

LIBRARIANS' DIGITAL SKILLS AND EASE-OF-USE OF OPEN SOURCE LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIAN LIBRARIES

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Abstract

This Study Investigated The Digital Skills And Ease-of-use Of Open Source Library Management Software By Librarians In University Libraries In North-central Nigeria. Employing A Descriptive Survey Research Design, The Study Covered A Population Of 301 Librarians And Utilised Total Enumeration Sampling Technique. Data Collection Involves A Structured Questionnaire. Analysis Methods Include Frequency Counts, Mean Values, And Standard Deviation Calculations. The Findings Revealed A High Level Of Ease-of-use Of Open Source Library Management Software In University Libraries, With Koha, Evergreen, And Newgenlib Being Among The Most Commonly Used Platforms. Additionally, The Study Highlights The Librarians' High Level Of Digital Skills. As Recommendations, This Research Suggested Increasing The Utilisation Of Evergreen And Newgenlib To Assess Their Effectiveness In Comparison To Koha. Furthermore, There Is A Pressing Need For Comprehensive Training Programmes Aimed At Enhancing Librarians' Digital Skills And Their Ability To Curate Digital Collections Effectively Through Seminars, Workshops, And Conferences. Additionally, It Emphasises The Importance Of Advocating For Increased Funding For Libraries, Highlighting The Crucial Role That Modern Library Technologies Like Oslms Play In Enhancing Education And Research.

Keywords: Digital Skills, Ease-of-use, Open Source Library Management Software,
University Libraries, North-central

Introduction

Universities Often Serve As Hubs Of Knowledge Acquisition And Are Characterised By An Expectation Of Elevated Research Output, Particularly Among Faculty Members. The Majority Of Research Conducted In Nigeria And Worldwide Is Undertaken Inside Universities And Other Affiliated Research Institutions. The University Is A Recognised Establishment Dedicated To Providing Advanced Education And Conducting Scholarly Investigations, Granting Academic Degrees In A Wide Range Of Fields At Both The Undergraduate And Postgraduate Levels. The Primary Purpose Of A University Is To Preserve And Uphold Existing Knowledge, Facilitate The Dissemination Of Information Via Educational Instruction, And Generate New Knowledge Through Research (daramola, 2016; Kwaghga, Igbashal&tor-akwer, 2019).

Randhawa (2017:1) Defines Open Source Library Management Software (oslms) As Computer Software That Is Made Available Under A Licence Or Arrangement, Such As The Public

Domain, Which Allows Users To Examine, Modify, Enhance, And Distribute The Software In Its Original Or Modified Form. Open Source Library Management Software Refers To Software That Allows Users The Freedom To Execute, Duplicate, Disseminate, Examine, Modify, Exchange, And Enhance It For Various Purposes. According To Randhawa (2018), Open Source Library Software Offers Libraries The Advantage Of Avoiding The Upfront Expenses Associated With Commercial Software While Also Providing Them With More Autonomy Over Their Operational Environment.

Ease-of-use Is A Basic Concept That Describes How Easily Users Can Use A Product. Someone Who Uses Something To Achieve His/her Goal Is A User. Ease-of-use Is The Usability Of A Product, Service, Tool, Process Or Environment And Software. In The Same Vein, Those Who Make Use Of Oslms For Housekeeping Activities Are Oslms Users (librarians). Also Those Who Visit The Library Or Use Oslms And Find Oslms Useful Are Library Users. According To Barman (2020), The Term "user" Refers To An Individual Who Is Actively Engaged In The Pursuit Of Accessing The Information Resources That Are Made Accessible Within A Library Setting (p. 1). The Use Of Open Source Software Has Emerged As A Prevalent Worldwide Phenomenon Due To Its Cost-effectiveness, Adaptability, Accessibility Of Source Code, And Unrestricted Redistribution.

Digital Skills Encompass The Capacity To Efficiently Locate, Assess, Employ, Distribute, And Generate Content Via Digital Devices, Including Computers And Smartphones. "skill" Can Be Defined As The Proficiency To Accomplish Tasks Accurately And Promptly. In The Context Of Library Professionals, Possessing A Range Of Skills, Including General, Specific, And Professional Expertise, Is Crucial. Digital Skills Encompass The Ability To Effectively Utilise Digital Information Systems And Tools, Which Includes Proficiency In Computer Hardware And Software, As Well As The Application Of Security Measures To Safeguard Both Hardware And Software Components, Along With Sensitive Data And Personal Information. These Digital Skills Encompass A Diverse Set Of Competencies Essential For Functioning Within Digital Libraries And Information Systems. They Encompass Technical Aptitude, Knowledge Of Computer Hardware And Software Applications, System Administration Capabilities, Ict Proficiency, Internet Proficiency, Web-publishing Expertise, Information Processing Abilities, Database Development And Management Proficiency, Networking Skills, Preservation Competencies, And A Spectrum Of Other Digital Proficiencies (hamad, Al-fadel, & Fakhouri, 2021; Ferdows, 2014). It Is On This Premise That The Researcher Intends To Investigate Digital Skills, And Ease-of-use Of Open Source Library Software In University Libraries In North Central, Nigeria.

Statement Of The Problem

The Study Focuses On Open Source Library Management Software (oslms), Offering Librarians The Capability To Automate Various Library Tasks. Oslms Enhances Data Accuracy, Streamlines Procedures, Reduces Costs, And Empowers Library Staff. Despite These Advantages, Nigerian University Libraries, Particularly In The North-central Region, Predominantly Rely On Manual Operations. Many University Library Employees In Nigeria Lack Proficiency In Utilising Oslms For Essential Tasks Such As Administration, Cataloguing, Acquisition, And More. Previous Research Indicated That Librarians' Digital Skills Influenced Ease-of-use In Developed Countries But Not In Nigeria. To Address This Issue, This Study Investigates The Impact Of Digital Skills And Ease-of-use Among University Librarians In North-central Nigeria.

Objective Of The Study

The Specific Objectives Are To:

- I. Identify The Various Open Source Library Management Software Used By Librarians In University Librariesin North-central Nigeria;
- Ii. Determine Digital Skills Possessed Bylibrarians On The Ease-of-use Of Oslmsin University Libraries;
- Iii. Determine The Level Of The Ease-of-use Ofoslmsby Librarians In The University Libraries;

Research Questions

- I. What Are The Various Open Source Library Management Software Used By Librarians In University Librariesin North-central Nigeria?
- ii. What Is The Digital Skills Possessed By Librarians On The Ease-of-use Of Oslmsin University Libraries?
- iii. What Is The Level Of ease-of-use Of Oslmsby Librarians In University Libraries?

