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Analysis of the Grammatical Content in some Selected Senior Secondary English Language Textbooks in Oyo State

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Abstract

This study analyses the grammatical content in some selected senior secondary English Language textbooks (Intensive English II and Effective English II) in Oyo State. The study adopts the survey research design. Fifty teachers of English Language were randomly selected from senior secondary schools in Oyo State. The research instrument used for data collection was Grammatical Content Adequacy Scale (r=0.81). Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentage scores, mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics of t-test. The results show that the grammatical contents of the two recommended English language textbooks used in senior secondary school II were high. The findings also revealed that the two textbooks were not significantly different (t= -2.078; df=2; p>.05). Based on the findings of this study, the paper recommends that government and stakeholders in textbook selection should always consider the grammatical content of textbooks as well as the age of a learner determines the method, technique and the level of language to be used in the classroom. In addition, because background knowledge of a text is very essential.

Writers should therefore include passages that are familiar to students when constructing passages.

Keywords: English Language, English Grammar, Grammatical Content, Textbooks, English Language Textbooks

Introduction

Textbooks serve as guide for students and help them organise learning both inside and outside the classroom (Oliveira and Colleagues, 2014). According to Richards and Rodgers (2006), textbooks are designed in a way that their table of contents suggest a gradual development of language forms and functions, from the most basic to the most complex. All these approaches and features are intended to develop the use of communicative language. Textbooks help in allowing teachers to know the materials to cover and the design of each lesson which is normally and carefully spelled out in detail. The detail provides organised unit of work and balanced chronological presentation of information. They play crucial roles in teaching and learning process.

Textbooks are very useful. Using a textbook is one of the most effective and readily available ways to relieve some of the pressures put on teachers, lessens preparation time, provides ready-made activities and finally provides concrete samples of classroom progress through which external stakeholders can be satisfied (Garinger, 2001). Ogunsiji (2015) sees textbooks as what are used to present organised knowledge in a selected, simplified, ordered and methodological way that will enhance effective understanding.

Textbooks play an essential role in language classrooms (Richards, 2001). Adegboyeje and Afolabi (1991) state some usefulness of textbooks to the teachers and students: Textbooks help to individualise instruction that is, students can proceed on their own individual rate. They enable students from different

backgrounds to study at the same time or re-study an item. They help in organising and providing unity for classroom instruction. They help students in learning how to study, reading better, weighing evidence and solving problems and they are also helpful in improving teacher's skill.

Ogunsiji (2015) says textbooks occupy a central place among all instructional materials used for effective dissemination of knowledge in the school system. Textbooks can be said to serve the function of providing a source of comprehensive content, facilitating easy retrieval of information, providing a sense of security for both teachers and students, providing guides for educational programmes and expanding the content and its organisation. Garinger (2001) comments on the usefulness of textbooks that they are one of the most effective and readily available ways to relieve some pressure put on teachers, lessens preparation time, provides ready-made activities and finally concrete samples of classroom progress through which external stakeholders can be satisfied.

Thousands of textbooks are published every year but only a fraction of these could be regarded as real textbooks because within each textbook, there should be variation according to educational, principles, languages and age of target students. It implies that textbooks should not be made and published anyhow if adequate learning is to take place. A cursory look at the English language textbooks used at many secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria reveals that they are being used without consideration for their contents. Most of the teachers in senior secondary schools in Osun State are more concerned about using any textbook without considering whether the contents of the text will aid learners in acquiring communicative skills or competence.

A lot of textbooks in use are poorly organised. The materials to be taught are not usually arranged in order of difficulty and topics grouped together are unrelated and materials are somehow irrelevant to the communicative needs, interests and environment of the learner (Ndahi, 1977). Therefore, the problem of this kind has become one of the greatest areas of concern in our educational system in recent times, particularly at senior secondary schools, which witness remarkable decline in both communicative and linguistic competence of the students of the English Language. The problem identified above is inimical to intended curriculum outcome of English language in Nigeria senior secondary schools and even beyond the school system.

