Competence in English Language Usage: A Tool for Self-sustenance, in Present Day Nigeria

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Abstract: The study investigated the need for competency in English language usage; a tool for self-sustenance in the present day Nigeria. To achieve this, the descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population for this study was made up of writer-preneurs in the areas of content developing, copywriting, affiliate marketing and other areas where the knowledge of language is engaged for self-sustenance. The sample population comprised twelve (12) of such persons who were randomly selected from different parts of the country. Five (5) structured questions were raised to guide the study. The relevant data were generated for the study through interviews held over the internet due to the barrier of distance. The analysis was carried out using the conversation analysis and the result obtained showed that, there is a significant relationship between competence in language and self-sustenance. It was also discovered that, there is no significant relationship between competence in language and self-sustenance. These results were discussed and situated within the existing body of knowledge. Recommendations were made, some of which include that; The Teacher should: Ensure that the four (4) language skills are well taught, engage the use of modern instructional materials to aid the learners' understanding. The learner should: develop the ability to listen, speak, read and write, move from competency to performance; that is, begin to put to use the knowledge they have already gained. The Government should: ensure that schools are well equipped with language laboratories.

Keywords: Language, Competence, Self-sustenance, Economic, Purpose

1. Introduction

A person may described as being "self- sufficient" when he/she has the means with which such a person can meet his/her socio-economic needs without depending on other people. This study is going to examine how a person's competency in his/her usage of the English language (or their proficiency) can serve as a tool or a system through which they may be self-sufficient.

The word "competency" according to the Oxford dictionary [19], refers to the "implicit knowledge of a language's structure". It may connote literacy or erudition in the field of English language, not just as a subject, but as a vehicle through which communication and mutual understanding may be enhanced. The word "competency" may be used interchangeably with such words as "ability", or "capability".

Language is a medium through which communication happens. According to Akindele and Adegbite [1] language computizes thoughts and expresses our culture. It is the major feature which distinguishes humans from animals, as well as communities. Our beliefs may be expanded and expressed through language. In the book, An Introduction to Language by Victoria Fromkin et al [21], we learn that "having the knowledge of a language makes it quite possible to speak and be understood by others familiar with it. It enables us combine sounds to form words, words to form phrases, and phrases to form sentences". Language comprises of symbols, words and gestures which are used to communicate meaning. Through it, ideas are expressed and it is made up of syntax, semantics and context.

Noam Chomsky [16] asserts that, "when we study human language, we are approaching what some might call "the human essence", the distinctive qualities of the mind that are; so far as we know, unique to man". By this, the scholar is establishing the fact that, language is a major characteristic of human beings.

1.1. The English Language in Nigeria

The Cambridge University Press has it that, the usage of the English language in Nigeria may be traced back to the late 16th century and the early 17th century, with the Advent of Christian missionaries who domiciled in Badagry, which is close to Lagos, in the South West, and Calabar, in the South Eastern parts of Nigeria. These merchants used to trade in slaves until 1807, when the slave trade was abolished. The slaves were emancipated and allowed to return to their home countries. In Nigeria, those of them who had received some form of Western Education and Christianity, began to interpret for the Christian missionaries.

These Christian missionaries had the intention of making their converts literate enough to read their Bibles and not just speak the English language. Samuel Ajayi Crowther, who translated the English Bible was motivated by this factor. The attainment of Independence in 1960, made the English language that of inter- ethnic communication.

In Nigeria, the English language has moved from being a mere classroom language, into the second national language after our indigenous native languages; hence, the language of politics and governance, of trade and commerce, international relations and globalization, the media and ICT, as well as literacy and formal education.

The English Language as a course of Study: Following the course description according to Wikipedia, it is an academic discipline taught in primary, secondary and post-secondary education in English-speaking countries. Texts created in English literature are studied and explored. It involves the study of literature (especially novels, plays, short stories and poetry), English composition; including writing essays, short stories and poetry, English language arts and the inclusion of the study of grammar, usage and style; English sociolinguistics including discourse analysis of written and spoken texts in the English language, the history of the English language, English language learning and teaching and the study of world Englishes, English linguistics (syntax, morphology, phonetics, phonology, etc).

