

English in Botswana Junior Secondary Curriculum

Deborah Adenihun Adeyemi* and Maureen Sindisiwe Kalane**

**Department of Languages & Social Sciences Education, University of Botswana,
P. O. Box UB 70291, Gaborone, Botswana
E-Mail: adeyemid@mopipi.ub*

***Communication and Study Skills Unit, University of Botswana,
P/ Bag 0022, Gaborone, Botswana
E-Mail: kalanem@mopipi.ub.bw*

KEYWORDS Syllabus. Objectives. Basic Education. Language Skills. L2 Language Learning. Integrated Approach

ABSTRACT This paper seeks to justify the place of the English language in Botswana junior secondary school curriculum, by examining the social, economic, and educational importance of the English language in Botswana. The paper further discusses how the teaching and learning of the language impacts the achievement of the government's ten-year basic education programme, as well as the goal of, 'an educated and informed nation of, 'Vision 2016'. Vision 2016, Republic of Botswana (1997) is a national document that spells out the achievements of the country by the year 2016. The paper also identifies the challenges that may hinder the achievement of the educational and social goal highlighted and makes suggestions for improvement in the teaching of the English language at the junior secondary school level.

INTRODUCTION

Botswana is situated in Southern Africa. The Southern African region consists of ten countries namely: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Botswana, formerly known as the Bechuanaland Protectorate, became independent in 1966. The country was ruled by the British between 1885 and 1965. As a result of her past colonial contact with Britain, English is very important in Botswana. It is an official language in the country and a medium of instruction in schools and institutions of higher learning. It is also a major language of communication within the country, the Southern African region of which Botswana is a member, the continent of Africa and globally.

After independence, efforts were made through various education policies to enhance the teaching and learning of the English language in Botswana, Republic of Botswana (1977, 1994). These documents envisioned the effective preparation of students for life, citizenship and world of work. In addition, modern trends dictate the necessity for highly proficient skills in English which has become a globalized language. McKay (2004) states that currently in many countries today, there is tremendous pressure to learn English. This has resulted in some previously conservative countries such as China and Japan encouraging their citizens to develop English speaking and writing skills.

In the document, Vision 2016, *Long Term Vision for Botswana* (Republic of Botswana 1997), communication is prioritised as Botswana (the people of Botswana) are envisioned as an, 'educated and informed nation by the year 2016.' A pertinent paragraph of the document says:

Botswana will have entered the information age on an equal footing with other nations. The country will have sought and acquired the best available information technology, and have become a regional leader in the production and dissemination of information (Republic of Botswana 1997:5).

Furthermore, Recommendation 31 of the *Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE)* (Republic of Botswana 1994) emphasises proficiency in the use of English, as a tool for effective communication, study and work, as well as an important goal of Junior Secondary Certificate curriculum. This being the case, there is tremendous pressure on the students of junior secondary schools to have competency in the English language and develop the basic communication skills in the language.

Finally, the importance of English within the entire school curriculum cannot be over-emphasised. As well as being an official language in Botswana and in most of the countries in the Southern African region, it is also a major language of communication and commerce, not only internally, but regionally and in the wider global context. It has significant importance in the field of education and functions as a medium

of instruction across the curriculum. It is also an access language in technology and information services. In addition, it facilitates the acquisition, creation and documentation of knowledge. It is also the language through which a great deal of learning takes place and thus, has a significant and prominent place in the Botswana education system (Republic of Botswana 2000).

Problem Statement

Literature and experience of these authors indicate that both teachers and students face problems in the teaching and learning of the English language at the junior secondary level, and that the difficulties have been persistent over the years. In fact, there is continued noticeable poor performance of students in English as highlighted by various government documents. The annual report of the Junior Certificate (JC) English Examination in 2001, 2005 recommended among other measures, that:

- i) Teachers expose learners to varied reading materials and topics in order to enhance their creativity, develop vocabulary and generally enhance language acquisition and learning.
- ii) Teachers equip the learners with all the sub-skills of writing, giving lots of practice (Ministry of Education 2001; Botswana Examinations Council (BEC) 2005).