Review Of Related Literature

The Major Software Used In Libraries Today Is Integrated Library Software (ils). The ILS Is A Multipurpose Software Application That Enable Libraries Catalogue, Manage, And Circulate The Library Materials To Users. There Existvarious Open-source ILS Softwarewhich Are Been Employedinseveral Nigerian University Libraries. Examples Include Koha, Newgenlib, Evergreen And Openbiblio (moruf, Sani, & Abu, 2020).otieno (2016) Opined That Open-source Software Is An Application Or A Computer Program That Is Made Freely Available For The Public, The Source Code Can Be Modified And Distributed. Its License Warrants A User To Access The Source Codes And Programming Language Used In The Compilation Of The Software. This Allows Libraries Irrespective Of Their Size Or Type To Tailor The Software To Meet Their Specific Need. Leeladharan&ilammaran (2015) Noted That “the Tools Of Open-source Software (oss) And Its Implementation In Libraries Improves Access To Diverse Information Sources And By That Means Provides A Cost-effective And Dynamic Service To A Larger Extent Of Clients Within A Shorter Period.

Despite The Fact That Open-source Software Is Widely Used, Especially By Western Countries, The Adoption Of OSS Is Negated By The Misconceptions Of Developing Countries (rafiq & Ameen, 2009 As Cited In Leeladharan, &ilammaran, 2015).even In Developed Countries,certain Individuals Who Are Headsof It Divisionsof Top-level Organisations Also Reject The Usage Of OSS For Different Reasons. While Some Are Of The Opinion That OSS Isirrelevant To Their Business, Othersbelieved OSS To Be Unreliable Due To Absence Of Ongoing Support, A Few Of Them Even Mentioned That Another Reason Was That Lack Of Time To Adopt OSS (goode,2005 As Cited In Leeladharan&ilammaran, 2015).however, On A Positive Note, Some Believe That Organizations Could Discover That Their Capabilities Have Increased And Their Set Goals And Objectives Can Be Met When They Make Use Of OSS With The Minimal Allocated Organization's Budget And It Staffing (hedgebeth, 2007 As Cited In Leeladharan&ilammaran, 2015). Based On Their Unique Needs And Goals, Libraries Select Various Types Of Open-source Software. Here Is A List Of Open-source Software Options That Librarians Can Employ For Tasks Such As Information Dissemination, Storage, And Retrieval Within Libraries:

Koha: Koha Is Known To Be The First Of Its Kind. It Is Suitable For Managing Library Systems Of Different Sizes And Types. Koha Runs On A Browser And Uses The Interface Of Opac. The Software Is Freeware And Users Are Able To Modify The Software To Meet Their Library Needs. The Development Of Koha Is Sponsored By Volunteers, Support Companies And Libraries Of Varying Types And Sizes Globally. It Gets Strength From Its Enthusiastic Users, Businesses, And Libraries That Develop It. The Program Works On Web, Servers, And Linux.

Evergreen: It Is A Type Ofoss That Has A Free License Covered By Gpl And Gnu. Itassists Users In Locating Resources, Manage Catalogues, Alsocirculate Those Materials Irrespective Of The Type Or Size Of The Library. The Program Can Work Withmac, Web, And Linux.

Newgenlib (ngl): It Is An ILSthatoffers All-inclusive Support For Various Standards Relating Tolis. The Front Endhas Been Structuredso That Librarians Who Do Not Havea Library Science Background Shouldalso Be Able To Utilize The System. It Also Offers Different Primary Functions Of ILS And Has Built-in Social Media Features.

Openbiblio: This Is An Open-source, Easy To Use, And Automated Library System That Contains Opac, Cataloguing, Circulation, And Staff Administration Functionality. The Main Purpose Of This Project Is To Make Available A Cost-effective Library Automation Solution For Schools And Private Collections.

Opals:it Provides Open Access To Library Collections And Information Databases. It Is Both Cloud And Web-based.

Digital Skills Influence Librarians' Capacity To Navigate Oslms For Easy Use. Digital Skills Have A Direct Influence On The Ease-of-use Of Oslms. It Posited That The Ease-of-use Of Open Source Library Management Software Among Librarians Will Be Dependent On The Digital Skills Adopted By The Libraries Using Various Oslms Such As Koha, Newgenlib, Etc. Information And Communication Technology (ict) And Computer Self-efficacy Refer To An Individual's Belief That He Or She Has The Skills And Abilities To Use Computing Technology To Perform Specific Tasks, While User (librarian) Experience Refers To The Prior Experience Of An Individual With A Specific Technology. Tiemo (2019) Highlighted That Nigerian Academic Library Staff Have Acquired A Substantial Level Of Digital Technology Skills For Managing Online Resources To Enhance Library Services. However, Ongoing Training Is Essential To Further Enhance Their Digital Skills, Particularly In Optimising Online Resources And Services. Bhatti And Nadeem (2014) Emphasised The Widespread Interest Among Academic Librarians In Acquiring Proficiency In Using Social Networks, The Internet, And Engaging In Online Activities. To Navigate The Complexities Of Digital Librarianship, Librarians Require New Competencies, Such As Digital Library Creation And Management, Metadata Development, Information Preservation, Content Management, And Utilisation Of Scanning And Optical Character Recognition (ocr) Techniques (choi & Rasmussen, 2006). Adeleke (2016) Affirmed The Importance Of Librarians Possessing A Diverse Skill Set, Which Includes Traditional Library Expertise, Managerial And Technical Proficiencies, Familiarity With Metadata Creation, And Understanding Of Copyright Regulations, To Establish And Maintain Digital Repositories. Additionally, Martzoukou And Elliott (2016) Identified A Comprehensive Range Of Digital Skills Deemed Vital By Librarians. These Encompass The Development Of Information Technology (it) Competencies, Spanning Various Communication Media And Tools, Such As E-books, Online Databases, And Social Media Platforms.

These Factors If Present Will Result In The Successful Implementation/adoption And Use Of A System (oslms). There Is Need Therefore To Have Librarian Who Are Computer And Ict Literate Employed And That They Should Have Adequate Experience Prior To The Implementation Of An Information System (mamary Et Al., 2014).