The other areas the discipline covers include; literary criticism and literary theory, public speaking and speech writing, rhetoric composition studies, creative writing, philogy and etymology, journalism, poetry, publishing, literacy, area studies (especially American studies), the philosophy of language, theater and play writing, screenwriting, communication studies, ethnic studies, disability studies, digital media and electronic publishing, film studies and other media studies, as well as various courses in the liberal arts and humanities among others.

With the inclusion of education, additional areas of study include: philosophy of education, psychology of education, guidance and counselling, educational administration, studies in curriculum, ICT amongst others.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Over the years, researchers in the field of English language Education have paid great attention to such areas as linguistics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, stylistics, grammar, methodologies used in teaching the discipline, the challenges involved in teaching, as well as the way forward; little attention has been paid to other ways by which the knowledge gained during the course of study may be utilized for economic empowerment, especially, with the digital way of human interaction.

The years that followed independence and the introduction of the formal education system, made available a plethora of job opportunities for graduates who had just completed their higher education. Some had not even completed their first degree when companies offered them jobs.

However, several years later, with the rise in population and continually changing trends, some of the jobs performed manually no longer require the services of persons, as computers and the internet have been designed to handle such tasks. For example, in the past, people needed to travel long distances to deliver messages to other people. Later on, it got better when the postal system was introduced. This was not without its own challenge, as people had to wait for days and even weeks to receive their parcels. Nowadays, with the introduction of the social media and messaging application software, messages are transmitted within minutes, and items from anywhere around the world may be way billed within a week.

As the world advanced in science and technology, lesser persons are required to perform certain tasks; leaving the available slots a struggle among the best.

It is expected that a person who is a graduate of English language Education, will be able to function in any area requiring communication and the use of language. This has motivated the researchers to embark on this study.

1.3. Aim and Objectives

This study draws attention to other areas where the knowledge of language may be used for self-sustenance. It is set to achieve the following objectives:

1. To understand the language skills and the importance of teaching them and learning them.
2. To examine the opportunities that can be explored by one who is competent in the usage of these language skills.
3. To show how competency in language usage may be a tool for self- sustenance.
4. To encourage students in the department of English language, to strive for mastery in their usage of the language in order to be self-sufficient.

1.4. Research Questions

This work is basically going to dwell on the following questions:

1. What does competency in language usage mean?
2. Can competency in language usage serve as a tool for self- sustenance?
3. Is there a job prospect for graduate of English language

education apart from teaching, giving the present state of the Nigerian labour market/ economic system?

4. What are the other ways by which the knowledge of language may be maximised in order to be self-employed?

5. Are there a number of persons who are using their language skills as a tool for self-sustenance?

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study will be beneficial to students in the department of English language Education, and all who have attained some level of mastery in their usage of the language. This is because it will show other areas in which their knowledge can be utilized for the purpose of making money and being self-sufficient. It stresses that, language skills should be well taught and learned, as competency in it can make it possible for one to be self-employed without depending on the government for employment.

2. Review of Related Literature

This chapter is based on a review of related works and literatures. It considers a number of scholarly studies which have been carried out in the past with relevance to the topic on ground. It begins with a consideration of the four language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. It also covers the importance of teaching these skills, the need for competency in these skills and areas where the knowledge of language may be utilized for economic sustainability. According to Morreale, Rubin and Jones [15] skills are what students should be able to exercise. They have to be acquired through practice. Students are expected to be proficient in the skills in order to be able to communicate and use language effectively. It must be noted that, the communication skills complement one another. This is owing to their inter-relatednes, and dependency on the process of thought.