Patricia Byrd (2001) says that most teachers depend on textbooks often as a required tool because they provide content and activities that shape what happens in the classroom. Textbooks provide the basic instructional information that is supplemented liberally from other sources; hence, they are still a major force in educational process. Ur (1998) sees textbooks as what provide explicit framework which clues teachers and learners in what they have done and what will be done.

Graham (2001) states that the utility of the average textbook for a typical present day ESL/EFL course is normally unquestioned. Nonetheless, teachers are urged to remember most textbooks in a given period of time are often very much alike; they are the product of the pressures of market, as imperfectly interpreted through the publisher and materials writer, and can often run counter to legitimate educational pressures. What sells may not be what works, what works may not necessarily have a format which book publishing can produce. Richards (2001) states that some textbooks may not suit learners' needs because most textbooks are written for global markets. However, as a result of increase in the number of textbooks in the market, makes formulating the right choice of textbooks difficult (Kolade, 2012;

Fakeye 2014). Textbooks selection can have a great impact on the teaching and learning process as teachers would need to make references to textbooks (McGrath, 2002).

Textbook selection involves the careful selection of materials, examining whether they reflect the needs of the students, the aims, methods and values of a specific teaching programme (Cunning worth, 1995). The textbooks to be selected must take the following into consideration: The terminal objectives which the course or subject strives to achieve, the learning experience through which the course context will be mastered, the syllabus which gives the course its content, the approach and methods to be adopted by the teacher so that, he/she can achieve the objectives and the evaluative procedures to enable the teacher to determine whether the objectives are met or not (Ubahakwe, 1979).

Textbook selection is very important because the quality of a textbook can determine the success or failure of students (Mukundau, 2007). Therefore, there is a need for investigation of grammatical contents in English language textbooks used in teaching because of the vital role that textbook plays in teaching and learning of the English language in Nigerian schools. Williams (1990) says English Language textbooks must be written in simple, clear and comprehensible language. The vocabulary and other contents in the textbooks must consider the users' background without necessarily sacrificing international acceptability. Perfect book does not exist, yet there is need to find out the best that will fit and be appropriate for a particular group of learners (Grant, 1987).

Therefore, it is essential to investigate the grammatical content in English Language textbooks for improvements. Ayodele (2001) asserts that grammar is crucial for communication to take place because it shows how language is used. Grammar is the study of

the systematic account of the rules of sentence structure, syntax and semantics of a particular language. Turula (2011) views grammar as what equals the agreed upon rules and norms of language and includes the comprehension of sentence structure. English grammar is the way in which meanings are encoded into words in the English language**.** English grammar fosters precision, detect ambiguity and exploit the richness of expression available in English Language (Bradshaw, 2013).

According to Lester (2001), grammar is the internal, unconscious rule system, that is, the rules of the language that have been acquired and are used unconsciously by a speaker. It also means the scientific analysis of grammar that is, the linguistic models of grammar and transformative generative grammar. Eyisi (2006) sees grammar as a branch of study that is, the body of descriptive statements concerning the systematic interrelationship of structures within the English Language. It is also normative rules that determine correctness in the use of a language. Ogbuchi (2011) refers to it as "the traffic rules of language". The analogy between traffic rules and grammar is the fact that if one does not obey traffic rules, one will definitely not be able to use the English Language without errors marring one's effort. Grammar refers to the tacit rules of language, which control the organisation of words into coherent and meaningful language that is acceptable to the native speakers of the language.

Grammar is the core of any language programme. On the importance of language, Murthy (2007) stresses that "unless we master grammar, we cannot speak or write English correctly". Ogbeniyi (2002) also states that it is obvious that the learning of English especially by a second language user is impossible without considerable reference to grammar, and indeed without a detailed knowledge of grammatical processes. This is because the patterns and forms of a language are what constitute grammar, the core of language. Mulroy (2003) stresses the value of

teaching grammar, questioning the value of grammar is like asking whether farmers should know the names of crops and animals.

