can serve as a substitute for a good language teacher, not even the most sophisticated language laboratory can replace the effective and well developed language teacher. If language teaching fails, all other societal processes will flounder in frustration. To this extent, therefore, my position here is that any perceptible educational failure could find its correlates in failure in language teaching and poor language teacher development. Hence, there is need for effective language development.

But the question that arises is: on whose shoulders will language teacher development rest? Language teacher development is a multi-sectoral issue. The language teachers themselves must in this regard blow their own trumpet by initiating programs and research projects that will help them build capacity for growth. The 21st century language teacher must develop strategic thinking skills – the ability to understand the rapidly changing environmental and global trends in language teaching and learning as well as have the willingness to engage in periodic language audit and needs analysis to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the

language teaching environment. In this way, the language teacher can take the right initiatives and have strategic response for his development. The language teacher must invest in literature and participate in conferences, refresher courses, seminars, and submit to mentoring and demonstrate a willingness to collaborate with his/her colleagues for efficiency and growth. The sponsoring agents and the government must provide adequate policy instruments and funds that will encourage the development of the language teacher. Adequate work environment, teaching materials, and incentives which the language teacher can anchor his motivation on can act as a buffer to his professional development. This means that all stakeholders must contribute in the language teacher development process.

Synergy and Language Teacher Development

What is synergy? Synergy has become a vogue word in every field of human endeavour in the globalized world. Simply defined, synergy is the mutual cooperation between two or more agents in order to produce better results. Synergy is seen by Houghton Mifflin (2007) as “the introduction of two or more agents or forces so that their combined effect is greater than the sum of their individual effects”. There is a kind of osmotic force, which leads to the realization of desired goals or targets in synergy. The principles of synergy embody cooperation and complementarity and excludes monopolistic traits in every ramification. Tripodal synergy involves the mutual and combined action of three elements to produce an effect or result that is better than the action of one or two of the agents. The concept of tripodal synergy in the theme of this paper, in my view, sees merit in the interactive processes among disciplines in language teacher development, thus reinforcing the global trend of interdisciplinary approach to scholarship and problem solution. Furthermore, it reinforces the traditional issue of the relationship between language and literature and the role(s) the later could play in (second) language teaching and learning vis-à-vis language teacher development in the face of the complex linguistic ecology of the nation. Therefore, I opt to examine the concept of synergy and how it impacts on the professional development of the language teacher. In the context of our theme, Synergy involves the combined action of ethnic languages, literature and the English language in language teacher development. Let us at this juncture take a cursory look at the issue of language, literature, and how they interface in the language teacher development process.

Language as a Factor in the Synergy Model for Language Teacher Development:

While I will not like to belabor the issue of the preponderance of ethnic languages and pluri-culturalism in Nigeria, it is important to note that many people like to argue that the issue of multilingualism is the greatest single factor that vitiates any development agenda at both the national and the individual professional levels. According to Bodomo (1999:1) citing Prah (1993) “students of African development in their search for solutions to the development problems of Africa have often ignored linguistic and other socio-cultural resources.

Bodomo goes on to argue that when linguistic issues are addressed at all, the fact that there is a multiplicity of languages in the African countries is often seen as a hindrance to the development of the continent....” In Nigeria alone, we have more than 400 vernacular languages. Certainly, these numerous mutually unintelligible languages in the nation speak of our cultural diversity and our hindrance and or facilitation to development at national, state, community or individual professional levels. There are scholars who favour both sides of this position. For instance, Bodomo (1999:2) argues that Africa's own languages are central to African development and ought to occupy an important place in the development discourse. Emenanjo (1998) using the Nigerian case argues that multilingualism is a national asset. But MetcliffSunter cited in Baldeh (1990) had no value in African indigenous languages which he described as cultural artifacts only fit for the savage. This paper aligns with Bodomo (1999) and Emenanjo (1998) to state that Nigerian ethnic languages are critical in all aspects of our national life including any agenda for language teacher development. This position is first predicated on the Sapir-Whorf linguistic relativity theory which asserts that our perception of the world, the views we hold about life and the significances we ascribe to phenomena are, in the main, determined by our native languages. Second, if reality is the object of language, and for most Nigerians,and reality is defined and appreciated in indigenous languages, it is difficult to conceive of any agency, project or programme for realistic development which can by-pass the use of indigenous languages “... In fact, the indigenous languages, especially the mother-tongue, is the primary code for perception of reality; second and third languages build on the perceptual foundations established by the mother tongue; Emenanjo (1998:38).