Listening and speaking are important tools for learning and both form the basis for developing interpersonal skills. It is a necessity to all curriculum areas, context and to every aspect of study, work and life. Teaching listening, and speaking, have been described as central and 'Cinderella' of English by Tomilison [20]. In a report to support the teaching and learning of functional English by the author, it was observed that "too little attention has been given to teaching programme of study for speaking and listening and the range of contexts provided for speaking and listening remains too limited" (p. 28). Similar observations have been made in Nigeria by writers such as Olaoye, [18]; Azikiwe, (2007); and Nwankwo, [17].

Eggins and Slade's [11] theory of casual conversation will be followed in carrying out a systematic analysis of the theoretical framework. It will be used to analyze all that pertains to the linguistic features of the data. Before examining the level of interpersonal meaning, the conversation and linguistic features, as well as the lexical and syntactic features will first be identified and analyzed.

2.1. Turn-Taking / Turn- Design in the Interviewer-Respondent Interview

Turn-taking is a terminology in conversation analysis, which is used to refer to the usual way by which sequential conversations happen. It holds that, in the process of interacting, people take up turns to speak. The basic principles of turn-taking were first outlined by some sociolinguist; Harvey Sacks, Emanuel A Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson in a work titled "A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation" in the journal, Language, in [12] issue.

Conversations issue between two or more persons who present their idea in various contexts. In 1973, Sacks and Schegloff made an observation of conversations and developed the "adjacency pairs" structure.

The art and study of speaking, and writing persuasively, for the purpose of informing, educating, persuading or motivating an audience on a given issue is known as rhetoric. It is mainly concerned with how to get things done or spurring action. According to Plato, it is the art of ruling the minds of men.

Kenechukwu et al [13] posit that, the language of persuasion is very important for a successful advertising campaign. Persuasion is the act of causing people to do or believe something. It is inducing people to take a desired action towards a given course. Asemah in Nweke [2], says that, persuasion is a systematic and skillful method of creating more positive outcome. Kruti and Alan [14] explain that, persuasive effect of advertising message is governed by not only what is said, but also, how it is said. Persuasion in business, aims at appealing to the emotions and general sensibility of the audience, in order to make them buy or do something.

The rhetoric thrives on a very good knowledge of, and ability to use language. There is a level of competence in language usage a person must possess, to be able to make good rhetorical presentations.

2.2. Language for Economic Purpose

The fact that man is highly intelligent being, who judges what is said and done to believe or partake in an activity, makes the rhetoric an important and interesting aspect of language in use. It is aimed at creating strong convictions, by engaging language in the appropriate description of events, situations, people or things, to foster understanding, and bring people to see the importance of what is being projected.

The ability to engage language in a persuasive manner is one which is highly required by employers. This is because, everything sold has something written on it, or said about it. Every bill board bears an inscription of something, every poster has some words scribbled on it, every sachet, manual, jingle, commercial etc, engage the use of persuasive language.

Some companies are ahead of others because they understand the importance of both verbal and non-verbal communication, and have learned how to put this knowledge

to good use. It is the nuances in language that sets some organizations ahead of others.

The importance of language competence is therefore, something that cannot be overemphasized.

2.3. Language Use in Online Marketing

Techopedia defines it as the use of a set of tools and methodologies, to promote products and services through the internet. Unlike the traditional business marketing, online marketing has a broader scope of marketing elements with relation o the extra channels and marketing mechanisms which can be found on the internet. The benefits of online marketing includes- an increase in potential, lesser costs, better customer service, and easy control amongst others. It is also known as "digital marketing", "web marketing," or "internet marketing."

Online marketing brings organizations together with potential customers, thereby, raising business development to a more advanced level than the traditional marketing. It combines the internet's creativity and technical tools such as design, content development, sale and advertising.

This system of trading flourishes on the effective use of language and the rhetoric. The process of putting language together to describe, advertise and sell products or services is known as content development/writing.

2.4. Content Developing

According to the Oxford dictionary [19], it is a type of marketing that involves the creation and sharing of online material (such as videos, blogs and social media posts) that does not explicitly promote a brand, but is intended to stimulate interest in its product or service.