At the secondary school level, the grammar is broken down into topics in the English language curriculum. These topics are many and varied (NERDC, 2006, 2007). They include topics on nominal groups (nouns, pronouns, noun phrases and nominalization), verbal group (auxiliary, lexical, transitive and intransitive verbs), adjectival/adverbial group (adjectives and adverbs), phrases and clauses, among others. However, according to NERDC (2006), specifically English language teachers must pay attention to concord (subject verb agreement), active and passive voice, tense and punctuations as they teach the grammatical elements. This probably because concord and tense run through all structures irrespective of the topic to be taught. It may be because concord and tense present problems to students. Donald and Modeline (1992) believe that more than half of the errors made in English occur as a result of the confusion in the use of present tense, past tense and past participle. Bamgbose (2003) asserts that several errors that occur in English arise from lack of mastery of concord and tense.

When English language textbooks used in secondary schools adequately reflect grammar, students' performance in English will improve. . Previous studies have focused on text readability and lexical contents of English language texts but with little emphasis on grammatical contents of English language textbooks used in secondary schools. Literature has shown that English language textbooks with adequate grammatical content will enhance learners' performance in reading, writing, listening and speaking but much research attention has not been given to grammatical content in selected Ministry of Education approved English Language textbooks in Oyo State, Nigeria and this is the gap that this paper is set out to fill.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the adequacy of grammatical content of *Intensive English II*?
2. What is the adequacy of grammatical content of *Effective English II*?
3. What is the difference in the grammatical content of the two textbooks?

Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design. Fifty teachers of English Language were randomly selected from senior secondary schools in Oyo State. For face and content validity, Grammatical Content Adequacy Scale was shown to experts in Language Education. The research instrument used for data collection was Grammatical Content Adequacy Scale (r=0.81). Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentage scores, mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics of t-test.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question 1: What is the adequacy of grammatical content of *Intensive English II*?

Table 1: Adequacy of Grammatical Content of *Intensive English II*

S/N	ITEMS	Sufficiently	Moderately	Sparingly	Never	Mean	Std.D
1	New grammar items are presented in the textbook.	8 (32)	32 (8)	-	-	3.80	.405
2	New grammar items are practiced in the textbook.	10 (25)	12 (30)	10 (25)	8 (20)	2.60	1.081
3	Language usage is adequately treated in the textbook	20 (50)	14 (35)	5 (12.5)	1 (2.5)	3.33	.797
4	There is a balanced treatment of language form in the textbook.	18 (45)	19 (47.5)	3 (7.5)	-	3.38	.628
5	New grammatical items	31	7	1	1	3.7	.649

	are introduced with familiar items to the learners in the textbook.	(77.5)	(17.5)	(2.5)	(2.5)	0	
6	The textbook presents structural items communicatively.	6 (15)	17 (42.5)	10 (25)	7 (17.5)	2.55	.959
7	The textbooks presents adequate examples of structure to be taught	3 (7.5)	11 (27.5)	22 (55)	4 (10)	2.33	.764
8	The textbook clearly explain the kinds of responses expected in drills	15 (37.5)	21 (52.5)	2 (5)	2 (5)	3.23	.768
9	The textbook selects structures in regards to the differences between L1 and L2.	21 (52.5)	7 (17.5)	11 (27.5)	1 (2.5)	3.20	.939
10	The textbook adequately covered grammatical contents	25 (62.5)	12 (30)	3 (7.5)	-	3.55	.639
11	The grammatical contents presented in the textbook are relevant to the learners needs.	15 (37.5)	22 (55)	3 (7.5)	-	3.30	.608
12	Sentence structure presented in the textbook is logical	22 (55)	17 (42.5)	1 (2.5)	-	3.50	.641
13	Spelling drills are adequately treated in the textbook	19 (47.5)	15 (37.5)	4 (10)	2 (5)	3.28	.847
14	The presentation of each word class is sequential	15 (37.5)	19 (47.5)	3 (7.5)	3 (7.5)	3.15	.864
15	The new grammatical concepts are presented meaningfully, in relation to context, so as to aid understanding	18 (45)	17 (42)	4 (10)	1 (2.5)	3.30	.758
16	Examples on grammar presented in each unit	8 (20)	28 (70)	3 (7.5)	1 (2.5)	3.08	.616

