

**Needs Analysis of Designing Course Materials for
Primary Education Studies (PES) Students of Federal
College of Education, Yola Adamawa State of Nigeria
Learning Arabic for Specific Purposes (ASP)**

Jabir Abdullahi*

Abstract

This paper carried out needs analysis with the aim at shedding light on the necessity for the innovative course materials that will be designed and developed for the effective teaching and learning of the Arabic courses, specifically for the learners in the department of Primary Education Studies (PED). The population of the study comprised of one hundred and seventy five (175) NCE II students, who took PED 219 (Arabic in Primary Education 11), in first semester NCE II as well as PED 126 (Arabic in Primary Education 1) in their second semester NCE I 2017/2018 academic session. One hundred and twenty (120) students were selected using simple random sampling. Quantitative data was obtained by means of 4-point Likert Scale. The data was analyzed by using frequencies, simple percentages and weighted average. The findings reaffirmed the added advantages of learning Arabic language for the learners, educational system and national integration. The study also found that learning Arabic language requires instructional materials and relative courseware that will make the learning more effective. Parental misconception, religion undertone as well as students Arabic backgrounds were also identified as added challenges to the effective learning of Arabic language.

Keywords: ASP, Course Materials Design, ECCE, Needs Analysis, PES

* Federal College of Education, Yola, Adamawa State- Nigeria
Email: abuabdullahi707@gmail.com

Introduction

Nigeria is known as most populous black-race nation in Africa, with diverse multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious peoples. Education become topmost priority of Nigerian government and the standard of education depends on teachers, as popular saying that “no nation rise above qualities of its teachers”. Thus, the Nigerian educational system put teacher’s education at centre and specifically saddled colleges of education with the responsibility of producing teachers for the base schools (primary education). The 2012 edition of minimum standards for Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) mandated all students in the Colleges of Education at the department of Primary Education Studies (PED) to register a foreign language course as elective course. This was aimed at exposing the students to other foreign languages (Arabic or French), and training students to become teachers with adequate knowledge of the Nigerian primary school curriculum, skill, attitude, and methods, to enable them teach the subjects of primary 1-6 as contained in the National Curriculum. At the same time they are equipped with foreign language competency in order to face the challenges in the real world. The maximum period of the course is three semesters at the different NCE levels. The course is taught to all registered students in Primary Education Department (PED) regardless of their ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Arabic language plays a vital role for students of PED in the college of education, it assists students in understanding terminologies found in Arabic for primary education texts, as it provides an exposure to the students on the context and usage of the language in primary education studies. The language also exposes students to exhibit the four basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Among the reasons that make teaching of Arabic Language to PED students important is due to fact that Arabic language has become part of the minimum standard in Nigerian colleges of education. The stipulated lecture periods of 2 hours per week for total of 9 weeks, making 18 hours in a semester was well spelt-out in the minimum standard for (PED 126) titled “Arabic Language in Primary Education Studies”. The minimum standards required the assessment to be based on the objectives of the course which include speaking, reading, and writing of elementary Arabic. At the end of the course the students are expected to be able to speak, read and write elementary Arabic. To this effect, the following text books have been currently introduced for students uses: Al’assas (Basic Arabic), Annahwul-wadh (Arabic Brighter Grammar), Durusul-lugatil-arabiyya li gairil-nadiqinabiha (Arabic for non-Arabs), as

well as permissibility of using relevant online materials for the teaching and learning of Arabic language.

Course materials form an important part in the teaching and learning of any subject (Dubin & Olstain, 2000). It is therefore, crucial to re-evaluate the existing course materials for PED126 in order to design and develop an innovative courseware. In designing a language course material, it is important to carry out a needs analysis to determine the specific reason for learning the language in addition to the learner's objective needs. Also, the learners' affective needs, such as their interest, wishes, expectations and preferences should be taken in to cognisance when designing the courseware. On this note, it is highly essential to carry-out needs analysis through collection of data that can be used to develop a profile of the language needs of a group of learners in order to make decisions about the goals and content of a language course. More so, needs analysis should not only be considered as a pre-stage part of designing language courseware, it should be an on-going process to ensure relevance and quality of subject matter.