Rob Johnson, a content developer, says it is "researching, producing, and publishing of information to meet a strategic goal. That goal will either be to build a connection with an audience, or encourage some kind of marketing or sales outcome". It entails putting together words, phrases, clauses, sentences, symbols, images, etc, to inform an audience of a product, brand, or company, in order to get them to take action; make purchases.

Every business or activity that is audience- centered on the internet, thrives on the effectiveness of their content. This content is formulated using language. We shall consider briefly, some of the online businesses people engage in below:

2.5. Copywriting

Copywriting is using written words to make someone buy anything, anywhere at any time you want them to. It is the process of writing advertising materials. Copywriters are responsible for the text on billboards, websites, emails, advertisements and lots more.

A copywriter is a sales man in print. Copywriting is all about getting the reader to take action. That action might be to purchase or engage with a product, service, or company.

Copywriting is not a talent, its a skill. Writing can be a talent but Copywriting is a skill anyone can learn. It does not

mean writing just anything, there is an art to touching people's emotions and getting them to buy a product. One only needs to learn how to use the right words. It is a systematic way of getting people to take action, in series and sequence.

What are the qualities one must have to be a copywriter? These include:-

2.5.1. Reading Voraciously

Being a copywriter, demand that one reads any/everything, and be vast in knowledge, because opportunity presents itself without notice. One must be read to write about anything and any sphere of life that is presented.

2.5.2. You Must Be a Researcher

Researching is different from reading. One must be able to dig deep on specifics in order to be a researcher. This is how one is able to know what is unknown to others, and what they do not know, they will buy from those who know.

2.6. Relevance of Copywriting in the Global Space

Life is all about buying and selling and more than ever, life is digital

1) Mails and letters have been replaced by emails.
2) Websites are created per second and people need copywriters to write their landing pages.
3) Social media ads are the new form of advertisements. And that's a copywriter's job.
4) Everybody has something to sell. A product or a service and they need a "sales copy". This is a copywriter's job.

2.7. Branches of Copywriting

i.   Email marketing; These are electronic messages sent to people once they subscribe to something.
ii. Website content; -Landing pages
     1) About us.
     2) Articles and content.
A copywriter does all the above
iii. Product description; Here you describe a product to customers.
iv. As a copywriter you can also help people manage their social media. Putting out content daily.
v.   As a copywriter, you write sales letters or sales copies.

2.8. Types of Copywriters

2.8.1. Corporate Copywriters
These person work for a company or organisation, for a fixed pay, or salary.

2.8.2. Freelance Copywriters
These work on freelance marketing sites such as Fiverr, upwork etc.

2.8.3. Personal Brand / Agency Copywriters
This is the highest level in copywriting. Here, one already has a name, works by him/herself, and is paid for putting out content.

2.9. Affiliate Marketing

It is the process of promoting a company's products or services, or driving a sale and getting paid. An affiliate marketer helps a company create an awareness of their product to people, and when they buy, receive a commission or remittance.

2.9.1. The Merchant

Also known as the creator, seller, brand retailer or the vendor. This party is the one formulating or making the product. It may be an individual or a group of persons.

2.9.2. The Affiliate/Publisher

This party is also referred to as the promoter, or publisher. The affiliate may be a single person, or a group. Their job is to publicize or advertise the product, and bring potential buyers. When this is done and sales are made, they receive a commission or percentage.

2.9.3. The Consumer

This is the party for which the product has been made or formulated. The merchant and affiliate target this party.

2.9.4. The Network

This serves as the intermediary between the affiliate and merchant. The network is a direct revenue that has been created to enable the seller gain direct access to the buyer. Eg Clickbank, Amazon, Expertanaire etc. The network also serves as a database of several products out of which the affiliate marketer may choose to promote.

