

Affective Hindrances in the Achievement of Communicative Competence Amongst Year One Nigeria Certificate in Education Students, Owerri

Sr. Mary Joy Emeribe (PhD) and Rev. Fr. Longinus Chukwuemeka Chinagorom (PhD)

Department of English Language and Literature, Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri.

Department of Linguistics and Igbo, Faculty of Humanities, Imo State University, Owerri.

Corresponding author: emeribejoy12@gmail.com

Abstract

The substantive one hundred level in the Nigeria Certificate in Education, NCE are students to read courses streamlined by the National Commission for Colleges of Education, NCCCE that for a period of three years. These students are confronted not only with academic challenges but also affective nuances. Competence in English Language is a sine qua non for students' success because of the exacting demands of higher education in the college. The nagging problems, in this paper are the hindrances that affect students to achieve their communicative competence. Three research questions guided the study. Conversation Linguistic Theory was used to discuss and unearth some communicative issues thereby giving more insight to the study. A correlation survey was a design with a population of 200 students and a sample size of 60. Level of Affective Filters Questionnaire (LAFQ) was used as a tool for data collection. Descriptive statistics guided in the data analysis. The results of the study show that affective hindrances rated high. While Communicative competences like General English (GS 101), construction of simple sentences without mixing Broken English, or code mixing with Igbo language as their LI, effective communications is equally problematic. In conclusion, the high rate of affective hindrances has negative effects on the Year one NCE Students from being communicatively competent. Recommendations on reducing affective filters to their barest minimum were highlighted.

Keywords: hindrances, affective, communicative competence, first language, second language.

Introduction

Determination for the success of certain language learning contexts remains the basic idea behind In the Nigerian educational system, since language is the mode of communication. English language has been the recognized second language in the Nigerian Educational system. There exist some nagging challenges that mar the effective English language teaching and learning. Some of those Language issues hinged on linguistic and affective variables. Second language learners suffer from language transfer, linguistic issues which are categorized under inter-lingual and intra-lingual, social factors, psychological and Environmental factors, inadequate and shortage of infrastructural, among others. These are some of the limitations and worries that both teachers and learners of English as a second language face in Nigeria.

Some of the above challenges have been addresses with little or no attention paid to comprehensive inputs and affective hindrances in respect of students of higher institutions of learning. The linguistic comprehensible inputs would bring into lime light what the students are exposed to in their lecture rooms. While the affective hindrances would showcase the levels of hindrances that mar the language input exposed to students.

The mandate of the teacher training programme as the Nigerian Certificate in Education, Minimum Standard projects, is the official minimum teaching qualifications in Nigeria, which is to produce quality teachers. The Basic Education sub-section encompasses the following categories of Education:

1. Pre-primary Education or Early Childhood Education & Care Education,
2. Primary Education,
3. Junior Secondary Education,
4. Adult and None—Forma Education,
5. Special Needs Education

According to The Minimum Standard, each of these categories of Education has an approved national curriculum which is distinctive and extensive in addition to those of the Secondary Education (which remain content specific). Thus, NCE must as a matter of urgency, prepares teachers with knowledge and skills required to teach effectively the different levels and areas of the basic education programme, without being oblivious of the needs for higher education of the beneficiaries.

Therefore, the Minimum Standard for teacher educators defines the minimum the educators should know and be able to do as well as their expected minimum disposition towards their work if they are to remain progressive in their career.

The ability to communicate effectively becomes a matter of paramount in the teacher education. The potential student teachers should be able to make use of the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing in order to impart the knowledge adequately. The ability to listen and be able to respond to the fruits of the listening exercises is needed. The skill to speak without mincing words coupled with the idea of reading and writing in order to teach potential learners. More so, the skills will make them to understand and improve their ability to identify, discriminate, react and respond appropriately to the daily communicational demands of the around them. In addition, it will help trainers to specify information for text listened to. Similarly, the student or trainees will obey the rules of turn taking, instruction command or directives given.

The place of grammar in the teacher education in the teaching of the English Language is central. The ability of the students teachers to appreciate the linguistic interference that constantly betray them in their bid to communicate Second Language {L2}. The grammar and mannerism, and other linguistic nuances find in their first Language, {L1} are erroneously translated to the second language, thereby causing substandard in the second the language structure. The goal of proper teaching of language as a mode of communication is make students communicate effectively in diverse situations using these grammatical forms accordingly.