Prah's (1993) theory of African development introduces the indigenous language paradigm as a critical factor in any development discourse. The implication of this is that there must be synergy between the indigenous languages and the target language (English) in Nigerian language teacher development for the realization of the goal of producing the professional language teacher. The lessons of contrastive linguistics about positive and negative transfer phenomena, facilitation and inhibition effects of the first language lend strong support to this argument. Language teacher development initiatives need to draw inspiration from it. But the multiplicity of ethnic languages does present challenges in language teacher preparation and development. Interlingua differences are as diverse as the number of ethnic languages. Transfers have been known to manifest at four levels according to Jarvis (2012:4) as follows:

- i. “Intra-group homogeneity which shows the degree of similarity in the target language performance found between the target language (TL) and the mother tongue (MT).
- ii. Inter-group heterogeneity which refers to TL performance differences between speakers of different source languages.
- iii. Cross language congruity which refers to similarities between a person's use of the source language and the TL.
- iv. Intra-lingual contrasts which represent a person's use of the features of TL that differ with respect to how congruent they are with the features of the source language....”

Admittedly, these categories raise the issue of language varieties within variety, the question of choice, correctness, and acceptability. Each language teacher brings the transfer effect of his MT on the TL and this tends to introduce variations in language teacher performance vis-à-vis language teacher development. The MT does constrain the range of hypotheses learners make about the target language. Here, the fossilization phenomena may extend the effect on the target language teacher who comes from a multilingual background such as Nigeria, and this may adversely affect his skills and development. By exposing the English language teacher to one of these indigenous languages, he will be better equipped to understand and manage MT-induced English language learning problems. Also, there is the issue of world Englishes and the question of acceptable variety. Globalization now tends to be closing the gap between BrE and AmE as people appear to use these varieties interchangeably despite the advocacy of the consistency principle. Issues such as this must be part of the synergy tripod in the process of language teacher development.

Let me reiterate here that language is a critical factor in teacher preparation and as Emenanjo (1998:38) notes, it is a major medium in verbal communication and in verbal literary creativity and continuity.... Therefore, it must be seen as the pivot on which innovations, reforms, and skills acquisition rest. Let me at this point address the issue of literature in language teacher development.

Literature as a Factor in the Synergy Model of Language Teacher Development

One element in the theme of this paper is literature, a creative medium through which literary artists articulate and mirror their sensibilities to a given target audience. The scope of literature embraces all of life and this is one of the reasons it has been described sometimes, as a slice of life. Whether literature occurs in the form of poetry, drama or fiction, etc. it reflects the beauty of the language in which it is conveyed. As an artistic form, literature embodies the intricate dimensions and complexities of language use. This accounts for the popular perception of literature as “language in action”, (David Williams, 1996). Again, the perception of literature as that art form which holds a mirror to life speaks volumes in itself about the functionality of the discipline. Literature teaches and delights. Our origins and our culture, how we lived, who we are, where we are coming from and where we are going can all be captured in works of literature; written or oral. This dimension of literature is aptly encapsulated in one of the major pronouncements Chinua Achebe made in 1964 in the Leeds Conference on Commonwealth Literature on his aims and ideals as a novelist cited in Adrain A. Roscoe (1971:121):

Here then is an adequate revolution for me to espouse; to help my society regain its belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-denigration. And it is essentially a question of education in the best sense of the word. Here, I think my aims and the deepest aspirations of my society meet... I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past with all its imperfections was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them... Art is important but so is education of the kind I have in mind....

I surmise that what the literary giant and our teacher, Achebe meant here is education through the medium of literature. Our national literature contains vigorous advocacy of our indigenous cultures, the traditions. Also, epitomized in our national literature, are our people's culture, aesthetics and our models of communicative and discourse strategies. Nigerian literature is rooted in two linguistic traditions – one whose mode of expression is in the ethnic languages and the other written in English and French and known as literature in English, or French. One of the major characteristics of Nigeria's national literature is that it is a blend of the local cultural rhetorics and style with the Anglophone and Francophone patterns. This is perhaps, the reasons why Banjo (1995:7) has described African literature of which Nigerian literature is a national variety as “a kind of Creole or mulato to literature aimed primarily at African bilinguals as well as English monolinguals”. This assertion is an attempt to describe the preponderance of local stylistic devices, and sometimes, the transliterations and oral narrative techniques often found in Nigerian literature.