The Increasing Technological Advancement Concurrently Poses Threats To Long-standing Corporations, Firms And Organizations All Around The World, Resulting In Fierce Competition On How To Secure, Retain And Better Serve Customers. This Presents Chances For New Service Options. Leading Companies Now Try To Leverage The Development Of Information Technology To Better Improve Their Services. Mobile Applications, Website Pages, Software Applications, Transaction Processing Systems, Management Information Systems As Well As Library Management Systems Are Some Of The End Products Of The It Advancements Adopted By These Organisations To Get Their Product And Services To Users All Around The World Much Faster And Easier. This Is Why Most Companies Pay A Huge Amount To Software Developers To Come Up With User-friendly Applications That Can Be Easily Used And Adopted By Their Consumers. Lai (2016) Stated That How Quickly Customers Adopt New Technologies Depends On A Variety Of Variables, Which Includes The Accessibility Of The Technology, Consumer's Comfort, Consumer Demand, And User Security Which All Revolves Around The “ease-of-use” Of These Technologies. Ease-of-use Is A Fundamental Idea That Outlines How Simple It Is For Customers To Utilize A

Product. It Is A Common Concept That Is Used To Address The Simplicity And Convenience With Which A Certain System Or Software Can Be Engaged And Interact With. Camilleri And Camilleri (2019) Stated In Their Study That Ease-of-use Is The Term Used For Describing Users' Perspectives On How Much A System Or Software Is Free Of Effort When Used. Furthermore, When Users Discover That The New Technology Introduced Is Challenging And Difficult To Comprehend And Interact With, It Is Quite Likely That They Will Reject The Technology Or System. User Considered A System Or New Software To Not Be Easy-to-use If They Believe It To Be Difficult, Tiresome, Or Time-consuming. And Of Course, They Won't Be Effective And Efficient When Utilizing It Because They Might End Up Being Uncomfortable, Wary, Or Even Afraid Of The New System. This Shows How Crucial Ease-of-use Is When Developing Software That Consumers Will Interact With. the Primary Distinction Of Our Study Lies In Its Focused Examination Of The Correlation Between Librarians' Digital Skills And The Ease-of-use Of Open-source Library Management Software, Specifically Within The Context Of North-central Nigerian Libraries. While Existing Studies Have Explored Various Factors Influencing Software Utilisation And User Experience In Different Regions Or Contexts, Our Study Zeroes In On This Specific Relationship In A Defined Geographic Area, Shedding Light On The Unique Situations And Dynamics Prevalent In North-central Nigerian Libraries.

Methodology

The Study Employed A Descriptive Research Design, Specifically Adopting A Descriptive Survey Design, For Its Capacity To Gather Comprehensive Data That Can Be Extrapolated To A Larger Population (aina &ajiferuke, 2002, As Cited In Ilesanmi, 2021). The Research Population Consisted Of 301 Librarians From Both Federal And State Universities In North-central Nigeria. The Study Included All 301 Librarians, Employing A Total Enumeration (census) Sampling Approach. The Research Instrument Utilised Was The 'digital Skills And Ease-of-use Of Oslms By Librarians Questionnaire (dseuoslmslq).' Rigorous Measures Were Undertaken, Including Expert In Library And Information Science Reviews And Pilot Testing, To Ensure The Questionnaire's Validity. The Instrument's Reliability, Assessed Using Cronbach's Alpha, Yielded A Satisfactory Coefficient Of 0.81. Data Collected From The Survey Underwent Analysis Using Descriptive Statistics, Encompassing Frequency Counts, Percentages, Mean Values, And Standard Deviations For Research Questions. The Statistical Package For Social Sciences (spss) Was Employed For This Analysis, With A Criterion Mean Score Below 2.50 Considered Negative And A Score Above 2.5 Considered Positive.

Results And Discussion

Questionnaire Response Rate

Table 1: Questionnaire Response

Number of Questionnaire Administered	Number of Questionnaire Returned	Percentage of Questionnaire Returned
301	290	96%

A Total Of Three Hundred And One (301) Questionnaires Were Distributed To Participants. Out Of These, 290 Completed Questionnaires Were Returned, Resulting In A Response Rate Of 96%. This High Response Rate Of 96% Is Noteworthy Because It Surpasses The Typical And Acceptable Response Rate For Most Studies, Which Is Generally Considered To Be 60% And Above.

Research Question 1: What Are The Various Open Source Library Management Software Used By Librarians In University Libraries In North-central Nigeria?

Table 2:open Source Library Management Software Used By Librarians.

Open Source Library Software	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
KOHA	260	89.6	30	10.4	290	100
Evergreen	10	3.5	280	96.5	290	100
OPALS	0	0	0	0	0	0
Openbiblio	0	0	0	0	0	0
Invenio	0	0	0	0	0	0
PMB	0	0	0	0	0	0
NewGenLib	20	6.9	270	93.1	290	100
CodeAchi	0	0	0	0	0	0
Librarian	0	0	0	0	0	0
BiblioQ	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2 Shows That 260 (89.6%), Agreed That The Type Of Open Source Software Library Management Their University Adopted Is Koha, 20 (6.9%) Respondents Agreed They Use Newgenlib, And 10 (3.5%) Respondents Agreed They Adopted And Use Evergreen As The Type Of Oslms Adopted In Their University Libraries For Their Daily Routine. It Can Be Concluded That The Typesofopen Source Library Management Software Used By Librarians In University Libraries In North-central Nigeria Are Koha, Newgenlib And Evergreen.

Research Question 2: What Are The Digital Skills Possessed By Librarians Towards The Ease-of-use Of Open Source Library Management Software In University Libraries In North-central Nigeria?

Table 3: Librarians' Digital Skills Towardsease-of-use Open Source Library Management Software

Digital Skills	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Use of Microsoft office applications	276	95.2	14	4.8	290	100.0
Search terms formulation skills	175	60.3	114	39.7	290	100.0
Database search skills	194	66.9	96	33.1	290	100.0
Management and design of databases	145	50.0	145	50.0	290	100.0
Skills in locating and accessing e-resources	199	68.6	91	31.4	290	100.0
Open source software use skills	198	68.3	92	31.7	290	100.0
Open source library management software terminologies skills	188	64.8	102	35.2	290	100.0
I have capability of sending and receiving emails	289	99.7	1	.3	290	100.0
Skills of using computers, the Internet and communication networks to handle	270	93.1	20	6.9	290	100.0
I can store information into device such as flash drive and CD-ROM, memory cards or other devices	283	97.6	7	2.4	290	100.0

I have Metadata development skills	194	66.9	96	33.1	290	100.0
I can access on-line resources using open source library management software.	255	87.9	35	12.1	290	100.0
I have library website development skills	153	52.8	136	46.9	290	100.0
I have ability to create different file formats (PDF, gif, jpeg, bitmap and etcetera)	164	56.6	126	43.4	290	100.0
I know how to download files/resources from open source library management software	238	82.1	52	17.9	290	100.0
I can use Boolean operations (OR, AND, NOT).	178	61.4	112	38.6	290	100.0
I know how to use the author/title or subject search for electronic catalogue (OPAC) search	280	96.6	10	3.4	290	100.0
I can use different search engines such as Google, Yahoo, Google scholar, and Alta Vista etcetera.	288	99.3	2	.7	290	100.0
I have knowledge of data security by keeping back-up of digital contents	137	47.2	153	52.8	290	100.0
I can apply new technologies into library services	266	91.7	24	8.3	290	100.0
I have knowledge of network and system security	142	49.0	148	51.0	290	100.0
I have competencies in building digital collections	139	47.9	151	52.1	290	100.0
I have capability to use cloud computing in the library	148	51.0	142	49.0	290	100.0
I have the ability to work with integrated library management systems	257	88.6	33	11.4	290	100.0