Again, the 2004 Junior Certificate (JC) examiner's report notes in some sections that a considerable number of students did not understand some questions in the literature paper before rushing to answer them and thereby, lost points. Furthermore, the 2008 JC examination report observes that the general performance of students in composition and letter writing has slightly gone down and that some candidates were ill prepared for the Literature Paper 3 which required students to:

- Explain
- Describe
- Show feelings
- Express opinions
- Demonstrate understanding of literary aspects (BEC 2008: Papers 2 and 3).

To emphasize the foundations of the observed deficiencies, a survey project report of the learning achievement of Standard Four Pupils produced by the Ministry of Education (2001) indicates that, even at the primary school level,

only 21.9% of the pupils tested reached the competency level in literacy in English domains. If this situation is allowed to continue, it may be difficult to achieve literacy in the language and the educational and social goals already alluded to in this paper.

Objectives of the Paper

The discussion in this paper is in line with the following objectives:

1. Justifies the importance of the English language in the Botswana junior secondary school curriculum;
2. Evaluates the teaching and learning of the English language and how it impacts the achievement of the basic education programme, as well as the goal of, 'an educated and informed nation';
3. Identifies the problems in the teaching and learning of the language that may hinder the achievement of the educational and social goals; and
4. Gives suggestions for improvement in the teaching of English at the junior secondary school level.

RATIONALE

Competency in English is important in the educational system and in the socio-economic sphere in Botswana. It is also true that there are great educational advantages in learning literacy and other skills in English. Prophet (1990:115) argues that "competence in English is important for ensuring access to high status jobs and upward social mobility." Besides, the use of English nationally in education, business and socially has not diminished. In fact, for many African countries, including Botswana, the inability to develop the local languages as a result of lack of resources, and other logistical problems has made the learning of English language much more imperative.

Again, the teachers of English in Botswana face great challenges in their efforts for effectiveness in literacy instruction, most importantly, in the teaching and learning of the English language. Also, knowledge about the various problems of teaching English is very crucial in the pre-service and in-service education of teachers of English. If the teaching objectives as enunciated in the *Three-Year-English Syllabus*

(Republic of Botswana 2008) are to be correctly implemented and instruction improved, then it becomes important to identify the challenges in the teaching and learning process for improved pedagogy.

This paper is equally important to curriculum developers and teacher educators in English language as it can help to review areas of the curriculum that may not support the effective teaching of the target language.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE USAGE IN BOTSWANA

English has a significant importance in the field of education which permeates the entire school curriculum and is closely linked to the achievement of all the fifteen aims of the Basic Education programme in Botswana. Furthermore, except for Setswana, the national language of Botswana, English is used across the curriculum to teach concepts in other subjects in the junior and senior secondary schools curriculum, and also used for instruction at the tertiary levels. In fact, English is a requirement for the award of school leaving certificates at both the junior and senior secondary levels.

Currently, English has become an international language because of the economic, social and technological advantages of the countries of the USA and UK, among others. McKay (2004) observes that the traditional and conservative countries of Japan, China, Taiwan and the Middle East are encouraging their employees to develop English language skills by providing training on the job. To this end, the global world of today including Botswana needs to develop proficient, and skillful users of English in order to achieve the goals of 'a literate and informed nation' of Vision 2016), as well as compete nationally and internationally in socio-economic terms. As a result, the development of English language skills in Botswana education system and particularly in junior secondary schools cannot be ignored.

English as a Second Language (ESL) in Botswana

Mooko (1996) makes a distinction between English as a first language (L1) or mother-tongue and English as a second language (L2). He adopts Ellis (1994) definition that in the case

of second language acquisition, the language plays an institutional and social role in the community. Mooko then surmises that since the definition has social and economic implications, it can be applied to the Botswana context. The argument being that English is institutionalized as it is the official language and also used as a medium of instruction in Botswana schools. It also has social implications as it is the language of the elite or the educated which many people aspire for. Again, English is a second language to the average Botswana citizen irrespective of the other languages that the people may speak. This explains Honey's (2000: 27) point of view that for some African pupils, English is the second language or probably the third or fifth language depending on the position of the L1.