The aim of this research is to design and develop an innovative course materials for PED126 (Arabic Language in Primary Education 1), as the research will report on the preliminary findings on the needs analysis which will be used to determine the basic components necessary for designing a course materials that are suitable to the needs of the learners.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the perception of learners on whether Arabic language has added value to their profession and offer them better job opportunity.
2. To determine the purpose of learner' interest in the study of Arabic language.
3. To determine whether there is need for the instructional material for the learning of Arabic language.
4. To identify factors those inhibit the learners from learning Arabic language.

Research Questions

1. Does learning Arabic language have any added advantage for the PES students of Nigerian colleges of education?
2. What are the motives behind learner interest in the study of Arabic Language?

3. Is there a necessity for having instructional materials for the learning of Arabic Language for PES students in Nigerian Colleges of Education?
4. What are the factors inhibit the PES students from learning Arabic languages?
- 5.

Literature Review

Teaching language for specific purposes is a new trend in the field of teaching Arabic, while the English language has already been to this field and known among different communities which is ESP (English for specific Purposes). So, teaching Arabic for specific purposes means teaching it by specific method to achieve specific aims for a certain range of students. It is not intended for this type of specification of teaching Arabic in general and comprehensive, but the focus is learning Arabic in which a certain side benefit the student in which to achieve a specific purpose, such as travel, tourism, trade etc. However, there is a difference between teaching Arabic, for example, for political purposes and the teaching Arabic for the purposes of the academic study. Arabic in the first case is a specific goal, but in the second case is a general goal.

Teaching Arabic for religious purposes was the first step in teaching Arabic for specific purposes. It has been appeared when every Muslim was eager longing to understand the teachings of Islam, so every Muslim was trying so hard to learn Arabic in order to satisfy the needs and achieve his own purposes which understand the Quran and Hadith and doing worships.

The second step to teach Arabic for specific purposes was teaching it for functional purposes. It happened in Umayyad era at the beginning of the Arabization of the offices of the Islamic state. Therefore, the children of non-Arab Muslims learned Arabic for jobs in that state.

Some argue that the interest in the development of teaching Arabic for specific purposes has begun to emerge in its new robe in the sixties in the last century, when a group of specifics in Applied Linguistics analysis of the different language field they found that in each language (Abdul-Raouf, 2004).

Field has its vocabulary, rules and methods, which is different from other language field. They also found that the field of teaching Arabic for specific purposes divided into multiple fields depending on the specificities of students. So , there are programs for teaching Arabic for Academy purposes , professional , religious , commercial , medical ,

scientific , legal , media , and political which included all the educational and professional fields .

Thus, we can say that there is an old movement to teach Arabic for specific purposes (religious and functional), With the passage of time, the evolution of the ages, the conditions in the Arab world, and after the events of the eleventh of September 2001 the interesting of Arab world has been increased. This means of course an urgent need to learn Arabic, specifically for commercial purposes, diplomatic, and political.

Unfortunately, studies associated with these fields are inadequate and unable to meet the needs of language learners in the teaching of specific purpose, specifically political purposes.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) divided teaching Arabic for specific purposes into two kinds; the first: Arabic for academic purposes or scientific. This applies to the Arabic language for educational purposes for students of colleges and universities, where the program meets the needs of learners to understanding books and references for specification and exchange scientific ideas at the academic communication. And the second: teaching Arabic for professional or functional purposes such as teaching Arabic for diplomats, businessmen, counsellors tourism, and the nurses. This program serves professionals and business owners who need Arabic as mean to perform their job, duties or professional.

In developing syllabus, an important element is analysing the needs of the students. Needs analysis is used to collect information about learners' needs. Learning needs refer to what the learner needs to do in order to learn. It is concerned with the method and activities, in learning process. To decide the method and activities, the teacher should understand the learning goals.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) (in Nation and Macalister, 2010) divided needs in to target needs and learning needs. Target needs refer to what the learner needs to know in order to function in the target situation, what they know already, and what they need to know. Target needs make sure that the course contains relevant and useful things to learn. It is more useful to look at the target situation in terms of necessities refer to what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation. Lacks refer to gap between the target proficiency and the existing proficiency. On the other hand, wants refer to what the learner wishes to learn.