Table 3 Shows librarians' Digital Skills For Using Open Source Library Management Software In The University Libraries. This Result Showed That The digital Skills Possessed By Librarians On The Ease-of-use Of Open Source Library Management Software In University Libraries In North-central Nigeria Are Capability Of Sending And Receiving Emails, Use Of Different Search Engines Such As Google, Yahoo, Google Scholar, And Alta Vista, Store Information Into Device Such As Flash Drive And Cd-rom, Memory Cards Or Other Devices, Use The Author/title Or Subject Search For Electronic Catalogue (opac) Search, use Of Microsoft Office Applications, Skills Of Using Computers, The Internet And Communication Networks To Handle, Application Of New Technologies Into Library Services, Ability To Work With Integrated Library Management Systems, Access On-line Resources Using Open Source Library Management Software, Know How To Download Files/resources From Open Source Library Management Software, Skills In Locating And Accessing E-resources 199 (68.6%), Open Source Software Use Skills, Database Search Skills and Metadata Development Skills, Open Source Library Management

Software Terminologies Skills, Use Of Boolean Operations (or, And, Not), Search Terms Formulation Skills, Ability To Create Different File Formats (pdf, Gif, Jpeg, Bitmap), Library Website Development Skills, Capability To Use Cloud Computing In The Library, Management And Design Of Databases, Knowledge Of Network And System Security, Competencies In Building Digital Collections And Knowledge Of Data Security By Keeping Back-up Of Digital Contents.

Research Question 3: what Is The Level Of Ease-of-use Of Open Source Software Library Management By Librarians In University Libraries In North-central Nigeria?

Table 4: Ease-of-use Of Open Source Library Management Software.

Statements	Very High	High	Low	Very Low	Mean	Std.
It is easy to use the cataloguing module for cataloguing library information resources	147	112	18	13	3.36	.79
It is easy to import/export data	141	144	3	2	3.46	.56
It is easy to order for books and library materials	166	107	10	7	3.49	.68
It is easy to keep track of those materials purchased	151	117	14	8	3.42	.71
It is easy to use the circulation module for charging and discharging information resources	159	92	20	19	3.35	.87
It is easy to use the patron module to register library patrons	135	128	15	12	3.33	.76
It is easy to use the OPAC module to search and retrieve information	186	84	12	8	3.54	.71
It is easy to generate and print barcodes/accession numbers	156	105	15	14	3.39	.80
It is easy to use the circulation module to prepare circulation reports/library stock management	183	92	10	5	3.56	.65
It is easy for serials control and management	129	112	20	19	3.24	.85
It is easy to use the administration module to prepare reports on book processing and service provision	162	114	8	6	3.49	.66
Aggregate Mean					3.76	.80
Criterion Mean						2.50

From Table 4, The Aggregate Mean Score Of 3.76 Is Greater Than The Criterion Mean Of 2.50, Hence It Is Concluded That There Is A High Level Of Ease-of-use Of Open Source Library Management Software In North-central Universities Libraries.

Discussion Of Findings

The Findings Indicated That The Various Oslms Used In University Libraries In North-central Nigeria Are Koha, Evergreen, And Newgenlib With The Most Widely Known And Used Koha. This Is In Accordance With Iroaganachi Et Al. (2015), Who Revealed That Koha Software Has Gained Popularity Over The Years, Especially In Academic Libraries In Nigeria, Where It Is The Most Frequently Used Software In South Africa And Nigeria. This Finding Backs Up Morufet Al. (2020) Research, On Various Open-source Software That Has Been Employed In Several Nigerian University Libraries, Including Koha, Newgenlib, Evergreen, And Openbiblio. This Signifies That There Are Three Major Open Source Library Management Softwares Used In North-central Nigeria By Librarians In University Libraries In Order To Ease The Routines Of Libraries Faster And More Efficiently.

The Findings Indicated That The Digital Skills Possessed By Librarians In North-central Nigeria Are Sending And Receiving Emails, Use Of Different Search Engines, Store Information Into Devices, Use The Author/title Or Subject Search For Electronic Catalogue (opac) Search, Microsoft Office Applications Etcetera. These Results Are In Line With The Findings Of Martzoukou And Elliott (2016), Who Observed That Librarians Exhibited Significant Proficiency In Various Digital Skills, Particularly In The Areas Of Computer Usage, Internet Navigation, And Communication Software. These Findings Also Align With Baro, Obaro, And Aduba (2019), Who Emphasised The Importance Of Librarians Possessing Competencies Such As Effective Database Searching And The Adept Application Of Emerging Technologies Within Library Contexts.

Another Finding Revealed That The Level Of Ease-of-use Of Open Source Library Management Software In University Libraries In North-central Nigeria Is High. This Is In Line With A Study By Lubua (2019), Who Noted That Ease-of-use Is Attained When The System Provides Conditions For Users (librarians) To Perform Tasks Effectively, Safely, And Efficiently. According To The Findings, The System With The Required Level Of Usability [ease-of-use] Is Expected To Be Effective, Efficient, Engaging, Error-tolerant, And Very Easy To Learn And Use.

Conclusion

This Study Delved Into The Digital Skills And Ease-of-use Of Open Source Library Management Software (oslms) Among University Librarians In Nigeria, Specifically Exploring The Utilisation Of Koha, Evergreen, And Newgenlib. The Findings Revealed A High Level Of Digital Skill Acquisition Among Librarians, Enabling Proficient Use Of Oslms. Additionally, Librarians Demonstrated A High Level Of Ease-of-use When Interacting With Open Source Library Management Software. These Results Emphasise The Competence Of Librarians In Harnessing Digital Tools For Effective Library Management, Ultimately Enhancing The Efficiency And Functionality Of University Libraries In Nigeria. The Study Highlights The Importance Of Enhancing Digital Skills Among Librarians In North-central Nigeria To Improve The Ease Of Using Open-source Library Management Software.

Recommendations

In View Of The Following, The Study Recommended The Following;

- I. Librarians should Make An Effort To Increase The Utilisation Of Evergreen And Newgenlib To Assess Their Effectiveness In Comparison To Koha.
- ii. Library Management Needs enhanced Training Programmes Tailored To Equip Librarians With Advanced Digital Skills And The Ability To Curate Digital Collections Effectively Through Seminars, Workshops And Conferences. This Commitment To Regular Retraining Will Empower Library Staff To Navigate And Utilise open Source Software With Proficiency, Ensuring Optimal Performance And Adaptability In The Rapidly Changing Digital Landscape.
- iii. Librarians, Library Associations, And Stakeholders Should Advocate For Increased Funding For Libraries, Emphasising The Critical Role That Modern Library Technologies Like Oslms Play In Enhancing Education And Research.