In the current setting in Botswana, Setswana is the first language or mother tongue (L1) for the majority, but not for all the learners. Nyati-Ramahobo (1999), notes that Botswana is a multilingual society consisting of over twenty different minority languages. As a result of the described language situation, the discussion in this paper will be done in the context of L2 language teaching and learning context.

Language in Education Policy in Botswana

With respect to the teaching of languages in the primary schools, Setswana is taught as a compulsory subject for citizens of Botswana throughout the public primary school system. The change from Setswana to English as the medium of instruction takes place in Standard Four (Republic of Botswana 1993). This reflects the Botswana Government's language policy which states that all learners be taught using Setswana as the medium of instruction at the initial stages from Standards One to Three. It also ensures that students take English as a school subject in these classes in order to prepare them to learn in English which becomes the medium of instruction from Standard Four onwards. However, an amendment was made to the above in the adopted recommendation of 1994 (Republic of Botswana 1994) to indicate that English should be made the medium of instruction from Standard Two as soon as practicable (Republic of Botswana 1994:59), and that adherence to the introduction of English as the medium of instruction in Standard Four be strictly followed. However,

adherence to English becoming the medium of instruction from Standard Two varies from school to school and from rural to urban areas, and also dependent on teacher competency (Adeyemi 2008).

The government policy of admitting students from age 6 and above into the primary school system ensures that by the time pupils encounter English, they will have acquired the native speaker competency that will aid their learning of the L2. Consequently, the belief is that from then on, the teacher and the community would provide an enabling environment both inside and outside the classroom for the students to learn the L2 (English) (Pongweni 1999).

ENGLISH AND THE AIMS OF THE BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME

In Botswana, the formal basic education programme includes the first ten years of education - Standards 1 through 7 of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary school. An important objective of basic education is to promote the all-round development of the individual and prepare citizens for life in the 21st Century. As a result, basic education is viewed as a fundamental human right (Republic of Botswana 2002). In addition, basic education seeks to provide quality learning experiences for individuals, from the academically talented to those who have physical or learning handicaps. In this way, the principles of national development, sustained development, rapid economic growth, economic independence, social justice, and a desire for continued learning are promoted.

In order to achieve the above objectives, the current Junior Secondary English Syllabus (Republic of Botswana 2008: ii) details the objectives and expected outcomes of the teaching and learning of English language among others as follows:

- Communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in speech and writing both in and outside of school;
- Understand and respond to what they hear, read and experience in a range of situations, settings and media;
- Enjoy reading a range of literature, not only fiction but also general interest works and materials;
- Convey information in logical order and present facts and ideas based on the subjects of the curriculum; and

- Recognize and use different registers, implicit meaning and non-verbal communication appropriate to the situation (Republic of Botswana 2008: iii).

It can be deduced from the above that success in the learning of English language as a result of its importance in the education system of Botswana, must include the ability to use the language for personal, interpersonal, social and world of work situations, and in all communication situations effectively. In totality, it is believed that all these educational measures, would promote the all round development of the individual, prepare them for life in the global community and enable them achieve the goal of an educated and informed nation of Vision 2016. The ability of the individual to acquire literacy, understand communication in the language and the development of the necessary skills in the language to enable them function effectively as members of the national and international community would be the end product.

ENGLISH IN THE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The current Junior Certificate English Syllabus (Republic of Botswana 2008) details the objectives and expected outcomes of the teaching and learning of English at the junior secondary school level. It also outlines skills in speaking, reading, listening and writing to be studied. Furthermore, the syllabus states in part, 'The work involved enables pupils to gain further practice in the key areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing, consolidating these skills in interesting and communicative ways that enrich pupils' day to day language' (Republic of Botswana 2008: ii). The syllabus also emphasizes the integrated teaching of the language skills. Furthermore, other components of language which are suggested to be taught are outlined under a general section which includes grammar, literature, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Examination Skills. It also suggests that library skills and study skills be infused into the teaching of the language as are other skills in the general section outlined above. It is reasoned that the elements in the general section play a complementary role to the teaching and learning of the language. All to these suggested improvements in the teaching of languages in general and English in particular, is believed, would enhance the effective teaching

and learning of the target language. It can also be deduced from the revisions in the syllabus that measures are being put in place to encourage an interactive and communicative language course which would offer learners the opportunity to use language as a vehicle for the development of functional, interpersonal and social skills.