Problem of Study

The problem of this study is the alarming predicament the year 1 NCE Students undergo. They recognize that due to the usual competitive nature to be enrolled in Bachelor of Degree Programme and their inability to score above one hundred and eighty {180} in their Joint Admission and Matriculation Board, JAMB that would qualify them to be enrolled for Degree Programme, they see themselves in the NCE Programme as the last resort. In other words, most NCE Students nowadays are students of circumstances and not actually a determined programme of choice. It is a programme taken as the last option due to JAMB failure.

Sequel to the above predicament, the students are already in a fuse. Transition from the students' homes, catering for themselves, taking decisions by themselves, deciding and making choices of whom or not to be their peers, and the need to get a Bachelor's certificate, are some basic issues.

Some emotional traumas, sub-standard communication they have to combat with remain outstanding as they pursue their NCE course.

Therefore, the problem of this study is mainly focused on the hindrances that students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri face that negatively affect their communication and interaction as they pursue their education.

Research Design

The research design adopted by the researchers for the study was descriptive survey. Since the idea of sampling is fundamental to survey. The study therefore made use of purposive sampling to distribute twenty (20) questionnaires to each of the selected population of sixty (60). The scale, mean was used in the data analysis.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the affective hindrances that confront Year one NCE students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College Education, Owerri?
2. What are the communicative language competences expected of Year 1 NCE Students?
3. To what extent do the affective hindrances mar the Year 1 students in their communicative competence?

Population of Study

The population for study comprises all the year one NCE Students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College Education, Owerri in the Department of English Language. The total population for 2020/2021 Academic Session is two hundred students.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Proportionate stratified random technique allowed the researchers to randomly select twenty male and forty female students from the three departments from the school of languages. The idea was to capture evenly the wide range of the three departments in School of Languages. Female outnumbered males in the entire College and that is the reason why females outnumbered males in the sample size.

Instrument for Data collection

The instrument for the data collection was a questionnaire, referred to as Level of Affective Hindrances Questionnaire (LAFHQ). It was made up of the ten question items from each research question which, when responses were given, they generated information on the affective hindrances that mar the students communicative competence.

Method of Data Analysis

The questionnaire was collated from the different people who responded to the questions. A four-point scale was used, which ranges from strongly agreed, agreed, disagree, and strongly disagree. That is $4+3+2+1$ total $10/4 = 2.5$. The bench mark for acceptance is 2.5 therefore, any mean score that falls below the cut score is not accepted. Statistical tool, Mean was used to compute the responses.

Definition of Terms:

Affective hindrances

Affective filters act as hindrances or barriers to language learning in the sense that they manifest when a learner is anxious, has low self-esteem, or lowly motivated. These and many more agents that block acquisition of language inputs are identified as filters. The presence of affective filter explains how two students can receive the same (comprehensible) input, yet one makes progress while the other does not. One is open to the input, while the other is not. The problem which this research examines is one that falls within major themes in Krashen (1985) second language acquisition Monitor Model, comprehensible input and affective filters.

Affective Filter or hindrances embody a number of 'affective variables' which play a facilitative, but non-causal, role in second language acquisition Krashen's (2005). These variables include: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. Learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. Low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can combine to 'raise' the affective filter and form a 'mental block' that prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition. In other words, when the filter is 'up' it impedes language acquisition. On the other hand, positive affect is necessary, but not sufficient on its own, for acquisition to take place.

The negative emotions prevent efficient processing of the language input, and on the contrary, the positive emotions promote the efficiency of the process. It can be deduced that affective factors do play a significant role in both foreign language learning and teaching.

Other communication challenges students encounter are clearly pronounced as interference. It is referred to a negative transfer of the features of one language to another language. In the Nigerian situation, English is a second language and one of the implications is that most learners of English in Nigeria master the phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics of their mother tongue prior to the formal exposure to the English language. It is a negative transfer of the students L1 or Mother Tongue to the English Language that obstructs learning. The peculiar problems that result from the structural differences between the student's first language or other Nigerian language and the English as a target language are varied. At the phonological level, many of such nagging problems could be identified right from the process of speech production to the manipulation of stress and intonation. There are glaring differences in the number of speech sounds in the L1 and the L2. These differences result in unhealthy approximations which hinder proper production of speech sound in the target language. For instance, English has forty-four speech sounds made up of vowel and consonants but none of the native Nigerian languages have the same number of sounds, even when they are some closeness in number, there are still some radical and even striking differences.