Learners are not consulted as to whether a need for such knowledge is needed. Their needs have been decided for them by those concerned with their long term welfare. Needs analysis thus include the

study of perceived and present needs as well as potential and unrecognized needs. It is used to make sure that learners learn useful things. It further proposes the function of needs analysis, as they need to find out what language skills a learner needs in order to perform a particular role; help determine if an existing course adequately addressed the need of potential students; determine which student from a group are most in need of training in particular language skills; identify a change of direction that people in a reference group feel is important; to identify a gap between what students are able to do and what they need to be able; and collect information about a particular problem learners are experiencing.

Methodology

A survey research design was adopted in this research. The population of the study comprised of one hundred and seventy five (175) NCE II students, who took PED 219 (Arabic in Primary Education 11), at first semester NCE II as well as PED 126 (Arabic in Primary Education 1) in their second semester NCE I 2017/2018 academic session. It is assumed that these students will be able to give necessary feedbacks, comments and criticism on the course materials that have been used in their previous Arabic courses. One hundred and twenty (120) students were selected using simple random sampling procedure from the total population of one hundred and seventy five (175). Quantitative data was obtained by means of 4-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaires were administered to the respondents; all the responses in the 4-point scale questions were sorted after analysing the responses thoroughly. The codification were made carefully and then followed by the data analysis. The data and the results were then presented in tabular form using frequencies, simple percentages and weighted average.

Since the instrument for this research was based on 4-point Likert Scale, therefore, the weight for Strongly Agree is 4 points, Agree – 3 points, Disagree – 2 points and Strongly Disagree – 1 point. Thus, the average point will be $(4+3+2+1)/4 = 2.5$. Therefore any weighted responses value greater than or equal to 2.5 will be considered as “agreed” while those values less than 2.5 will be regarded as “disagreed”.

Results

Table 1

Distribution of Responses on Whether Learning Arabic Language in PES Department of Nigerian Colleges of Education Has Any added Advantage

S/N	Items	SA FX(%)	A FX(%)	D FX(%)	SD FX(%)	w \bar{x} n=120
1.	The PES students need Arabic knowledge to master part of the requirements for the Primary Education	55(46%)	28(23%)	26(22%)	11(9%)	3.06
2.	The PES students need Arabic language to be more suitable for job after graduation	71(59%)	27(23%)	10(8%)	12(10%)	3.31
3.	When the Arabic language learnt, the learner can make use of it to interact with Arabic native speakers	23(19%)	74(62%)	15(13%)	8(7%)	2.93
4.	Training Nigerian students with Arabic language makes them employable outside the country soil	31(26%)	56(47%)	12(10%)	21(18%)	2.81
5.	Training Nigerian students with Arabic language makes them more relevant for the international relationship and ambassador for the world peace	30(25%)	73(61%)	13(11%)	4(3%)	3.08
	Grand Average					3.04

w \bar{x} : Weighted Average from 4-Point Likert Scale (accepted value ≥ 2.5)

The results in the Table 1 reveal that students from PES department in the Federal college of education, Yola perceived learning Arabic language has added advantages. Most students (69%) strongly agreed that learning Arabic language will make them more relevant in their field of study (w \bar{x} =3.06). More so, 82% of the students believed that learning Arabic language will make them more suitable to secure job in future time (w \bar{x} =3.31). Majority students (81%) opined that learning Arabic language can make them interact with Arabic speaking people within and outside the country (w \bar{x} =2.93), while 73% of the students were of the opinions that learning Arabic language can make them employable outside the Nigeria soil (w \bar{x} =2.81). Also, 86% of the PES students believed that with Arabic language knowledge, Nigerian students can effectively participate in the world peace (w \bar{x} =3.08). The

table reveals further the grand average value of 3.04 which is greater than accepted value 2.5, which, implies that students agreed that learning Arabic language has added advantage.

