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ARTICLE DE RECHERCHE

Résultats de la recherche sur une approche multimodale de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage de l'anglais dans un contexte EFL : une étude de cas

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Résumé

L'objet de cette étude était de mener une investigation sur l'emploi de l'approche multimodale à l'apprentissage et l'enseignement de la langue Anglaise. Elle (étude) détermine les différents modes qu'il faut utiliser et leurs effets pour des Lettres et civilisation anglaises à l'Université de Kinshasa. 145 booster les attitudes et perceptions des étudiants par rapport à la langue Anglaise. Le chercheur a utilisé la méthode qualitative mixe. Les participants dans cette recherche étaient les étudiants de premier graduat et les professeurs d'Anglais et Informatiques des Affaires de l'Université de Kinshasa. Les instruments pour la collecte de données étaient les questionnaires pour les professeurs et les étudiants et les observations. Les résultats ont révélé que les professeurs n'utilisent pas l'approche multimodale dans leurs enseignements. Mots clés : Multimodalité, approche multimodale, apprentissage, enseignement, EFL.

Mots-clés :

Abstract

The aim of the study was to investigate the students' and teachers' attitudes toward the use of a multimodal approach. It tried to determine the different modes encompassing the design of English language teaching/learning, and their enhancing effect on students' attitudes and perceptions. The researcher used mixed qualitative methods. The participants of the study were English teachers and English and Business Computing Science first year students of the University of Kinshasa. The instruments of the study were observations and questionnaires for teachers' and students' attitudes about multimodal approach. The results revealed that teachers do not use a multimodal approach in their teaching.

Keywords: Multimodality, multimodal approach, learning, teaching, EFL

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Introduction

This article is about findings on research on: "A Multimodal Approach to the English language teaching and learning in an EFL Context: a case study". As the title suggests, it investigates two things: (1) the use of a multimodal approach in order to find out its advantages more likely to impact on the teaching and learning of English in EFL and (2) teachers' and learners' attitudes on the use of this multimodal approach. "The term multimodality refers to the integrated use of different semiotic resources, especially language, image, sound and music in texts and communicative events" (Van Leeuwen 2014: 281). Multimodality clearly shows that meaning is not encoded through the written text only, but also through other modes. Kress (2010:79) defines a mode as a resource for meaning making

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and he adds that "Different modes offer different potentials for making meaning". As far as this study is concerned, a multimodal approach encompasses printed texts, audio recordings and videos modes to teach and learn English due to many benefits it offers such as increasing learners' motivation to learn, fixing learners' pronunciation and intonation, enabling learners to improve their ability to communicate orally using language, intonation and gestures. The assumption underlying the multimodal approach is that this approach is an inclusive approach by the fact that it considers many modes to the teaching

and learning of English and its capacity to enhance learning as it accounts for the students' individualities and learning styles in the English teaching and learning process. It is assumed that some students learn better by (1) seeing, (2) listening, others by (3) action doing and (4) there are those who learn better by combining two or the three. At this point the multimodal approach sounds a good fit.

Research problem

The problem under study was the impact of the multimodal approach on teaching /learning and of the multimodal pedagogical instructional procedures design on the students' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions of EAP for College Beginners in EFL in English and Business Computing Department. In fact, in the 21st century, literacy has become multifaceted and has been integrated with new technologies and multimodality. Compared to foundational literacies which include print-based text comprehension and production, new literacies have incorporated more aspects of practices. Due to the multimodal nature of reading and writing practices in today's literacy classrooms, it is imperative to include multimodality in literacy instruction. As Edwards-Groves (2011: 62) claims, "classroom practices need to explicitly enable multimodal, collaborative and interactive learning opportunities between students, between teachers and students time". However, the learning practices should not be bound to the classrooms, because "pedagogical practices must not only be generative but also explicitly draw on the technoliteracies students are 'practicing' in their out-of-classroom" settings. In this respect, literacy learning can be extended beyond school boundaries to home or community settings through multimodal literacy practices. It is expected that literacy learning happens out of school contexts can be stepping stones that connect with literacy learning at school. In today's multimedia and technology saturated world, school students, college and university young adults and nonschool learners all engage in various forms of multimodal reading and writing activities on a daily basis. Due to this, language and literacy learning in the 21st century has multifaceted meanings – to be literate in today's classrooms means students are not only able to read and write print-based texts, but also be able