All of these, are a function of gaining a level in the usage of language. As a student of English language Education, the advantage is more because, during the course of study, the learners are exposed to the general knowledge of language, as well as the use of rhetoric. A graduate in this filed, should not be caught up in the web of unemployment upon graduation, because the knowledge gained in school can be channeled into any of these aspects. All that is needed is that, the student pays maximum attention to the reaching and learning of these things, and be willing to put in the hard work required to make a living in today's hard economy.

3. Methodology

This study employs descriptive research design of survey type. It aims at gathering relevant information from the target population through interview. A number of writers in the areas of content writing, affiliate marketing, copywriting and other forms of writing which is for the purpose of making money were interviewed; asked a number of questions in order to elicit responses that will be relevant to this study. Others were from documents, excerpts from video tapes, audio tapes, visuals and electronic communication which are used to present the findings of this study.

The interviews conducted with writers, who are using their competency in the English language as a tool for their self-sustenance. Some of the interviews are conducted via social media handles such as WhatsApp, and Zoom; others may be physical.

The population of this study compromises a total number of male and female writers in the areas of copywriting, content developing, affiliate marketing and other areas of writing, randomly selected from different states in the country. The sample size is selected using the purposive sampling technique to choose twelve writers located in different areas in the country, 7 content developers 1 freelance editor, 1 journalist, and three affiliate marketers. These persons are located in Lagos, Enugu, Abuja, Kwara, Portharcout, Ado-Ekiti, and Niger State.

The researchers prepared a number of questions which the interviewees or correspondents responded to. Their responses are used for the data for this work. Five (5) structured questions are used. Three (3) questions are structured for the respondents' biography or demographic characteristics of the correspondents. These include their names, educational background, motivation for writing aspect of writing they are focused on, and whatever personal information they may wish to disclose. The 4th question is to help the researchers confirm that the correspondent understands the topic of discussion well enough. The 5th to 8th questions seek to know what opinions the correspondents have regarding competency on language and self-sustenance in the present day Nigeria.

The interview was held online, on a social media application due to the barrier of distance. The researchers made necessary enquiry about the required persons, and getting their contact addresses. This was in addition to the ones already on ground.

4. Result of the Findings

This chapter covers the discourse analysis of the interviews held with the randomly selected correspondents. The excerpts below are illustrations of turn-taking and adjacency pairs. There are two brackets presented below, ( ) and [ ]. The first one indicates overlapping talk by speakers, while the second indicates the actual date and time the responses were sent.

Extract 1A is from the interview held with, a content developer and journalist. Content developer. In lines 1-8, the interviewer initiates the turns. The turn-taking arrangements in the course of the interview follows a stringent order, with the interviewer initiating the turn by greeting and stating the purpose of the interaction. The respondent take up turns automatically after the interviewer.

4.1. Extract A1

1. [7/20, 2:41 PM] A: Hello, Senator
(16.0)
2. [7/20, 2:57 PM] B: You are welcome
3. [7/20, 2:57 PM] B: How are you doing?
4. [7/20, 3:01 PM] A: I am fine, thank you, Sir
5. [7/20, 3:02 PM] B: I am good
6. [7/20 3:03 AM] A: We are from the Department of English Language, Faculty of Education, Federal University, Oye, Ekiti (FUOYE).

We are carrying out a research on the need for competence in language usage, as a tool for self-sustenance in present day Nigeria.

7. [7/20, 3:04 PM] A: We understand that you are a content developer, and we would like to have a brief interview with you, Sir

I hope you would not mind?

(7:19)

8. [7/20, 10:16 PM] B: No problem

The excerpt shows how the participants in the speech take up their turns, with the interviewer dominating the conversation.

The interviewer launches the conversation by greeting the respondent and stating the purpose of the meeting. The respondent takes up his turn 16 minutes later probably because he was not online when the researchers sent the message. He returns the greeting. The researchers go on to state the purpose of the interaction as well as seek his consent before proceeding with the interview. The respondent shows interest. In except A2, the interview commences.

4.2. Excerpt A2

14. [7/21, 10:31 AM] A: 1. Can we meet you, please?