The phonological problems are more pronounced and therefore more devastating as Onuigbo (2001) points out, in the areas of supra-segmental. It is often remarked that English is a stressed-timed language, while the native Nigerian languages are syllable-timed language. In other words, while there is always a distinction between the stressed and unstressed syllable in English, there is no such a distinction in our mother tongue. This gives rise to the transfer of syllable timing sequence of the learners' L1 to L2. Effective communication in English demands that the stressed syllables be pronounced with greatest muscular energy and great effort, while the unstressed syllables are produced with less emphasis. That is probably why the stressed syllables are usually louder and longer than the unstressed syllables. For most Fresh student learners of English, every syllable receives the same emphasis and prominence, and these account for lack of required minimum intelligibility in the utterances of learners.

Another aspect of speech in the area of intra-lingual challenges is the use of rhythm and intonation as a result of different speech systems. With respect to rhythm in English sentences, English is an inter-national language which its speakers tend to move from one phrase to another rather than

moving from one word to another which slows down speech. Intonation in English as Nwachukwu (2007) notes has a system in which there are characteristic intonation pattern, unlike the any other Nigerian language that is at the word level, statements, commands, are said with the falling tune. Whereas polar- questions are said with the rising tone. The general tendency is that most student-speakers and learners of the English Language speak English the way they speak their own native language.

At the grammatical level, lack of correspondence between systems such as articles, pronouns, tenses, concord, among others is the main source of interference among the Igbo learners. Nigerian languages do not have the articles system, which gives rise to such ungrammatical sentences as: * I have problem*, she killed snake*, * majority of them are boys (the majority-----). * I have good news for you. (I have news-----).

Motivations and their Implications

Motivation is one of the variables that may enhance or impede communication are common. It is considered to be one of the most important factors, which affect the learner's language input and effective communication. Motivation is the extent to which you make choices about goals to pursue and the effort you will devote to that pursuit. It is a combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language which includes favourable attitude towards learning the language.

The concept of motivation has been defined in various ways. Williams and Burden (1997) point out that "identifying students" motivations for foreign language learning was a prerequisite to developing interventions that promote interest and continuation in foreign language study". Motivation involves sustaining interest and investing time and energy into putting in the necessary effort to achieve certain goals. To sum up, motivation is the process by which goal-directed behaviour is stimulated in language learning. It drives and directs behaviour. Motivation directly and profoundly influences how often students use foreign language learning (FLL) strategies; how much input they receive in the language being learned; how high their general proficiency level becomes; and how long they persevere and maintain FLL skills after language study is over.

Motivation as Anyadiegwu and Obi-Okoye (2009) specify is a concept that is purposeful or goal oriented, and is believed to affect human behaviour in such areas as learning, thinking, creating and feeling. It can be described as an inner condition of an organism which initiates, produces energy and directs its behaviour towards a goal. The more the motivation, the better the learning; that an incentive of reward is to be preferred to one of punishment; that hope of success is a better motivation than fear of failure. Generally, motivation is a concept characterized by ambition, high level of energy, making future plans as well as strong desire for independence. This implies that motivation is a desire to meet some internalized standard of excellence and that such desire can either be very high, moderate or very low.

Communicative Competence

During language teaching and learning, a curriculum implementer selects content, good instructional materials, and evaluation procedures, but if the methods and techniques of delivery are faulty, the objectives will be invalid and unreliable. (Offorma 2009). Hence, to be on the safe side, there is an urgent need to use the correct teaching methods in every language lesson. Communicative competence, as Emeribe (2018) asserts:" it is the use of language in extended discourse for various kinds of social interaction. Such competence can be illustrated under the following heading:

- Appropriateness of usage
- Conventional usage

- Transactional usage and
- International usage"

Language occurs in socio- cultural and inter-personal contexts, it reflects much more than limited linguistic purpose. The objectives of communicative language teaching can therefore be specified with reference to the social purpose of language. Communicative ability is the goal of second or foreign language teaching. It is not only the aim but also the method in the language teaching. Before the invention of communicative language teaching, language teachers used to develop their students' abilities in listening and reading comprehension and in oral and written composition. However, the principles and techniques of communicative language teaching advocate for a shift in emphasis, an exploration of specific and explicit procedures for practicing communication in the language pedagogy.

Theoretical View: Conversation Linguistic Theory

Pask (1976) major work was the development of Conversation Theory (CT) and its applications in education. This theory grew out of his work with cybernetics where he conceived human-machine interaction as a form of conversation, a dynamic process, in which the participants learn about each other. He worked to build unifying bridges between the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. Conversational Theory seeks to explain how knowledge is constructed through interactions between the parties involved. In other words, this theory examines how two parties come in mutual understanding of concepts. It is based on discussion of the teaching and learning system. It looks at the ongoing learner/ teacher interaction at the process of negotiation of views of the subject matter which takes place between them in such a way as to modify the learners' perceptions. In the process of learning as this theory explains, the teacher can set the task, describe her conception of the subject matter or that aspect of it being taught. The learner can describe his conception of it. The teacher can adapt the task in the light of the learner's description or action.