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FACTORS AFFECTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN SECONDARY SCHOOL FRENCH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN JOS NORTH LGA AND THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

While The Nigerian Educational System Recognizes The Need For Language Proficiency, The Efficacy Of Current Pedagogical Practices, Particularly The Communicative Approach, In Fostering Communicative Competence Remains Inadequately Explored In The Teaching Of French Language In Secondary Schools. Based On This Fact, The Study Investigates Factors Inhibiting And Promoting The Implementation Of Communicative Approach In The Teaching Of French Language In Jos North Local Government Area. Data Was Collected From Secondary School Teachers Of French Language Through The Use Of Questionnaire And Was Analysed Using Frequencies And Percentages. The Study Shows That Insufficient Time For Teaching; Teaching To Prepare Students For Examination And Teachers Lack Of Proficiency In French Language Were Among The Prominent Factors. The Study Further Discusses The Way Forward Towards An Effective Implementation Of Communicative Approach In Secondary School French Language Teaching And Learning.

Keyword: Communicative Approach; Communicative Competence; French Language; Implementation; Secondary School; And Teaching.

Introduction

The Teaching Of French In Nigeria Is Considered Very Vital Since The Knowledge Of And Proficiency In The Language Can Enhance An Optimal Understanding Between Nigerians And Their Predominantly French-speaking Neighbours. Moreover, Today, More Than 300 Million People Speak French On The Five Continents With 29 Countries In Africa. French Is The Second Most Widely Learned Foreign Language After English, And The Fifth Most Widely Spoken Language In The World (ministère De L'europe Et Des Affaires Etrangères, 2023). With The Trend Of Globalization, The Knowledge Of French Has Become Very Useful To Future Nigerian International Students, Foreign Investors, Nigerian Tourists And Nigeria As A Member Of International Bodies. With The Knowledge Of French, Nigeria Can Fight Terrorism And Contribute Immensely In The Pursuit For Peace, Unity And Security Of African Nations.

These Points Among Others Explain The Need For Nigerians To Learn And Speak French. One Of The Objectives Of The National Curriculum For Secondary School French Is To Teach The Learners To Communicate In French Language Through The Systematic Use Of Communicative Approach (nerdc, 2022). The Communicative Approach, Which Emphasizes Interaction As Both The Means And The Ultimate Goal Of Learning, Has Gained Prominence As An Effective Language Teaching Method Worldwide. However, Despite The Increasing Global Recognition Of Its

Importance In Language Education, There Exist Some Identified Factors Affecting Its Implementation In Most French Language Classrooms. The Study, Therefore, Discusses Some Of These Factors And Proffers The Way Forward.

Statement Of The Problem

Despite The Federal Government's Pronouncement Of French As The Country's Second Official Language And Her Making It Compulsory From Primary 4 To Junior Secondary School Three (nerdc, 2022), Many Students In Nigeria Including Those In Jos North Local Government Area Still Lack Communicative Competence (waec Chief Examiner's Report, 2019-2023) And Motivation In French Language Learning (ogbonna & Opara, 2019). The Five Years Results Show That The Number Of Students That Registered For French In Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (ssce) Is Not Up To 1% Of The Total Population Of Students That Registered For Ssce In Plateau State. For Example In 2022, Out Of 34,359 Students Who Enrolled For Ssce In The State, Only 263(0.76%) Registered For French. Similarly, In 2023, It Was 31,662 As Against 267 (0.84%) Students. The Results Also Reveal That The Number Of Students That Scored From A1 To C6 Were Never Up To 50% Of The Population Of Students For French In The State In The Five Years. In Addition, The Result Reveals A Large Number Of Students Scoring Between D7 And F9. For Example, The Number Of Students Who Had F9 Was As Much As 117/245 In 2021 And 105/267 In 2023. This Result Is An Indication Of Students' Low Enrolment And Poor Performance In French Language In The State. This, Indeed, Is Worrisome. It Suffices It To Mention That If Nigeria Does Not Produce Many Citizens Who Are Communicative Competent In French Language, She Will Fail To Enjoy The Huge Economic And Social Benefits Of Learning A Foreign Language. Besides, She Will Not Be Able To Effectively Play Her Role In The International Bodies And She Will Remain Isolated From Her Neighbours Who Are Predominantly French-speakers.

Theoretical Framework

The Study Was Anchored On Communicative Competence Theory of Dell Hymes Which He Propounded In 1966. Hymes's Juxtaposition Of The Word 'communicative' With 'competence' Stands In Sharp Contrast With Noam Chomsky's Influential Use Of The Term 'linguistic Competence,' Which Chomsky Used To Refer To A Native Speaker's Implicit Knowledge Of The Grammatical Rules Governing His/her Language. While Accepting The Importance Of Grammatical Knowledge, Hymes Argues That In Order To Communicate Effectively, Speakers Have To Know Not Only What Is Grammatically Correct/incorrect, But What Is Communicatively Appropriate In Any Given Context Such As *Vous*(formal) And *Tu*(informal) In French (lillis, 2006 In K. Brown (ed), 2020). This Theory Is Relevant To The Present Study As The Goal Of Communicative Approach Is Communicative Competence. Equally, With The Increase In Contact With People Of Different Cultural And Linguistic Backgrounds, This Theory Helps The Teacher Of French As A Foreign Language Not Only To Teach The Learners How To Make Linguistically Correct Sentences But Also To Teach Them How To Communicate Appropriately In Different Social Context Given That It Varies From Society To Society.

Purpose Of The Study

The Purpose Of The Study Is To:

1. Examine The Factors Affecting The Implementation Of Communicative Approach In The Teaching Of French Language In Secondary Schools.
2. Proffer Solutions For The Way Forward On The Implementation Of Communicative Approach.

Significance Of The Study

Investigating The Factors Influencing The Implementation Of The Communicative Approach Provides Insights Into The Challenges And Opportunities For Pedagogical Advancement In French Language Teaching. This Knowledge Will Inform Educators, Curriculum Developers, And Policymakers About Effective Teaching Methodologies.

Literature Review

Evolution In The Methodologies Of Language Teaching

From The 19th Century To Our Days, The Different Methodologies Have Followed One Another, Sometimes Breaking With The Previous Methodology And Other Times, Adapting Themselves To The New Needs Of The Society. In The 20th Century, The Development Of A More Practical Approach Coincides With The Appearance Of Certain Linguistic Needs That Emerged In The European Framework. Structuralism Insists On Linguistic Competence Up To The Moment When Functionalism Demands The Supremacy Of Communicative Competence (seara, 2019).