to read and write multimodal texts in print as well as in various forms at multiple venues. However, the perception of EAP is an issue among teachers new to EAP on the one hand and students on the other hand. "If for example the teacher views EAP as general English, he/she will likely use an ineffective methodology for EAP" (Sangabau,2017:6). As a result, the EAP students in return tend to ignore the real value of EAP and the learning becomes boring and demotivating with unsatisfactory results. As Krzanowiski (2008:4) argues "the result of teaching/learning of EAP is often reduced or made less effective because it is taught in a less motivating way and many other reasons such as time constraints, students' attendance and other problems". The observation is valid in the Democratic Republic of Congo college students who are not proficient in English in spite of the fact that they learn English for Academic Purposes. Ngwaba (2005:7) in his PhD dissertation criticized the ineffectiveness of English for Academic Purposes. He castigated the perception of students and lecturers toward poetry which was consequently neglected. Kakese (2010 :373) did the same for the ineffectiveness in the teaching/learning of academic writing on which the students and the teachers blamed each other for failure. By proficiency, it is meant to be "the overall mastery of English or how well prepared one is to use English in a particular setting such as an auto mechanics course or a university" (Madsen, 1983:4). Sangabau (2017: 247-248) in his PhD dissertation describes some obvious causes of failure in teaching/learning of EAP in DRC. These are students' lack of exposure to the language, lack of resources and teacher training deficiency. The problem of failure in EAP due to ineffective teaching/learning of EAP in the Democratic Republic of Congo is still not solved. The main question to answer is: Is a multimodal approach in use in the 21st century?

Research Hypotheses

This research on the use of multimodal approach raised the following three hypotheses:

1. The multimodal pedagogical instructional procedures design are more

beneficial for beginners of English in English and Business Computing Department.

2. Teachers and students have negative attitudes toward the multimodal

pedagogical instructional procedures design.

3. Teachers ignore the multimodal pedagogical instructional procedures

design.

Objectives

The main objectives were to (1) describe the elements of a multimodal approach, (2) work out a multimodal instructional design and an appropriate multimodal pedagogical procedures more likely to improve the teaching/learning of English and students' attitudes and perceptions in the Department of English and Business Computing Science, especially in the first year which is our focus and (3) make suggestions for its use.

Methodology

In this research, a mixed qualitative method was used in order to address the research questions. Mixed qualitative method is described as that research method that mixes the methods and it includes two (or more, or both) quantitative and/or qualitative approaches (Morse and Niehaus, 2016: 10-27). Morse and Niehaus make it clear saying that mixed methodology may not include just both quantitative and qualitative. The idea of mixing qualitativequalitative methods is also supported by Cremers et al (2019:1) when they carried out a piece of research on Patients' and healthcare providers' perceptions and practices regarding hypertension, pharmacy-based care, and health in Lagos, Nigeria. They used mixed qualitative methods in their study. They used observations of patient–pharmacy staff interactions and hypertension care provided, four focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with 30 hypertensive patients, nine community pharmacists, and six cardiologists, and structured interviews with 328 patients. Bazeley (2006:64-74) argues that "mixed methods research involves the use of more than one approach or method of design, data collection or data analysis within a single program of study, with integration of the different approaches or methods occurring during the program of study. He notes that he was not limiting this to a

combination of qualitative and quantitative research only, but more broadly, combination of any different approaches/ methods/ data/ analyses". From what is mentioned ahead, we can say that a mixed method cannot be restricted to quantitative and qualitative only; but may include, for example, qualitative methods such as qualitative participant observation with qualitative in-depth interviewing. Alternatively it could include quantitative survey research with quantitative experimental research for the sake of triangulation for deeper understanding of the phenomenon. The use of mixed qualitative methods design qualifies as a choice in this research by the fact that the observations and two different qualitative instruments for data collection were used. There was an instrument for teachers' data collection and another one for students.

Population

The population in this research includes all teachers of English who teach English and the students taught by those teachers in first year UNIKIN students of the English and Business Computing Department. The students participating were purposefully selected for the implementation of this research for three reasons. The first reason is practicality and researchability. The second one is that, it is in this first year that the English teaching and learning with the use of multimodal approach was initiated. The third one is that, it is in the beginning that exposure to the good model of the English language should be obtained. If this is missed at this level, the rest of the training would be reeling. As far as classes and course materials were concerned, the curriculum guide focused on English Level One, as contained in the new Interchange Intro (Richards et al

2000) for the first year of English in a multilevel course as offered in English

and Business computing Department. The data were gathered during the academic year 2017-2018. The number of participants for students who handed in the questionnaire was 255 and 8 for teachers. As far as classes and courses were concerned, we were based on the first year English and Business computing. And we focused on English One for data collection.