This teaching process was slightly modified by Laurillard (2002), as follows: the learning conversation operates on two levels: the teacher and students. At the lower level, the students are engaged in a task. The teacher, on the other hand, is providing the experiential environment within which this can happen, including managing the class or tutorial, setting tests delivery resources, etc. As these are going on, the teacher and the learners are engaged in a conversation about it, and exchanging their views.

The fundamental idea of the Conversation Theory was that learning occurs through conversations about a subject matter which serves to make knowledge explicit. Conversations can be conducted at a number of different levels:

- natural language (general discussion)
- object languages (for discussing the subject matter)
- meta-languages (for talking about learning/language)

For students to learn a subject matter, they must learn the relationships among the concepts. For teachers, the explicit explanation of the subject matter facilitates student understanding (e.g., use of teach back technique). Hence, Conversational Interaction refers to communication between individuals, particularly when they are negotiating meaning in order to prevent a breakdown in communication (Ellis, 1999). The theory points out the communicative nature of the courses the students read and how they are constantly in academic interaction amongst them and their teachers in general.

Results

Research Question 1: What are affective hindrances that confront Year one NCE students of AIFCE, Owerri

The purpose of this question was to find out those elements that act as hindrances on English language elements exposed to students.

Table 1:

S / N	Affective Variables	Number of Items	Most Often		Often		Rarely		Never		Frequency	Mean Index
			ΣF X	\bar{X}	FX	\bar{X}	FX	\bar{X}	FX	\bar{X}		
1	Home Background	13	1720	1.91	1740	1.93	2775	3.08	3025	3.36	382	2.57
2	School Environment	13	1710	1.90	2250	2.50	3810	4.23	3765	4.18	382	3.20
3	Relationship with others	14	3255	3.61	3750	4.16	3820	4.24	1340	1.49	382	3.37
4	Personality Traits	15	3570	3.96	3450	3.83	3200	3.55	2850	3.17	882	3.62
Total		55									Grand Mean=3.19	

Result showing the arrays of affective hindrances on Year 1 NCE Students

This result shows that Home Background has (13 items), School Environment also has (13 items), Inter personal Relationships made up (14 items), and Personality Trait has (15 items). These gave a total of 55 items. These cover the arrays of the affective hindrances postulated as hindrances in relation to senior secondary school students and their learning environment. The analysis of the data shows that the grand mean is 3.19. The researcher is of the opinion that the arrays of affective hindrances are high and they should be reduced to the barest minimum in order to achieve excellence in the English language acquisition. The multiple nature of hindrances emanating from classroom, learners themselves and teachers' lack of motivation, make the situation worst. What are the communicative variables for NCE students?

Table 2

S/ N	Input Variables	Number of Items	Most Often		Often		Rarely		Never		Frequency	Mean Index
			ΣF X	\bar{X}	FX	\bar{X}	FX	\bar{X}	FX	\bar{X}		
1	Continues Writing	9	3417	3.79	2502	2.78	1782	1.98	382	1.11	382	2.41
2	Comprehension and Summary	9	2376	2.64	2268	2.52	2196	2.44	1404	1.56	382	2.29

3	Lexis and Structure	15	4283	4.75	3519	3.91	2201	2.44	1500	1.66	382	3.19
4	Spoken English (Test of Orals)	11	4095	4.55	2942	3.26	2160	2.40	703	0.78	382	2.74
Total		44									Grand Mean=2.66	

Result showing the language contents their mean index of Year 1 NCE Students

The above table show the input language contents that are being exposed to students. From the results, the mean index of continuous writing is 2.41. The index for comprehension and summary is 2.29, lexis and structure is 3.19, the spoken English / oral is 2.74. The total grand mean is 2.66. These suggest that a grand mean of 2.69 was obtained was obtained from the computation, approximate to 58. 8%. While Whopping 46.2% inputs are yet to be covered by both teachers and student teachers.