Communicative English Language Teaching

The Botswana junior secondary English language syllabus (2008) emphasizes the communicative approach to the teaching of language. This approach grew out of the work of linguists such as Hymes (1971) and Widdowson (1978) who view language as a system for communication. This means that the goal of language teaching is learner ability to communicate in the target language. This implies that language is taught through communicative activities whereby students learn the language by using it in meaningful interactions and communicative activities that enable students develop the competencies required in the target language. This is emphasized in the recommended teaching approach which states:

At the end of the course, a learner who has gone through the Communicative Approach should have efficient linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence as well as be fluent in English language (Republic of Botswana 2008: iii).

The communicative teaching of language implies that communicative activities should be part of the language learning process and to achieve this, classroom practice be very interactive and that learners be given opportunities to negotiate for meaning in order to elicit and produce more accurate language (2008). Again, for students to become proficient in speech and writing; reflect critical thinking; use facts and opinions appropriately in performing assigned tasks; both in and outside the school setting, demands for more commitment and skill on the part of teachers and intensive language learning by students. Not only would students be required to learn the language at school in this model but also outside the school settings. One of the objectives of this paper, therefore, is to call attention to those elements in the educational programme that may hinder the attainment of the educational and social goals outlined.

The Difficulties of L2 Language Teaching and Learning

The differences between the processes of mother tongue (L1) acquisition and the second language (L2) learning have been well documented. The mother and immediate family initially play a critical role in the baby's acquisition of (L1), and then the peer group plays the next crucial role (Pongweni 1999). Lyons (1981: 233) asserts that, 'The native speaker's knowledge of their language is a set of rules which they have constructed by virtue of an innate capacity for language-acquisition to the language data that they have heard around them in childhood. This implies that all babies do have an innate ability to learn language in addition to external stimuli they receive from family and peer groups. Lyons goes on to explain that two aspects of language central to the speaker's use of their knowledge of the mother tongue are its creativity and productivity. Creativity he says manifests itself within the limits set by the productivity of the language system. This means that the speaker's knowledge of the language system enables them to exploit the productivity of that system to create an infinite set of novel utterances that conform to the 'well-formedness' or grammatical rules of the system.

By contrast to the (L2) user's language behaviour, the L1 speaker creatively uses the productivity of the language system largely unconsciously (Lyons 1981: 231) or effortlessly. The L2 speaker on the other hand is at a disadvantage because they are learning the language (English) as a second language and may not have the ability to exploit the creativity of the target language effectively and will have to make a conscious and laborious effort to learn the target language.

In the African context in general, and in Botswana in particular, there is the indication that the appropriate enabling environment for learning English (L2) as indicated by Pongweni (1999) does not exist. This is because the teacher cannot rely on the community to reinforce the English language learning adequately. Also, the average parent's unfamiliarity with English and probably the child's own lack of confidence and other socio-economic factors may become a hindrance to the effective learning of English (the only exposure some students have to English is restricted to the one or two periods a day; about

35-70 minutes of instruction allotted to the subject at school). In addition, the competency limitations of the teacher, who is equally a L2 learner of the language may become a hindrance to the effective learning of English.

It is against some of these difficulties for learners of ESL that the tertiary education system devised the communicative methodology in English language during the late 1970s. Mothudi (2003) among others reasons that tertiary level institutions in particular are mandated to offer Communicative and Study Skills at the first year level of university that are responsive to the needs of various stakeholders for academic and social needs. Mothudi (2003) further comments that in Botswana, there is the desirability of the Communication and Study Skills curricula to keep teachers abreast of current teaching trends, and that the contents of these curricula should emphasize the teaching of English language skills culminating in writing of term papers, essays, presentations, proposals and so on. It is a fundamental argument in this paper that the teaching of the language skills should be properly done at the junior secondary school level to minimize the problems that students later encounter at the tertiary education level.