15. [7/21, 10:40 AM] B: Responded

16. [7/21, 10:42 AM] B: Nice to meet you,

19. [7/21, 10:43 AM] B: I have been privileged to have certifications in Journalism as well.

20. [7/21, 10:45 AM] A: Alright, Sir

From the above excerpts, series of adjacency pairs are produced through the questions and answers. The respondent answers the first question by giving details about himself. From his introduction, he is qualified for the interview, having obtained formal education up to the tertiary level and is actively involved in the usage of language in the field of journalism and content creation.

Excerpt B1 is the interview held with name withheld, a graduate of English, Literature and Education, from the University of Benin.

4.3. Excerpt B1

13. [8/1, 3:19 PM] A: 2. We understand that you are into content writing, which is a way of engaging language for economic purpose.

Do you mind telling us how you started, and what motivated you?

14. [8/1, 3:21 PM] C: I have always written. When I was in secondary school I would write poems, essays and short stories. I started a blog in my first year in university, unfortunately I did not always find the time to create content so I just forgot about it.

I used to search for writing competitions online and enter them just for the fun of it. Eventually I transitioned into a professional content writer in 2019, I began receiving paid jobs and that is what I do for a living now.

I have been writing for money since 2019.

From the above series of adjacency pairs, the respondent

states that, she had a passion for writing right from when she was a child. She was building her ability to write and eventually went to the university to concretise it. Having developed the ability to a certain level, she began writing for money in 2019 and now depends on only this skill as her sole means of livelihood.

A copywriter, who is also a student of Medicine and Surgery in his penultimate year, in the University of Abuja, presented another thing that motivated him into copywriting in Excerpt C1.

4.4. Excerpt C1

14. [7/20, 2:27 PM] D: I am studying medicine and Surgery

15. [7/20, 2:30 PM] D: OK

16. [7/20, 2:32 PM] D: I am actually a Copywriter

17. [7/20, 2:32 PM] A: OK.

18. [7/20, 2:33 PM] D: But I know a thing or two about content writing because…

19. [7/20, 2:34 PM] A: Copywriting is also great. You may as well talk about it, Sir

20. [7/20, 2:34 PM] D: In a bid to make sales you can employ any of your skill set

21. [7/20, 2:35 PM] A: Sure. So, what was your motivation for going into copywriting?

22. [7/20, 2:36 PM] D: I need a side hustle

23. [7/20, 2:38 PM] A: Alright. How long have you been into this business?

24. [7/20, 2:39 PM] D: 9 months now

He began writing because he needed a source of income to support the one he is receiving from home. The money from home was certainly not succinct enough, and he ventured into writing as a means of generating extra money.

4.5. Excerpt D1

25. [7/21, 11: 05 AM] A: 4. What do you understand by "competency in language usage"?

26. [7/21, 11:06 AM] E: In the structure of language, competence and performance are two key terms which are used to describe language acquisition. Being competent in language usage is one of the key factors that markets or promotes a person, and puts him/her in a better state when it comes to content writing. This is because, what you do when writing is explaining your thought to your readers, which is quite different from when one is speaking. When speaking, your gestures, body language and all, will help project your thoughts to your audience, but when it comes to writing, your contents and language usage helps your readers understand your thoughts, link them up with each other and place what you are trying to say. So, being competent in language usage can make one a successful writer, or carve a nitche for him/her in the industry or art of content writing.

From the above excerpt, the respondent gives a very comprehensible definition of competency in language. He also states some of the importance of being competent in ones usage of the English language whilst presenting a

number of advantages which come with it.

Excerpt E1 is from the interview held with freelance editor and teacher.

When asked on whether or not there is a job prospect for graduates of English language, she had the following to say:

4.6. Excerpt E1

27. [7/20, 3:56 PM] A: 6. Is there a job prospect for a graduate of English language, giving the present state of the Nigerian labour market/ economic system?