Table 2
Perceptions of Respondents on Rational Behind Learner Interest in the Study of Arabic Languages in Nigerian Colleges of Education

S/N	Items	SA FX(%)	A FX(%)	D FX(%)	SD FX(%)	w \bar{x} n=120
1.	The learner motive for acquiring the Arabic language is to understand Arab culture	10(8%)	12(10%)	17(14%)	81(68%)	1.59
2.	The learners are learning Arabic language in order to be able to read and write Arabic texts	51(43%)	23(19%)	11(9%)	35(29%)	2.75
3.	The learners are learning Arabic for effective communication using the language	32(27%)	56(47%)	29(24%)	3(3%)	2.98
4.	Most learners are more interested in Arabic grammar than reading texts	20(17%)	56(47%)	36(30%)	8(7%)	2.73

w \bar{x} : Weighted Average from 4-Point Likert Scale (accepted value ≥ 2.5)

The results in Table 2 reveal that the majority of students (82%) strongly disagreed that they are interested in learning Arabic language in order to understand the Arabic culture (w \bar{x} =1.59). However, most students (62%) strongly agreed that they are learning Arabic language in order to be able to read and write Arabic texts (w \bar{x} =2.75). Likewise, 74% of the PES students strongly agree that they are learning Arabic for effective communication (w \bar{x} =2.98). More so, most students (64%) expressed their agreement views to the assertion that most learners simply prefer Arabic grammar than reading the text (w \bar{x} =2.73). The results from this table show that most learners are not truly interested in the cultural outfit of the native Arabic speakers rather; they prefer knowledge that makes them read their Arabic text; pass their examination and communicate with Arabic native speakers.

Table 3
Respondents Perception on Necessity for the Instructional Material for Teaching and Learning Arabic Language

S/N	Items	SA FX(%)	A FX(%)	D FX(%)	SD FX(%)	w \bar{x} n=120
1.	Arabic words and sentences can be read correctly without vowelization diacritics, such that compressive materials may not be needed for the Arabic	2(2%)	17(14%)	21(18%)	80(67%)	1.51
2.	Most learners do not need glossary of vocabularies at the end of each chapter	10(8%)	12(10%)	23(19%)	75(63%)	1.64
3.	Pronunciation and reading of Arabic exercise can be understood better without necessary acquire CBT (Computer Based Training)	0(0%)	21(18%)	12(10%)	87(73%)	1.45
4.	Arabic letter are legible for learners at every font size. Thereby, the Arabic textbook and instructional materials do not necessarily needed to be bold	12(10%)	23(19%)	12(10%)	73(61%)	1.78
5.	Most learners learn Arabic language better, even in the absent of clear instructional materials.	8(7%)	12(10%)	31(26%)	69(58%)	1.66
6.	Arabic can be better read and understood ever without colourful text	15(13%)	63(53%)	38(32%)	4(3%)	2.74

w \bar{x} : Weighted Average from 4-Point Likert Scale (accepted value ≥ 2.5)

The results in Table 3 reveal the respondents perception on necessity for the instructional material for teaching and learning Arabic language. The results indicate that most respondents (85%) disagreed to the assertion that Arabic words and sentences can be read correctly without vowelization diacritics (w \bar{x} =1.51) this implies that the students

unanimously viewed that Arabic words and sentences needed correct vowelization diacritics. Likewise, 82% of the respondents disagreed to the assertion that learners do not need glossary of vocabularies at the end of each chapter ($w\bar{x}=1.64$). More so, majority of respondents (83%) indicated the necessity for the introduction of CBT and other ICT facilities for the effective learning of pronunciation and reading of Arabic text ($w\bar{x}=1.45$). The results from this table also indicate strong disagreement views of the respondents (71%) to the assertion that since Arabic letter are legible for learners at every font size, there is no need for bolding the texts of all the Arabic textbook and instructional materials ($w\bar{x}=1.78$). Likewise, respondents (84%) unanimously disagreed that learners can learn Arabic language better without any clear instructional material ($w\bar{x}=1.66$). However, most respondents (66%) agreed that Arabic can be better read and understood without colourful text ($w\bar{x}=2.74$).