AREAS OF CONCERN IN THE JUNIOR SECONDARY ENGLISH CURRICULUM

The junior secondary English language curriculum (2008) serves as a common guide to teaching the language across the country, based on Botswana's national interest and equal opportunity so that the students are exposed to the same contents and training for job opportunities. Also, the curriculum helps to make planning easier for teachers as the contents, methods, objectives, assessment, sequence of teaching, intensive and extensive aspects of language teaching are specified. However, a close examination of the document, setting and mode of teaching reflect the following weak points that may hinder effective English language instruction based on personal experience of these authors at this level and from informal discussion with the language teachers:

Exposure: This is important to any language development efforts. A large number of students are disadvantaged in the learning process because of socio-economic factors or home back-

ground. Students from these backgrounds have no access to television, computers and other technological gadgets to aid their learning. Even at school level, many are ill motivated and learn the language only to pass their examinations. This most often results in both teachers and students resorting to code-switching which hampers effective communication in the target language.

Assessment Procedure: There is a gap between the assessment suggestions and the terminal examination of students. The syllabus states that the principal aim of assessment should be for each student to reach the highest level of performance of which they are capable in every aspect of the language used, yet spoken English is not examined both internally in school based assessment as well as the terminal exams for the award of the Junior Certificate (JC). If communication in the language is desired, the existing situation does not help the communicative cause. A provision in the revised 2008 syllabus recognizes the use of alternative forms of assessment but leaves this largely to the discretion of the teachers. There are no specific pronouncements on this or how much they are going to contribute to the overall assessment process. This amounts to leaving too much to chance and teachers rather concentrate on those elements that count for the examinations.

Furthermore, the syllabus states that the final Junior Certificate examination in English comprises the following separate papers:

Paper 1 – Objective paper (broadly based on a range of syllabus objectives).

Paper 2 – Continuous writing (featuring composition and letter).

Paper 3 – Open-ended questions seeking short answer and paragraph responses (focusing mainly on Literature, to include listening, extensive reading and application of language) (Republic of Botswana 1996: iii).

A close examination of the above shows that there is the absence of any form of assessment of speaking skill noted, earlier. Furthermore, the communicative approach to language teaching supports the process paradigm incorporating pre reading and writing activities. For example, the processes required in writing are not considered in the final writing examination process. Only the end product of writing is assessed. The process activities such as drafting, revision and final writing activities are ignored. It is not a sur-

prise that Adeyemi (2008) notes in her study that the main form of writing practiced at this level was basically product oriented and did not help the students' writing efforts, hence the poor performance noted in the examiner's report (2001, 2005, 2008). For learners of English as L2, process writing has been found to be beneficial.

Conflicting Understanding of Communicative Language Teaching: The Botswana Junior Secondary English syllabus states that the emphasis is on a communicative approach where the students learn the language by using it in meaningful interactions, communicative activities and problem solving tasks towards a more spontaneous and natural discourse. Furthermore, it recommends that Literature be taught as a component of the English language as they seem to be complementary, and grammar should be preferably taught as an integrated component of all language skills rather than in isolation. Students should therefore learn such grammatical terminology as is useful to them and they be infused in the teaching to support the natural teaching and learning of language in a non-threatening environment. The belief is that students need to see grammar at work in their speech, reading, writing and listening activities. The traditional isolated or unconnected teaching of language skills should give way to integration and interactive language teaching and learning.

The above imply teaching the L2 in a natural environment as much as possible and creating authentic situations for the use of the language. In staff room discussions with teachers, however, varying views on this were expressed. Some teachers said the communicative approach discourages the explicit teaching of grammar and allows grammar mistakes to be overlooked. Others felt that the emphasis is too much on communication as opposed to written language. Yet, others felt that, the emphasis is too much on communication as opposed to the learning of other language skills/elements. Yet, others suggest that the natural discourse environment does not exist to support the use of the communicative approach in the L2 language learning setting in Botswana. While appreciating these views, there is clear evidence of differing understanding of the communicative language teaching paradigm. The dissenting opinions automatically suggest a problematic teaching situation which needs to be urgently addressed.

Lack of Resources: From the resources point of view, there are problems to be addressed. The development of reading proficiency element of the teaching of English makes it imperative for students' to access library facilities and resources. It is true that there is the provision of library physical infrastructure in all Botswana public junior secondary schools. However, many lack reading materials and operate non-borrowing facilities. This means that students are unable to engage in the type of intensive reading activities to support their language learning.