	of the textbook are adequate						
17	Tenses treated in the textbook are adequate.	17 (42.5)	17 (42.5)	6 (15)	-	3.28	.716
18	Grammatical items are adequately presented with exercises.	22 (55)	11 (27)	6 (15)	1 (2)	3.35	.834
19	The grammatical aspects treated in the textbook are contextualized	16 (40)	19 (47)	5 (12)	-	3.28	.679
20	Some grammatical forms treated in the textbook that have more than one meaning are appropriately explained.	17 (42.5)	9 (22.5)	8 (20)	86 (15)	2.93	1.118
Weighted Average= 3.21							

Note: Percentage in Parenthesis

Table I shows the adequacy of grammatical contents in Intensive English II. It reveals that the adequacy of grammatical contents in Intensive English II has a weighted average of 3.21. It implies that the grammatical contents in the text are rated adequate.

Research Question 2: What is the adequacy of grammatical content of Effective English II?

Table 2: Adequacy of Grammatical Content of Effective English II

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	St.D
1	New grammatical items are presented in the textbook.	16 (41%)	10 (25.6 %)	2 (5.1%)	11 (28.2%)	2.79	1.26
2	New grammatical items are practiced in the textbook.	18 (46.2 %)	10 (25.6 %)	6 (15.4 %)	5 (12.8%)	3.05	1.07
3	Language usage is adequately treated in the textbook	20 (51.3 %)	5 (12.8 %)	10 (25.6 %)	4 (10.3%)	3.05	1.09
4	There is a balanced treatment of language form	17 (43.6	12 (30.8	4 (10.3	6 (15.4%	3.02	1.08

	in the textbook.	%)	%)	%)	)		
5	New grammatical items are introduced with familiar items to the learners in the textbook.	18 (46.2 %)	12 (30.8 %)	3 (7.7%)	6 (15.4%)	3.07	1.08
6	The textbook presents structural items communicatively.	10 (27%)	6 (16.2 %)	3 (8.1%)	18 (48.6%)	2.21	1.31
7	The textbook presents adequate examples of structure to be taught	16 (41%)	5 (12.8 %)	9 (23.1 %)	9 (23.1%)	2.71	1.23
8	The textbook clearly explains the kinds of responses expected in drills.	24 (63.2 %)	1 (2.6%)	6 (15.8 %)	7 (18.4%)	3.10	1.24
9	The textbook selects structures in regards to the differences between L1 and L2.	17 (44.7 %)	8 (21.1 %)	8 (21.1 %)	5 (13.2%)	2.97	1.10
10	The textbook adequately covered grammatical contents	13 (33.3 %)	12 (30.8 %)	2 (5.1%)	12 (30.8%)	2.66	1.24
11	The grammatical contents presented in the textbook are relevant to the learners needs.	18 (46.2 %)	8 (20.5 %)	4 (10.3 %)	9 (23.1%)	2.89	1.23
12	Sentence structure presented in the textbook is logical	23 (59%)	6 (15.4 %)	1 (2.6%)	9 (23.1%)	3.10	1.25
13	Spelling drills are adequately treated in the textbook	17 (43.6 %)	7 (17.9 %)	8 (20.5 %)	7 (17.9%)	2.87	1.17
14	The presentation of each word class is sequential	15 (38.5 %)	3 (7.7%)	8 (20.5 %)	13 (33.3%)	2.51	1.31
15	The new grammatical concepts are presented meaningfully, in relation to context, so as to aid understanding	14 (35.9 %)	12 (30.8 %)	8 (20.5 %)	5 (12.5%)	2.89	1.04
16	Examples on grammar presented in each unit of the	19 (50%)	1 (2.6%	11 (28.9	7 (18.4%	2.84	1.24