Instruments for data collection

For the purpose of this study, the observations and two questionnaires were addressed. One questionnaire was administered to teachers and the other one to students. The questionnaire for teachers had 23 questions which 9 were Yes/ No questions and 14 questions were open-ended questions. The questionnaire for students had 9 questions which 2 questions were Yes/No questions and 7 questions were open-ended questions. In terms of validity, we can say that the instruments were valid since they measured what they were supposed to measure (advantages and students' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards multimodal approach and multimodal pedagogical instructional design).

Package for data analysis

As far as the package to analyze data is concerned, excel spread sheet was used. That is to say; data collected from informants were entered, coded, analyzed, and presented in tables using excel software assisted by the computer.

Findings

The main findings of the research are:

A. From observations

Six classes, respectively, English One, English Grammar& Composition, Reading of the English texts, Phonetics and Orthophony, Anglo-American Literature and African Literature were observed. Each teacher in each class was observed 3 times, which make the total of 18 times. It is resulted from the analysis that almost all the teachers used textbook. They did not use audio and video episodes in their classes. It is just in English One where textbook, audio and video were used. This shows that students were not exposed to the language and their learning styles and their individualities were not considered. The researcher expected to see all the observed teachers using textbook, audio and video to enhance meaning and comprehension. The tables below sums up the different courses, times of observations and materials observed:

Table 1. First time of observations

N° 1

Materials observed Textbook Audio Video Teacher one Textbook Audio Video Teacher two Textbook Teacher three Textbook Teacher four Textbook Teacher five Textbook Teacher six Textbook

Table 2. Second time of observations

N° 2

Materials observed Textbook Audio Video Teacher one Textbook Audio Video Teacher two Textbook Teacher three Textbook Teacher four Textbook Teacher five Textbook Teacher six Textbook Table 3. Third time of observations

N° 3

Materials observed Textbook Audio Video Teacher one Textbook Audio Video Teacher two Textbook Teacher three Textbook Teacher four Textbook Teacher five Textbook Teacher six Textbook

B. From the questionnaires

Table 4. The use of video episodes by the teachers

Items Frequency Percentage Yes, I do 33,3 No, I don't Missing Almost never 16,7 Total

It is resulted from the teachers' and students' questionnaires that: (50%) of the teachers don't not use video episodes in their teachings;

Table 5. The use of audio by the teachers

Items Frequency Percentage Yes, I do 16,7 No, I don't 83,3 Missing Total The table above shows that 83.3% of the teachers say that they do not use audio in their teachings

Table 6. The use of textbook by the teachers

Items Frequency Percentage Yes, I do No, I don't Missing Total

The table above reveals that all the teachers use textbook in their teaching, This leads to say that almost all the teachers do not use the multimodal approach to expose their students to the English language skills and the leaning of vocabulary and cultural elements. Therefore, students are not given a chance to meet their leaning styles of the language and their individualities are neglected.

Conclusion

Multimodality has not been used in all its facets including textbook, audio and video episodes in a class-session. For the sake of effective teaching and learning in an EFL context, multimodal approach needs to be considered. The hypotheses: the multimodal pedagogical instructional procedures design are more beneficial for beginners of English in English and Business Computing Department and teachers ignore the multimodal pedagogical instructional procedures design were confirmed. Another: hypothesis teachers and students have negative attitudes toward the multimodal pedagogical instructional procedures design was rejected. Regarding contribution of this study, a Multimodal pedagogical instructional procedures design which shows how a teacher should proceed integrating the elements of a multimodal approach is the researcher's contribution. The use of mixed qualitative methods in a piece of research is also the researcher's contribution. For implications, this study suggest that a multimodal approach and a multimodal pedagogical instructional procedures design

integrated in the teaching and learning of English language in an EFL context have a capacity to promote students' autonomy in learning, improve motivation to learn, facilitate various learning styles, avoid teachers talking too much time and enhance comprehension.

Recommendation

The research strongly recommends the teachers of English to turn to the use of a multimodal approach and a multimodal pedagogical instructional procedures design in an EFL context because they are extremely beneficial in terms of its contribution to the improvement of the language skills and vocabulary growth, culture and enhance English teaching/ learning quality.

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