Other teaching resources such as English language and literature textbooks are sometimes in short supply and students have to share books. Even though this situation may be the exception, rather than the norm, if not properly addressed, may contribute to ineffective teaching of English and the objective of an educated and informed citizenry would become unachievable. Perhaps, much more important is the issue of large class size. This is a common problem, not only in Botswana but in many other developing countries and has the potential to hinder effective language education (Adeyemi 2008; Mooko 1996; Molosiwa 1990). This observation is based on the premise that there are enough language teachers to support teaching if class sizes were to be reduced.

Implications for Teaching

The importance of the English language in the national and global spheres and in the educational and social life in Botswana has been established. As a result, it is suggested that in order to achieve the aims of basic education and the goal of an enlightened nation, the teaching of the English language in junior secondary schools in the country takes the following into consideration:

Exposure Issues: Most students have poor reading habits and this could affect their proficiency in the language. Also, home and school limitations in terms of parent's socio-economic backgrounds may limit students' exposure to the target language. The unavailability of adequate reading materials and lack of lending facilities in the schools libraries do not help in this regard. The school libraries should be well equipped to provide materials for leisure reading to fill the exposure gap by providing the resources that will enable students to have enough access to

novels, magazines, newspapers, television, videos, computers and so on that would heighten students' level of exposure.

Assessment Issues: The syllabus suggests that assessment be undertaken by a process of formative assessment. The tools and implementation are mainly left to the discretion of teachers. This may expose the process to abuse or non-implementation. If there is no compelling reason or monitoring process, there is a tendency to relax. Speaking skills should be assessed as part of the language learning process. Furthermore, there is a need to review language testing procedures to incorporate alternative assessment procedures such as portfolios and so on to cater for all differing abilities as enunciated in the curriculum.

Provision of Resources: Some of the instructional materials used for English composition at the junior secondary level are usually produced by foreign authors. For instance, some of the key concepts are either 'imported' or not at the level of understanding of the students. Very few books authored by Africans are available and so making an explanation in the local context difficult. McKay (2003) notes that when teaching English as a foreign language, educators should recognize the value of including topics that deal with local culture. Jones and Wyse (2001) have also stressed the importance of a well-equipped library in the enhancement of achievement in all subjects. This has implications for the upgrading and adequate stocking of libraries.

Class Size: Adeyemi (1998) and Mooko (1996) have highlighted the negative effect of large class size on the achievement of the goals of education. A small class size tends to enhance higher teacher-student interaction and thereby increasing the chances of students to succeed and vice versa for a large class size. Mosteller (1995) and Stumpf (1995) have also concluded from their various studies that reduced class sizes improved students' achievements. Consequently, a large class size will do little to enhance language education because of the interactive activities involved and the need for teachers to give students the attention and help they need.

Specialized/Remedial Lessons: The students' readiness for English language skills is mostly discountenanced as observed by Ellis (1994). It may not be out of place to demand for writing/reading clinics which are often non-existent in the schools. It is necessary for teachers to iden-

tify and offer remedial lessons to those students who have serious difficulties in learning the language. Probably, it is time to offer specialized services in English language teaching at the junior secondary school level. Honey (2000) notes that for teachers who are good at say the teaching of writing, reading, or speaking should be allowed to offer specific instructions in them, rather than teachers being used as jack of all trades and master of none. This is as opposed to the current situation where the same teacher teaches all the skills even if they have ability in some areas more than others.

Code-switching Issues: The controversial issue of code-switching should be reviewed. Code-switching, in this instance appears to be working against the development of effective communication skills required by the world of work and the global setting. This means that the way code switching is being used in most Botswana classrooms is not helping the development of effective learning and use of the English language. In a situation such as described above, code switching will do more harm than good in facilitating students' development of the English language skills.

Workshops/Seminars: There is a need for workshops and seminars for practicing teachers from time to time on current approaches and methodologies for language teaching and assessment by the Ministry of Education and Skills Development. This would provide a forum for exchange of ideas on communicative language teaching, modifications and strategies that combine proficiency with competency in language teaching and learning. This is an important area that needs to be looked into as a result of the discussion in this paper. Further collaboration with the universities is also important so that the different stakeholders in education can exchange/share ideas and results of studies.