Table 3:

S/N	Items	Most Often	Often	Rarely	Never	Freq.	Mean Index
1	Home Background	476(1904)	201(603)	123(246)	100(100)	382	3.17
2	Regular Feeding	526(2104)	178(534)	116(232)	80(80)	382	2.27
3	Prompt Payment of Fees	496(1984)	218(654)	146(292)	46(46)	382	3.30
4	House Chores	680(2720)	175(150)	30(60)	15(15)	382	3.27
5	Parental Divorce	388(1552)	233(699)	209(418)	70(70)	382	3.04
6	Parental Health	416(1664)	211(633)	204(408)	69(69)	382	3.08
7	Family Income	652(2608)	126(378)	75(150)	47(47)	382	3.53
8	Abuse from Loved Ones	228(912)	313(939)	280 (560)	79 (79)	382	2.76
9	Proximity of Home to School	372(1488)	307(921)	129(258)	92(92)	382	3.06
Grand Total		4234	1962	1312	598	382	Grand Mean: 3.05

Result showing the affective hindrances and their mean index to communicative Competence of the year 1 NCE students

At the end of the computation, 'personality traits' with a mean index of 3.29 emerged as the variable that most often affect the comprehensive inputs. This is followed by 'Interpersonal Relationships' with a mean index of 3.13 while 'School Environment' and 'Home Background' obtained a mean index of 3.04 and 2.44 respectively. (See the appendix on chapter three). It was discovered from the above analysis that personality traits, interpersonal relationship and school environment score very high.

Conclusions

The content of the analysis of the affective hindrances to comprehensible inputs for English Language Learning in year one NCE students of AIFE, Owerri are diversified which negatively affect the English Language contents. Based on the empirical study, it was discovered in the analysis that the students are not comprehensively exposed to the four language skills. More of language learning was taught than of language acquisition. In addition to that, affective hindrances act as negative factors to the students' communicative ability. The English Language syllabus should incorporate both activities of language acquisition and learning. Where the four language skills are utilised in tandem. A lot has to be covered by the teachers of the English Language to ensure that students acquire English in a more relaxed environment.

Recommendations

We are in a knowledge age, characterized by information explosion. It is an age of great awareness, enterprise, competition and globalization. Emphasis has shifted from machines to individual visions, creativity and innovation. The psychology, behaviour and environmental influence of the 21st century students have changed from what used to be the teacher centred to child centred. It follows that the preparation of teachers who train and nurture the nation's work force must change in many respects from what it is presently: there is an urgent need to recommend the following:

1. There is need to review the teacher educational curriculum to align with the current global realities in terms of courses, content and pedagogy.
2. Students are the centre point of teaching and learning. They need to be actively involved, versatile in their reading culture and properly schooled and enhanced in their listening skills as these two skills are the skills that promote second language acquisition.
3. Modern methods of language teaching which strongly recommends language teaching through communicative approach, using games, debate, songs, reading extensively for effectiveness, more especially, wild exposures to the four language skills are highly imperative.
4. In service workshops cannot only be used to upgrade and expand teaching capabilities but also to reorient teachers to cope with changing conditions in the field or in the society at large.
5. Classroom furniture, teaching aids, language laboratory equipment and library books ought to be up-dated and in the state of the art condition in all secondary schools.
6. Teaching and learning should employ modern technology and be made more dynamic and interesting. The teacher is expected to be more of a guide on the side than a 'sage on the stage'

References

- Anyadiegwu, J. & Obi-Okoye, A. (2009). *Principles and methods of teaching English as a second Language TESL Methods*. Onitsha: D- Bell Graphics Press Services.
- Ellis, R. (1999). *Learning a second language through interaction*. Philadelphia: John Benjamin.
- Emeribe, M.J. (2018) Affective hindrances to comprehensible inputs for secondary school students English Language learning in Imo State: An unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Port Harcourt.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: National Educational Research Development Council.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2012). National Commission for Colleges of Education , Abuja: Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards for Languages.
- Krashen, S. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Krashen, S. (2005). *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. London: Longman.
- Laurillard, D. (2002) *Rethinking University Teaching: a Framework for the Effective use of Technology(2nd edition)* London; Routledge.
- Nwachukwu, U.I (2007). *Challenges in the teaching and learning of English in Nigeria*. Owerri: Cel-Bez Didactic Books.

- Nolan, V. (2001). Retrieved January, 2020 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.viavale.com.br/English/sk-vygot.html>.
- Offorma, G.C. (2009). Curriculum across Languages, 49th Inaugural Lecture of the University of Nigeria Nsukka.
- Onuigbo, S. {2001}. *Oral English for Schools and Colleges*. Onitsha: Africana-Feb publishers.
- Pask, G. (1976). *Conversation, cognition & learning*. New York: Elsevier
- Williams, M. & Robert B. (1997). *Psychology for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.