Summary Of The Differences Between Communicative Language Teaching (clt) And Grammar Translation (gt)

CLT	GRAMMAR TRANSLATION
GOAL OF LANGUAGE	GOAL OF LANGUAGE
1. Language is studied as a tool for communication orally or in writing	1. Language is studied as a phenomenon or as an object
2. Language has many functions beyond communicating information. Apart from communicating information, language is used to express emotion, make contact, articulate thoughts, and elicit reaction from a listener.	2. The function of a language stops at communicating information.
THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR	THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR
Grammar and vocabulary are learnt in context. Knowledge of the rules and structures of grammar and of vocabulary is necessary, yet sufficient condition for communication	The emphasis is on grammar learning through verbs drills, the translation of written texts and the memorization of grammar and vocabulary wordlists. Grammar is taught systematically and out of context.
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
Priority is given to authentic material such as real-life sources such as extracts from newspaper, recorded radio programmes; advertisements; excerpts from books, video clips, and so forth. Real objects can be used.	Instructional materials are not varied. It uses only the chalkboard and teacher's voice.
METHOD OF TEACHING	METHOD OF TEACHING
Scaffolding, Zone of Proximal Development, participatory, independent, pair and group work communicative activities are used.	Teacher does all the talking while students remain passive listeners
FOCUS	FOCUS
The focus is on the process of learning rather than the product.	The focus is on the product rather than on the process of learning.

PRACTICE	PRACTICE
Linguistic practice occurs through communicative activities.	Linguistic practice is confined to the memorization of words and rules.
INSTRUCTION	INSTRUCTION
Instruction aims at the mastery of all the four language skills	Instruction aims at the mastery of written medium rather than oral communication
ACCURACY AND FLUENCY	ACCURACY AND FLUENCY
Fluency rules over accuracy	Accuracy rules over fluency
THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER	THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER
The teacher is a model, a facilitator, an organizer of activities in the classroom, an advisor, an analyst of the needs and interest of learners, co-	Teacher is seen as an instructor, a dictator, autocratic. Teacher is a master and a possessor of
The teacher is a model, a facilitator, an organizer of activities in the classroom, an advisor, an analyst of the needs and interest of learner-s, co communicator.	Teacher is seen as an instructor, a dictator, autocratic. Teacher is a master and a possessor of knowledge.
Teacher fosters, encourages and orchestrates the work of the students.	
STUDENTS	STUDENTS
Students are active learners. Learning is learner-centered and learner-focused. It is all about what the student does. Student learns in a relaxed atmosphere. He communicates freely with the teacher who does not correct him judgmentally. He has the freedom to learn independently and from his classmates	Students are passive recipients of his inputs. Learning is teacher-centred, and does not cater for every learner's individual needs.
CORRECTION OF ERRORS	CORRECTION OF ERRORS
Correction is selective and judgmental	Correction is absolute and punitive

Adopted From Chang (2010) And Conti, Smith And Vinales (2016)

Methodology

Survey Research Design Was Used For The Study To Determine Teachers' Perception On The Factors Affecting The Implementation Of Communicative Approach In The Teaching And Learning Of French Language. Questionnaire Containing Eleven Items Was Used To Collect Data From 30 French Language Teachers Selected From 48 Public School French Language Teachers In Jos North Lga Of Plateau State. Data Was Collected Within The Period Of Two Weeks. Likert's 4-points Rating Scales Were Used As The Response Type. Data Was Analysed In A Tabular Form Through Frequency And Percentage.

Data Analysis**Teachers' Perception Of The Factors Affecting The Implementation Of Communicative Approach In French Language Teaching And Learning**

S/N	Problems	Major problem	Minor problem	Not a problem	Neutral	Total	Remarks
1	Teachers' lack of proficiency in French language	23 (76.6%)	5 (16.6%)	0 (0%)	2 (6.6%)	30 (100%)	Major Problem
2	Lack of teachers' pedagogical training	6 (20%)	20 (66.6%)	4 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	30 (100%)	Minor Problem
3	Insufficient time for teaching	30 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	30 (100%)	Major Problem
4	Lack of Audio-visual materials	20 (66.6%)	6 (20%)	4 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	30 (100%)	Major Problem
5	Students' learning Styles	24 (80%)	3 (10%)	2 (6.6%)	1 (3.3%)	30 (100%)	Major Problem
6	Teaching to prepare students for examination	28 (93.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (6.6%)	30 (100%)	Major Problem
7	Large classes	16 (53.3%)	3 (10%)	11 (36.6%)	0 (0%)	30 (100%)	Minor Problem
8	Lack of access to authentic materials	16 (53.3%)	2 (6.6%)	10 (33.3%)	2 (6.6%)	30 (100%)	Major Problem
9	Teacher's lack of commitment	3 (10%)	8 (26.6%)	16 (53.3%)	3 (10%)	30 (100%)	Not a Problem
10	Lack of opportunities for students to practice French language	16 (53.3%)	4 (33.3%)	2 (6.6%)	8 (26.6%)	30 (100%)	Minor Problem
11	Communicative Approach factor	14 (46.6%)	12 (40%)	2 (6.6%)	2 (6.6%)	30 (100%)	Minor Problem

Result Of The Findings

The Table Shows That The Teachers Viewed The Major Factors Affecting The Application Of Communicative Approach In This Order: Insufficient Time For Teaching With All The 30(100%) Teachers Attesting To This. This Is Followed By 'teaching To Prepare Students For Examination' With 28(93.3%) Respondents. Next To This Is 'students' Learning Styles With 24 (80%) Respondents. This Is Followed By 'teachers' Lack Of Proficiency In French Language' With 23 (76.6%) Teachers Attesting To It. Next To This Is: 'lack Of Audio-visual Materials' With 20 (66.6%) Respondents; This Is Followed By 'lack Of Opportunities For Students To Practice French Language' With 16(53.3%) Respondents And 'lack Of Access To Authentic Materials' With 16(53.3%) Respondents. The Table Also Reveals That While Only 6(20%) Respondents Agreed That 'lack Of Teachers' Pedagogical Training' Is A Major Problem, 20(66.6%) Respondents Opined That It Is A Minor Problem. In Addition, Only 14 (46.6%) Teachers Agreed That 'communicative Approach Factors' Is A Major Problem. In Conclusion, The Analysis Of The Data Shows That Teachers Are Aware Of And Agreed That Many Factors Are Responsible For The Poor Implementation Of Communicative Approach In The Teaching Of French Language.