Achebe once said that his concern in the use of the English language in literary creativity was to use the language as a master craftsman to carry his African experience to reach both his local and international audience. He preached the domestication of the English language for this purpose – a doctrine he assiduously maintained in his career as a renowned author and a legacy for which future literary and stylo-linguistic scholars must remember him. Nigerian literature has ample examples of the domestication phenomenon – a process which could be said to have provided the foundation beacons of Nigerian variety of English. Roscoe (1971:126) notes that Achebe's proverbs (in his literary works) are basically images with a didactic function, and can be used in the manner imagery is commonly used in literature, to bring into focus, and then, sustain themes the writer happens to be exploring. On the importance of literature in the education of the individual, and by extension in language teacher development, I share the same views with Selwyn R. Cudjoe (2004:21) in the statement that:

To neglect the authentic creation of generations of literary artists is tantamount to condemning one's society to oblivion and to scorn. Our future depends upon our having a better sense of our literary culture.... If we do not take stock and define ourselves through our literature, we would have committed a tremendous miscarriage of justice to our previous artists and our present civilization (democracy) and lost precious time...

Literature as art is central to our development struggles. Nnolim (2008:11) cites T.S. Elliot as advising that man “in ceasing to care for the arts and literature, he ceases to care for those faculties and virtues demanded by literary practice, and this constitutes a special form of barbarism”. We are all witnesses to the different forms of barbaric acts prevalent in our society today. The 1960s were more peaceful, less turbulent, and barbaric because the study of literature with its humanizing attributes was compulsory in our schools and colleges. Literature as a form of art has a strong force of advocacy for unity, human freedom, enculturation, economic empowerment and development. As Nnolim (2005:16) has rightly argued, and I agree with him into to:

Nigeria's most valued export is not petroleum products but her literatures which have won every imaginable international prize including the Noble Prize in Literature. Our literature has cut a deep niche in world culture because through translation into various languages, Nigeria exports her culture and tradition into every nook and cranny of the world. Achebe's Things Fall Apart has reportedly been translated into fifty languages outside Africa. Nigerian literary output thus exposes to the world the very foundations of her national consciousness. You will thus surely agree that the aesthetic experience embedded in our literature has within Nigeria itself, fostered among our various peoples, mutual sympathy and understanding that have drawn our country together in mutual friendship and mutual respect, because any group of people who share the same aesthetic experience through literature have a natural bond between them and fell united under a common identity.

The English language teachers in Nigeria need to share the commonality of the aesthetic experience provided by literature. They need to enjoy the unity and the natural bond of conviviality which literature offers. They need to exploit the rich linguistic resources of literature texts and the authenticity they provide in language models in language teaching and learning. Literature in addition to selling Nigerian culture abroad is a huge foreign exchange earner for the country. But ironically, and like agriculture on which the foundations of our nationhood was built, it has been frustrated by faceless educational and curriculum planners. Literature as art is therefore necessary in the professional development of the language teacher if he must understand and propagate the sociolinguistic variable in language teaching and learning and use language teaching to promote culture.

The two critical angles of appreciating a work of literature proposed by H.G. Widdowson, and which I think are critical in the professional development of the language teacher who works through the medium of literature are: first, the concept of literature as text in which linguistic theories and methods are used to show how language works in a piece of literature to express meaning. And second, the concept of literature as discourse which helps to define meaning in a literary work by relating the linguistic system with the context in which the constituent linguistic units occur. Thus, literature helps to show the context dependency of meaning and how linguistic foregrounding helps to enrich the meaning of a literary text. Literature can help in the vocabulary development of both the language teacher and his or her students. Style and language structure could be learnt and enriched through the study of literature. One cannot therefore fail to state here that it is on this basis that the literary theory for the teaching of language skills in both first and second language teaching and learning situations was proposed in the 1960s. These factors therefore make literature a necessary component of the tripod in the synergy for language teacher development.