28. [7/20, 3:59 PM] F: This question reminds me of a discussion I had with my parents when I chose to study English language over Law. My parents tried talking "sense" into me by buttressing the economic viability of Law over English. According to my Dad, the most I can aspire for with a degree in English Language is to be a "Teacher"

29. [7/20, 4:01 PM] A: That sounds interesting

30. [7/20, 4:03 PM] F: But the truth is, language is a fundamental part of any society. And as language experts we have the advantage of fluidity over most other professions.

So to answer your question, yes, there are job prospects for graduates of English language, regardless of the economic state of Nigeria's economy.

31. [7/20, 4:05 PM] F: It is rather unfortunate that most graduates do not know how to transcend from competence to performance

From her response, we can point out that, some members of the society who lack an understanding of the scope of the English language do discourage those who desire to pursue a career in it from doing so because they think it is limited, and may not be able to cater for their everyday needs. However, she has pointed out, in response 30, that the English language as a course, has the advantage of fluidity over most professions. This is because as we have mentioned earlier, that there is no human endeavor which does not engage the use of language in its functionality. One of the problems as she has mentioned in response 31 is that, most of the graduates who already have some level of mastery over the English language, are ignorant of how they can engage what they already know for economic purposes.

In the course of the interview held with B, when asked if there is a prospect for graduates of the English language, he had the following to give in response in exert D2:

4.7. Excerpt D2

32. [7/21, 11:17 AM] A: Great response, Sir.

6. Is there a job prospect for graduates of English language, giving the present state of the Nigerian labour market/ economic system?

33. [7/21, 11:19 AM] B: I would like to refine this question. The point is, writing, there does not necessarily place you an offer. We must come to terms with the fact that, presently, the country is damaged and things are really bad. Sadly, those who went to the university to study English language are even poor at writing. Only a few graduates of the English language can express themselves in correct sentences. Hence, the art of writing has gone into extinction or oblivion. It may be due to this wide spread of civilization, or probably the wake of powerful electronic gadgets which have helped people in writing. People rarely write now, so being a graduate of English language does not necessarily create any prospect.

I have been into journalism for seven years now, and some of my colleagues did not even study language in school. Some studied soil science, botany, statistics etc and yet, they write very well. So, it is not about the department. Some of the most successful journalists did not read Mass communication in school.

C, in his interview, had the following to say in response to same question in excerpt C2.

4.8. Excerpt C2

28. [7/20, 2:54 PM] A: 6. Is there a job prospect for graduate of English language, giving the present state of the Nigerian labour market/ economic system?

(3.0)

[7/20, 2:57 PM] D: The government does not offer one

30. [7/20, 2:57 PM] D: But the Internet does

From excerpt D2, which is B's response, we learn that the society does not have any offer awaiting graduates of English language, due to the incessant rise in population, and degeneration of the society which have resulted in increased difficulty in getting jobs and money making. However, E in excerpt C2, be is of the belief that, although the government of the day and the society as a whole do not have anything to present to graduates of English language, however, the internet has something. This offer is only available to those who are willing to pay the price to get skilled it writing.

In excerpt E2, asserted the following when asked other ways by which the knowledge of grammar may be utilized for economic purposes:

4.9. Excerpt E2

[7/20, 4:06 PM] A: 7. What are the other ways by which the knowledge of language may be maximised in order to be self-employed?

(23.0)

[7/20, 4:29 PM] E: The fusion of language skills and technology can sustain any serious minded English language graduate. Content is a vital part of digital marketing and SEO which is one of the highest paid skill presently. English language graduates can maximize that area and become economically independent.

As a language expert, you can also venture into conversation analysis. Most media outfits are engaging that.

Also, you can have a language blog/ website. It is even getting easier by the day, all you need is a YouTube channel.

Just make language videos on YouTube and cash out.

Moreso, you can teach English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Most countries in Asia and parts of Africa and South America pay heavily for that.

And for the fun lovers, you can become a tour guide. Help

plan trips abroad for holidaymakers.

Finally, as a language expert you can work as a freelance translator, editor or writer.