Discussion Of The Findings

Factors Affecting The Implementation Of Communicative Approach In French Language Learning In Jos North Lga Of Plateau State

The Present Study Identified Some Problems Affecting The Implementation Of Communicative Approach In French Language Teaching And Learning In Secondary Schools In Jos North Lga Of Plateau State. The Findings From The Teachers' Questionnaire Are Categorized Under Four Headings: Teachers' Factor, Students' Factor, Educational Factor And Communicative Approach Factor.

Teachers' Factor

Teachers' Factor Was Identified As One Of The Major Problems Affecting The Implementation Of Communicative Approach. Under The Teachers' Factor, The Following Factors Were Identified: Teachers' Proficiency; Teachers' Pedagogical Training; And Teachers' Commitment. The Teachers In The Present Study And Those In Sherwani And Kiliç (2017) And Chang (2010) Are In Agreement That Teachers' Training On The Implementation Of Communicative Approach And Their Language Proficiency Are Essential To Promote The Employment Of Communicative Approach In Foreign/second Language Learning. The Teacher Is Expected To Be Skillful In The Use Of The Language In Order To Impact Same To The Students.

Four Interviewees In Chang (2010) Indicated That The Teachers' Persistence In Practicing Communicative Approach Has A Positive Effect On Implementing Of The Approach. The Practice Of Communicative Approach, They Argued Highly Depends On The Teachers' Willingness To Persevere Because Communicative Approach Is Highly Demanding. The Teacher Will Need Time To Source Teaching Materials, Study The Use Of Each One, Prepare Their Lesson Notes And Time To Apply Them In The Classroom. The Communicative Approach Teacher Needs To Always Be Close To The Students To Plan Activities And Engage Them In Conversation In French.

Students' Factor

One Of The Items Under Students' Factor Identified By The Teachers In The Study As A Major Problem To The Implementation Of Clt Is Students' Learning Styles. 83.3% Of The Teachers Agreed That Students' Learning Styles Can Affect The Employment Of Communicative Approach. A Learning Style Is The Learners' Ideal Way Of Learning Based On Their Preferences, Strengths, And Weaknesses (canun, 2022). There Are Three Main Learning Styles: Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic Or tactile (white, 2022). Different Kinds Of Learners May Have An Inclination Towards Listening, Reading, Visuals, Being In A Classroom Full Of People, Or Working By Themselves. One Of The Traits Of Communicative Approach Is That It Encourages The Use Of Different Techniques And

Materials In The Teaching Of A Language Which Takes Care Of Students' Different Learning Styles. Another Important Item Under Students' Factor Is 'students' Lack Of Opportunities To Practice French Language. The Study Shows That 50.0% Of The Teachers Agreed That Students' Lack Of Opportunities To Practise French Is A Major Factor. Students Need To Have Avenues Through Which They Can Express Themselves In French. In Language Learning Any Word A Learner Fails To Use Regularly Will Be Forgotten After A Period Of Time.

Educational Factors

Administrative And Educational Policies Can Promote Or Inhibit The Implementation Of Communicative Approach. These Policies Can Be Captured Under: Large Classes; Time And Availability Of Instructional Materials.

Large Classes

The Problem Of Large Classes Is Another Factor Found To Be Affecting The Teaching Of French Language In Jos North Lga. Teachers And Researchers Agree That Class Size Is A Critical Factor In Determining The Quality Of Output From Secondary Schools. According To Barde, Ahmed, Mohammed, Bizi, Ibrahim And Uzoma, (2021), Classroom Size Refers To An Educational Tool That Can Be Used To Describe The Average Number Of Students Per Class In A School. This Varies From Country To Country. Dean (2004) Compared Class-size In Some Countries And Found That Turkey, Norway And Netherlands Had Class-sizes Of 20, The Uk, Usa, Japan, Canada And Ireland Had Class-sizes Of Between 15 And 20 While France, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, Italy, Luxemburg And Belgium Had Sizes Of Below 15. Unesco's Class-size Recommendation Is Between 30 And 35 And Any Classroom That Has An Extra Student Is Considered To Be Overcrowded And Not Good Enough For Teaching And Learning (lawal And Agboluaje, 2022). In Nigeria, The National Policy On Education Recommended 1:35 And 1:40 For Primary And Secondary Schools Respectively (barde, Ahmed, Et Al 2021). The Rationale Behind The Utilization Of Classroom Space Depends Upon Class-size. This In Turn Would Depend Upon The Area Of The Classroom. The Standard Allocation Of Class Space Per Pupil Is 1:25 Square Metres. Going By Nigerian Standard Class Size Is Between 35 And 40, It Then Means That Any Number Above 40 Is A Large Class.

The Findings Of The Study Of Barde Et Al (2021) Revealed That, Inability Of Teachers To Pay Attention To Individual Students And Especially Those With Special Needs, Lack Of Classroom Control And Management, Overcrowded Classroom And Difficulty In Conducting Effective Continuous Assessment In Classroom Are Some Of The Problems Teachers And Students Faced In Teaching And Learning In Over-populated Classrooms In Junior Secondary Schools Of Potiskum Local Government Area. The Findings Of Their Study Also Revealed That, High Numbers Of The Students In A Classroom Affect Academic Performance And That Smaller Class Size Lead To Improvement Of Academic Performance.

In A French Language Classroom, The Teacher Is Expected To Move Around With Ease In The Class To Monitor The Students' Work And For A Free Interaction With The Students And Students With Special Needs. Besides, Students Should Have Enough Space For Role Play And The Display Of Cultural Activities. In Addition, In A French Classroom, Mastering Of Students' Names And Calling Them By Their Names Is One Of The Ways Of Motivating Students And Giving Them Sense Of Belonging. But This May Be Difficult In A Large Class.

Time And Time Management

Time Is A Major Factor In The Implementation Of Communicative Approach. The Findings Of The Study Shows That Only Two Periods Is Allotted For The Teaching Of French In A Week At 35/40 Minutes Per Period In All The Schools Used For The Study Including Federal Government Colleges. This Is Grossly Inadequate For The Teachers To Effectively Teach The Four Language Skills Couple With The Fact That French In Nigeria Is Not The Language Of The Environment. Though The Time Allocated For French Is Very Insufficient, Observation Shows That Some Teachers Lack Time Management Skills. Some Go For Classes Late And Leave Before The Time. While Others Spend

Time Telling Irrelevant Stories, Some Others Spend The Whole Lesson Period Trying To Manage Students' Indiscipline Behaviours.