Table 4
Factors inhibiting learning of Arabic language among the PES students in colleges of Education

Factors	Fx	%
Student's Arabic background	90	20%
Lack teaching aids and instructional materials	117	26%
The fear of Islamization by non-Muslim parents	78	17%
Lack of qualified teachers	32	7%
Too much of courses in NCE programmes	67	15%
Lack of consideration for learner with little Arabic background	64	14%
Total	448*	100%

* Multiple responses

The results in table 4 reveal the students' perceptions on the factors preventing them from having good understanding of Arabic language. The table revealed that 26% of the factors responsible students' poor understanding of Arabic language is contributed by lack of teaching aids and instructional materials. Also, the results show that students' background in Arabic contributed 20% of factors that affected their interest in the learning of Arabic language. Likewise, fear of Islamising children by the non-Muslim parents contributed 17% of the

factors that inhibit the learners from effective learning of Arabic language. More so, 15% of the factors inhibiting the learning of Arabic language is contributed by too much of courses offered in NCE programme. 14% of the factors responsible for the poor Arabic learning among the PES students in the college of education is due to lack of consideration for learners with little Arabic background, while lack of qualified teachers was rated low rate only 7% of overall factors.

Discussion

The learning of Arabic language has been reaffirmed by the study for its added advantages for the learners, educational system and national integration. This agrees with the submission made by Onisabi, Adam and Jami'u (2013) that Arabic language remains among few languages that intricate multifunctional phenomenon, through facilitates human communication. The utilities of learning Arabic as foreign language transcend the benefit of obtaining an academic qualification for employment. Foreign language learning is now construed as a facilitator of globalization and a strong vehicle of fostering world peace and intercultural understanding in a world of extreme diversities. In a nutshell, if Nigerian students were exposed to the knowledge of Arabic language their chances to be part of international peace and unity are high.

This study also found that learning Arabic language requires instructional materials and relative courseware that will make the learning more effective. This agrees with the conclusion drawn by Musa (2008) that the Arabic language is facing stiff competition with English and French as first and second official languages respectively and with Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and other indigenous languages as Nigerian Mother Tongues offered as school subjects, this according to him places Arabic within a matrix of the daunting challenges and little instructional materials as well as getting less attention from education planners. Parental misconception, religion undertone as well as students Arabic backgrounds were also identified by this study as added challenges to the effective learning of Arabic language. This finding is in accordance with the finding made by Oladosu (2012) that erroneous belief and perception of Arabic language, in some quarters, as synonymous to Islamic study hindered learning of Arabic language in our schools.

Conclusion

This study has reaffirmed the need for the course materials as one of the important factors that can influence the learner's motivation in learning Arabic language. Also, the learning materials and provision of necessary courseware can be used to encourage all parents to allow their wads to learn Arabic language as a foreign language rather being falsely sensitive on Islamization, since parents will have access to the detail of the contents in the courseware. Designing course materials for the teaching of Arabic language will facilitate chances for the Nigerian graduates to be employable away from Nigeria soil. Failure to come up with effective, attractive, simple and innovative learning materials by the concerned authorities (teachers and education planners inclusive), will affect the learners' level of participation and motivation, and also limited their efficiency as class teachers in various primary school as well as reducing their chances for the job opportunities.

References

- Abdul-Raouf. M .S (2004) Arabic for specific purposes: Roots and Reality. Paper presented at the Arabic and Egyptian Culture week, Embassy of the Arab Republic Egypt Italy- Rome, from December 15th- 19th 2004.
- Dubin, F.and E.Olstain, (2000). Course design: developing programs and materials for language learning. cambridge: cambridge university press.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2012). Nigerian education research and development council. lagos- nigeria: NERDC Press.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2012). nigeria certificate in education minimum standard. Abuja- Nigeria: National commition for colleges of education.
- Hutchinson, T. and Waters. (1987) "English for specific purposes" Cambridge, University Press pp.16-19.
- Musa, I.A. (2008). Developing the child's communicative skills in Arabic. Nigerian Journal of Religious Education, pp.60-71.
- Oladosu, A. (2012.). Fluctuations in the Fortunes of Arabic Education in Nigeria. Inaugural Lecture, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria, pp.49-50.
- Onisabi A. S., & Adam A. G. and Jami'u A. M. (2013).Arabic Education for Nation Building Prospects and Challenges. Paper presented during the National Conference organized by School of Education, Kaduna State College of Education, Gidan -waya, Kafachan, held between 6th -9th November, 2007.