So you see, there is something for everybody here.

A content developer and affiliate marketer, who is a graduate of Physical and Health Education, from Ambrose Ali University, had the following to add in excerpt F1:

4.10. Excerpt F1

29. [7/20, 4:03 PM] A: A few more questions to go, please

30. [7/20, 4:03 PM] A: 7. What are the other ways by which the knowledge of language may be maximised in order to be self-employed?

(6.0)

31. [7/20, 4:09 PM] Ms Happiness: Freelance writing
Writing and publishing books
Spoken words
Writing poems

(1.0)

32. [7/20, 4:10 PM] A: Alright, Ma'am, contributed the following in excerpt B2:

[8/1, 3:25 PM]: 6. Today as a graduate or a literate person, you need to create opportunities for yourself. It is a sad reality, but a reality nonetheless. As a graduate of English language, you have the upper hand as you can shine anywhere. You can work in communications, on radio, TV, branding and marketing, content creation, podcasting and so many other areas.

(2.0)

[8/1, 3:27 PM]: 7. You can become a teacher. It may not seem like the most glamorous job, but who better to teach a certain language than someone competent in it? If you are bi/multi-lingual, you can become a translator. You can also be a speech writer amongst so many other things.

A copywriter and affiliate marketer who studied Microbiology in the University of Portharcout, added the following in exerpt G1:

4.11. Exerpt G1

[8/19, 2:56 PM] A: 6. Is there a job prospect for graduates of English language, giving the present state of the Nigerian labour market/ economic system?

(2.0)

[8/19, 2:58 PM] +234 902 737 6450: 6. There are opportunities in Nigeria. Unfortunately, only a few are ready to identify them.

Though the use of English language is gradually depreciating, more firms are still creating more opportunities for a selected few.

From excerpts D2, C2, E2, F1 and G1, a plethora of opportunities or prospects have been presented. Based on all of these positions, it is valid for conclude that, there is indeed a great importance for the language user to develop language skills. A person who has sharpened his or her language ability, should not be without a good means of income.

There may be no white-collar jobs, however, the internet makes available a wide range of opportunities which may be maximised by one who is competent in the usage of the English language.

5. Summary of the Study

This research has considered the relationship between competency in language usage, and self-sustenance. It has outlined the current state of the Nigerian society and prospects that lie for graduates; the fact that there are very few jobs available. It has examined the four language skills- listening, speaking, reading and writing; how they are acquired, and their importance. Their importance lies in the fact that, there is no venture or field of human endeavor that does not engage the usage of language in its functionality.

This study has also considered the available fields requiring competence in the ability to write, which can make for self-sustenance. It has been established that, although these fields are not open to only graduates of the English language; however, they have a better advantage given that, it is the area of their study, in the course of which they would have be exposed to the intricacies of language, and its usage as well.

In carrying out this study, the descriptive research method was adopted. The sample comprised writers in the areas of content developing; affiliate marketing, and copywriting. The data gathered came from the interviews held with persons in these fields, twelve of them in number. The data was analyzed using conversational analysis.

6. Conclusion

From the outcome of this study, it is justifiable to conclude that, there is a significant relationship between competency in language usage and self-sustenance. It is also justifiable to conclude that proficiency and competency in language usage are vital ingredient for self-sustenance irrespective of the discipline.

7. Recommendations

Based on this study, the following recommendations are made:

The teacher should:

1. Ensure that the four language skills are well taught.
2. Engage the use of instructional materials to aid the learner's understanding.

The learner should:

1. Understand that there are several areas requiring the use of the English language hence, pay rapt attention when learning, and make an in-depth study of language, to enable them have a better understanding beyond the general knowledge.
2. Develop the ability to listen, speak, read and write.
3. Move from competency to performance- that is, begin to exercise the knowledge gained.

4. Erase the thought of searching for a job after graduating, but instead, prepare for, and seek out opportunities that require the ability they already possess in order to avoid getting disappointed, and be able to be economically independent.

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