Lack Of Necessary Instructional Materials

In Addition To The Fore Mentioned, Enakome And Ganagana (2015) State That Lack Of Teaching Materials Is A Major Constraint In The Implementation Of French Language Policy. This Is Confirmed By Opara (2017) Who Adds That There Is Lack Of Instructional Materials To Inculcate The Communicative Competence In The Learners Such As Audio Visual Which Is Needed To Bring The Realities Of The French Language Into The Learning Experiences Of The Students. Additionally, Classroom Observation Showed That Teachers Rarely Teach With French Textbooks. This Is Because Many Students Do Not Have The Recommended Textbook. Secondly, Some Of The Textbooks Are Not Teachers' Friendly. Thirdly, Teachers Teach To Prepare Students For Exams. Past Question Papers, Inadvertently Take The Place Of Text Books. Aside This, Most Of The Recommended Textbooks Do Not Have Varieties Of Communicative And Cultural Activities Such As Games And Role Play. Whereas Many Authentic Materials And Web Technologies Abound Today In The Internet, Many Teachers Do Not Use Multimedia Technology To Teach. Confirming This, The Study Of Shuaibu And Ugwu (2018) Revealed That There Is Unavailability Of Modern Educational Facilities In Schools For The Teaching Of French Language Such As Access To Web Technology.

Teaching To Prepare Students For Examination

Generally, Society Attaches Much Importance To Students' High Scores In A Subject Than To The Acquisition Of Real Knowledge. For This Reason, Emphasis Is Laid On The Students' Passing Of Exams. Classroom Observations Show That French Teachers Rarely Consult The Curriculum And Textbooks For Their Teaching. Instead, Students Are Taught With Past Secondary School Certificate Examination Question Papers. This Method Restricts Teachers From Applying The Communicative Approach Which Encourages The Use Of Variety Of Methods And Instructional Materials. Teaching With Question Papers Cannot Elicit Students' Communicative Competence

Communicative Approach Factors

Findings Of The Study Show That The Nature Of Communicative Approach Can Affect Its Implementation. Communicative Approach Can Be Time-demanding In Teaching And In The Sourcing Of Authentic Materials. Moreover, Large Class Can Pose A Problem To The Teachers In Their Implementation Of Communicative Approach. In A Communicative Approach Classroom, The Teacher Is Expected To Communicate With Individual Student Through Scaffolding/guided Practice. This May Be Difficult In A Large Class. Students' Indiscipline Behaviours Can Be Elicited When The Teacher Is Speaking To A Set Of Students.

The Way Forward

To Encourage The Teachers' Proficiency In French Language, Offorma (2009) Postulated That Teacher's Factor Is A Major Factor In The Implementation Of Communicative Approach And Recommended That Teachers Should Be Trained In The Communicative Approach And That The Approach Should Be Included In The Methodology Courses.

To Manage A Large Classroom, Kucukler And Kodak (2019) Suggested The Teacher Can Ask The Students To Say Their Names If They Want To Ask Or Answer A Question. Besides, The Teacher Can Ask The Students To Have A Card Containing Their Names In Their Fronts. In Relation To Class Control And Discipline, Teachers Are Encouraged From The First Day They Meet With The Students, To Set Rules That Will Guide The Class And The Repercussion For Disobeying Each One. Teachers Can As Well Give Other Students Individual Exercises While He/she Communicates With Individual Students In A Large Class. As Regards The Correction And The Grading Of Students' Work, Self-editing And Peer Editing Are Suggested. In As Much As This Can Help The Teacher To An Extent, The Teacher Still Have To Supervise The Students' Corrections For Accuracy.

The Problem Of Time Can Be Overcome By The Teacher Maximizing The Time Available,

By Sourcing For Free Periods In The School Time Table And Through Extra-curricular Activities. To Overcome The Problem Of Sourcing Authentic Materials, Teachers Should Start On Time To Source For Them. They Can Use Part Of The Holiday To Gather And Practise How To Use The Materials. School Administration Should Provide Teachers Access To Internet To Download Materials From The Internet Or Provide Them Money To Improvise.

To Give Students Opportunities To Communicate In French, French Teachers Can Do This By Choosing A Day Or Two In A Week During The Morning Assembly To Sing Some Known Choruses Translated Into French; Sing The National Anthem And Say The Pledge In French; Organize Interclass French Quiz And Debate; Do In-door And Outdoor Games And Sports In French. The Teacher Can Practise Marching Or Playing Football With The Students In French. Whereas Marching Is An Oral Comprehension Exercise Here The Teacher Gives Order To The Students, Football Is An Example Of Oral Expression Exercise, Where The Referee Gives Order, And The Players Comply And Talk To Each Other And Express Their Feelings While Playing. These Are Very Good Oral Communication Exercises For Basic Secondary School Learners Of French. French Club Is Another Avenue Through Which The Learners Can Acquire Competence In French Language. There Are Many Games And Activities In The Internet That The Teachers Can Introduce In A French Club.

To Enhance Student' Communicative Competence, Games Can Be Modify As Communicative Activities In Textbook. Sometimes, The Textbook Has Some Games For Language Learning. However, The “games” Are Not Communicative Enough. They Only Involve Reading And Writing Practices, But Hardly Cover Speaking And Listening, And So Not Balanced For Language Skills Development As Emphasized In The Communicative Approach. Teachers, Therefore, Need To Adjust The Procedures Of The Games. To Use Games In The Classroom, Three Key Principles Are Suggested: (a) Think About Games; (b) Know Their Rules And (c) Know How To Vary Them (ko, 2014).

Additionally, Communicative Approach Can Be A Challenge To Teachers Who Are Not Proficient In The Use Of The Language. This, They Can Overcome By Constant Reading Of French Materials, Following Online Lessons And Communicating With French Language Speakers Around Them. They Can Also Practice Speaking The Language Alone To Themselves.

Conclusion

Despite The Few Challenges Identified In The Implementation Of Communicative Approach, The Approach Still Remains The Most Effective For Foreign Language Learners' Communicative Competence According To Literature.

Recommendations

As A Way Forward Towards An Effective Implementation Of Communicative Language Teaching (clt) Approach:

1. Teachers Need To Be Trained In The Use Of Communicative Approach. They Need To Be Provided With Fund To Enable Them Access, Download And Improvise Instructional Materials. Teachers Should Be Apt In Time Management. Teachers Should Also Be Sponsored For Proficiency/retraining Programme. Teachers Should Be Conversant With Learners' Learning Styles In Order To Satisfy Their Language Needs.
2. Foreign Language Requires A Lot Of Time To Master. Therefore, More Time Should Be Allotted For The Teaching Of French As The Current Two Periods A Week In Most Schools In Nigeria Are Grossly Inadequate.
3. Communicative Activities Such As Games And Songs Which Are Lesson-based Should Be Incorporated Into The Textbooks To Enhance Students' Communicative Competence.
4. Schools Should Encourage And Support Extracurricular Activities Where Students Can Practice The French They Learn In Class.

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