But in using literature for this purpose, the following constraints need to be pointed out. First, there is the tendency for one to relapse into literary interpretation and analysis instead of language study. The school curricula have de-emphasized literature by making it an optional subject for virtually every certificate

examination in the secondary school and there is no definite guidelines for the teaching of literature at the primary school level, (Banjo 1995). What is more disturbing is that in the teacher training process, it would appear that the curriculum is skewed in favour of language courses. Besides, courses such as linguistics and the teaching of literature, stylistics, language, and literature teaching do not exist in most universities and colleges where the language teachers are trained. These imbalances are challenges for ELTAN to correct before literature can effectively function in the tripodal synergy for language teacher development.

Parasitism and Deficits in the Language Teacher Development

The statement by William Blake in his poem “Jerusalem” which I quote below provides what I consider a good prelude for this section:

“I must create a system or be enslaved by another man's”

Language teaching in Nigeria is fraught with a multiplicity of problems and so is language teacher development. But I will like to stress two key problems in language teacher development-namely: the problem of parasitism, and deficits. Parasitism here is seen in terms of over-dependency on foreign applied linguistic theories and pedagogic models in language teaching. Although eclecticism is a permissible feature of scholarship, too much reliance on it may rob a system of its creative potentialities and the ability to create its own system. Except the professor Babs Fafunwa Yoruba language Experiment on the comparative advantage of English and Yoruba in the learning process, there has been no other effort by Nigerian linguistic scholars and language teachers to initiate or develop any theoretical models or practical methods for language teaching and learning. As we adopt foreign pedagogic models for all practical purposes, it makes our language teachers parasites and this leaves deficits in the language teacher development process. Again, in our language teacher development efforts, most research works lack authenticity, being as it were, products of recycling processes, they are left to gather dust in the library shelves of the institutions that have produced them and consequently they contribute only minimally to the professional development of the language teacher. On the contrary, American language teachers have been able to develop theories and teaching methods that helped their country to solve its language problems. Such theories and principles as structuralism, audio-lingualism have their roots in the efforts of American language teachers and linguists. The research efforts of people like Noam Chomsky in his transformational generative grammar model have dominated the world of linguistics for decades. Also, British language teachers and scholars have over the decades, made significant breakthroughs in language research most of which we now rely on. Today, the European Union is promoting a bilingual language programme that is being implemented with vigour. In Africa, national and regional governments pay little or no attention to comprehensive feasible language research programmes.

Nigerian language teachers have not kept abreast of research demands for their professional development. While their counter-parts in the developed world are encouraged through funding and the provision of institutional frameworks for language research and the development of language teachers, such facilities and support are absent in Nigeria. Those who manage to initiative studies on their own are neither encouraged by the public nor their colleagues. Rivalry and petty jealousies tend to drown the significant discoveries of language teachers as some of their colleagues would neither recognize nor recommend such achievements. Furthermore, most language teachers frown at, or disapprove of team work or peer review and mentoring. Others resist discipleship- a condition which is critical in language teacher development is another flaw in Nigeria's language teacher development. The monolingual nature of most teacher training programmes. In a country with 400 or more autochthonous languages, with English and French as a second language, German as

a foreign language, teacher training programmes should be able to offer the trainee-teacher opportunity of exposure to two or three other languages as electives while pursuing specializing in a major language, at least at the undergraduate level. In the colonial period, English nationals, followed this model for relevance in our multilingual setting. Bleambo (1999:3) confirms this in the statement that: colonial rule was beneficial to minor languages and he quotes phillipson (1992:127) as saying that the British Colonial service was aware of the importance of local languages perhaps to a greater extent than their successors.... Colonial service officers were required to learn at least one local language and to take three language examinations in the first decade of their career overseas. If they failed to do so, there were financial penalties. If a bilingual language policy worked during the colonial times, it is more desirable now, and will work better in the present day knowledge-and-ICT-driven world. Again, it is common knowledge that graduates of other disciplines are grafted to teach the subject because of the dearth of English language teachers. Employers of labour and school managers fail to see this as a disservice. The English language teachers themselves condone such practices because of their desire to minimize their work load. More pathetic and derogatory is the practice of graduates of other disciplines writing English language textbooks which they hoist on the English language professionals for patronage. A profession must have a way of protecting itself. English language teaching (ELT) is one of the fastest growing disciplines in the world today and the Association ought to find some merit in its professionalization within our own borders.