	textbook are adequate		)	%)	)		
17	Tenses treated in the textbook are adequate.	13 (33.3 %)	4 (10.3 %)	11 (28.2 %)	11 (28.2%)	2.48	1.23
18	Grammatical items are adequately presented with exercises.	17 (45.9 %)	6 (16.2 %)	3 (8.1%)	11 (29.7%)	2.78	1.31
19	The grammatical aspects treated in the textbook are contextualized	21 (53.8 %)	5 (12.8 %)	6 (15.4 %)	7 (17.9%)	3.02	1.20
20	Some grammatical forms treated in the textbook that have more than one meaning are appropriately explained.	20 (54.1 %)	2 (5.4%)	4 (10.8 %)	11 (29.7%)	2.83	1.36
	Weighted Mean = 2.84; Threshold = 2.50						

Table 2 shows the adequacy of grammatical content in Effective English II. The result indicates a weighted mean of 2.84, which is greater than the threshold set at 2.50. This implies that the grammatical content in the text is rated high. Out of the 20 items used, 11 items contributed to the adequacy of grammatical content in Effective English II because their means are greater than the weighted mean.

Research Question 3: What is the difference in the grammatical content of the two textbooks?

Table 3: Summary of the T-Test Analysis of the Difference Between the Two Textbooks

	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**95% Confidence Interval of the Difference**		**T**	**df**	**Sig. (2 tailed)**
				Lower	**Upper**			
Intensive English II– Effective English Course II	-.60000	.50000	.28868	-1.84207	.64207	-2.078	2	.173

Table 3 shows that there is no significant difference in the grammatical contents of Intensive English II and Effective English II ($t = -2.078$; $df = 2$; $p>.05$). This implies that the two textbooks are not significantly different; hence, the two textbooks have similar grammatical contents.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 revealed that the grammatical contents in Intensive English II were rated adequate. This may be because the required grammatical contents are in the text. This finding is similar to the study of Guilani, Yasin and Hua (2012) who reported that the treatment of reading and grammatical structure was adequate in three high school English Language textbooks for Iranian schools. Anjaneyulu (2014) also reveals that the evaluated textbooks used in 6th AP Grade upper/secondary schools for EFL learners were found to be well organised and the themes were satisfactory. This is against the study of Mojere (2021) who found that New Concept English textbook was not adequate in the treatment of grammatical structures.

Table II revealed that the grammatical contents in Effective English II was rated high. This finding is against the study of Mojere (2021) who reported that New Concept English textbook was not adequate in treatment of grammatical structures.

Table III revealed that there was no significant difference in the grammatical contents of Intensive English II and Effective English II. This finding is against the study of Mojere (2021) who reported that there was significant difference in the grammatical New Concept English textbook and Effective English II were found to be adequate in treatment of grammatical structures.

Conclusion

The study has shown that Intensive English II and Effective English II are not significantly different, hence, the two textbooks have similar grammatical contents. Based on the findings, the

study has provided a better understanding of the grammatical contents of two English Language textbooks (Intensive English II and Effective English II) in secondary schools in Oyo State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following were recommended:

1.All the recommended English Language textbooks for school should be subjected to grammatical content analysis.

2. There should be periodic revision of recommended textbooks. This would assist in enriching the grammatical contents of the textbooks.

3. Textbooks without adequate grammatical content should not be recommended for students.

4. Textbook writers and publishers should ensure that textbooks produced reflect adequate grammatical contents.

5. Conferences, seminars and workshops should be organised for teachers on how to assess the grammatical contents in English Language textbooks

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