Other deficits worthy of note in our national language teacher development agenda include:

- i. The gap between language policy initiatives and implementation.
- ii. The scrapping of double honours programmes in university language teacher training programmes which allows the trainee language teacher to offer an equal number of courses in education, literature and the language of specialization.
- iii. The over-compartmentalization of English language programmes into language or literature stress options which creates bias and a dichotomy in the choice of areas of specialization and draws grid lines between two stress areas.
- iv. The disguised rivalry and scarcity of staff which make the literature specialist and the language specialist exchange batons in language and literature teaching.
- v. The use of single English language honours graduates without any background in teaching methodology and principles in language, and literature, teaching.

Summary and Recommendations

Summary

We have examined in this paper major conceptual and practical issues on which language teacher development hinges. The paper noted that indigenous languages can play a cardinal role in the English language teacher development process and in the promotion of bilingual education. It placed strong advocacy on the use of literature as a tool in English language teacher preparation. Furthermore, the paper

argued that the language teacher development process were characterized by elements of deficits and parasitism. Some deficits, the paper stated, include lack of sustained research and government initiated and supported in-service training programmes for language teachers. Again, the paper criticized the over-reliance on Eurocentric language teacher development models. In the opinion of the paper, the deficits in Afrocentric models need to be off-set before a successful paradigm shift which will effectively use the tripodal synergy model for language teacher development in Nigeria can be put in place.

Recommendations

For an effective paradigm shift in language teacher development to take place in Nigeria as a multilingual nation, the following measures must be taken:

- More courses of the nature that integrates language with literature should be introduced in language teacher preparation and development programmes.
- Language curricula planning and development issues should at all times be left in the hands of experienced applied linguists and professionally equipped language educators.
- Effective language planning and policy should not be sacrificed on the altar of federal character and quota system which tend to perpetuate mediocrity and inefficiency in the national body politics.
- Language laboratories, computers, and other appropriate teaching aids should be provided to make language teacher development programmes effective.
- Government should specifically fund language research and revisit the language policy for a policy design that will realistically promote multilingualism, national and cultural consciousness.
- The government should establish national languages development council similar to the national mathematical centre to cater for language policy issues and the professional development of language teachers.
- A national academy of language teachers should be established by the practitioners themselves for the promotion of professional ethics, values, and the accreditation of language teaching professionals.
- Language development research centres should be established in our universities.
- Government and academic institutions should collaborate with corporate agencies and other stakeholders to establish a scheme of regular in-service training programme for language teachers.

Conclusion

The time for paradigm shift in language teacher development in Nigeria has come. This is necessary if the language teacher must be equipped for relevance and global competitiveness for excellence in language teaching. The tripodal synergy model envisioned in this discourse could lead the Nigerian language teacher to his promised land of professional development. But the language teacher must be guided by some principles and supported by the primary stakeholders in his strides for professional development. Training programmes must be efficient in order to remove the language teacher from what Shakespeare has described in his *Love's Labour Lost* as:

'they have been at a great feast of language and stolen the scraps....'

Furthermore, to make the tripodal synergy work in language teacher development paradigm shift, language teachers need to utilize Achebe's theory of literary education to demystify language teaching and advance the principle of the domestication of the English language to carry the whole spectrum of African experience.

For the professional development of the language teacher, the language teacher today needs to approach the six serving men of Rudyard Kipling whose names are *what, why, and when, and how, and where and who* to teach him all he needs to know about the paradigm shift in language teacher development in the 21st century. I have no iota of doubt as I present this paper that these six serving men of Rudyard Kipling are here today to rest their case on the tripartite synergy of language, literature and the English language on an enduring tripod.

Let me align with Michael Grenfell and his associates by quoting in part, their comments on the European language teacher and by interpolating their comments with my own views of the Nigerian language teacher to state that: language teachers in Nigeria can make a powerful contribution to the Nigerian nation and her emerging democracy. They can help to create bonds of friendship and mutual support among the ethnic blocs in the country, the ECOWAS sub-region, the African Union and the rest of the world. They can help to promote our linguistic and cultural diversity by fusing them into a national asset. The Nigerian language teacher is an idea whose time has surely come. But the language teacher of tomorrow needs concerted action today by teacher trainers, education researchers, policy and decision makers at institutional, community, local government, state and national levels to be able to realize any agenda for his professional development. It is then and only then that any paradigm shift in the professional development of the Nigerian language teacher can be feasible.

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