Pre-service and In-service Education of Teachers: The pre-service and in-service education of teachers needs to expose teachers in training, to theoretical knowledge as well as other workable approaches peculiar to the Botswana/local settings. The training should also enable teachers to be innovative, proactive and resourceful enough to use a balanced approach in their methods and not stick to dogma. It is important for teachers of language to find very workable strategies to aid their teaching and facilitate learning for their students.

CONCLUSION

In order to achieve the aims of basic education and ensure 'an educated and informed nation' with citizens who are able to function effectively in their society and the global world, the teaching and learning of English in Botswana schools should be effective. Effective teaching would in turn help the individual to acquire and use knowledge for better understanding, improved performance and skilled use of English for personal, political and socio-economic purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In consideration of the difficulties of L2 language teaching and learning, it is suggested that an integrated approach together with interactive learning strategies be used for effective teaching to ensure that junior secondary graduates acquire the appropriate language skills and knowledge necessary for them to function effectively in the society. It is also important that other workable strategies and methods be employed to make learning and teaching of the English language more meaningful to the everyday lives of the students in and outside the school settings.

REFERENCES

- Adeyemi DA 2008. *Approaches to Teaching English Composition Writing at Junior Secondary Schools in Botswana*. Doctoral Thesis, Unpublished. University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Adeyemi MB 1998. The problems of junior secondary teachers of Social Studies in Botswana. *The Social Studies*, 89: 232-235.
- Besson-Molosiwa AA 1990. *The Use of Process Approach in the Teaching of Setswana Compositions in Selected Secondary Schools in Botswana*. Masters Dissertation, Unpublished. University of Wisconsin, Madison.
- Botswana Examinations Council 2008. *Junior Certificate Examination: Principal Examiner's Report – Paper 3*. Gaborone: Government Printers.
- Botswana Examinations Council 2008. *Junior Certificate Examination: Principal Examiner's Report – Paper 2*. Gaborone: Government Printers.
- Botswana Examinations Council 2005. *JC Examiners' Report: English Paper 2*, Gaborone: Government Printers.
- Botswana Examinations Council 2001. *JC Examiners' Report: English Paper 2*, Gaborone: Government Printers.
- Ellis R 1994. *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hymes DH 1971. *On Communicative Competence*. Philadelphia, U.S.A.: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Honey J 2000. The language of Social Studies teaching in Africa. In: Michael B Adeyemi (Ed.): *Social Studies in African Education*. Gaborone, Botswana: Pyramid Publishing, pp. 25-33.
- Jones R, Wyse D 2001. *Teaching English, Language and Literacy*. London: Routledge.
- Lyons J 1981. *Language and Linguistics: An Introduction*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Mckay SL 2004. Western culture and the teaching of English as an international language. *English Teaching Forum*, 42: 10-15.
- Mckay SL 2003. Teaching English as an international language: The Chilean context. *ELT Journal*, 57(2): 139-148.
- Ministry of Education 2001. *Examiners' Report*. Gaborone: Department of Curriculum and Evaluation
- Mooko T 1996. *An Investigation into the Impact of Guided Peer Feedback and Guided Self-assessment on the Quality of Compositions Written by Secondary School Students in Botswana*. Doctoral Dissertation, Unpublished. University of Essex.
- Mosteller F 1995. Tennessee study of class size in early schools grades. *Future of Children*, 5: 113-127.
- Mothudi TH 2003. Infusing communicative strategies in the teaching of communication skills: Prospects and constraints. *Botswana Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1: 81-97.
- Pongweni A 1999. The English language learning experiences of post-O-level and mature age applicants to the University of Botswana. *Marang: Language, Literature and Society: Proceedings of the Conference in Honour of Bessie Head*, Gaborone: University of Botswana, pp. 169-184.
- Prophet RB 1990. Experience, language, knowledge and curriculum. In: CW Snyder, PT Ramatsui (Eds.): *Curriculum in the Classroom*. Gaborone: Macmillan, pp. 109-119.
- Republic of Botswana 2008. *The Three-Year Junior Secondary Syllabus (English)*. Gaborone: Department of Curriculum and Evaluation.
- Republic of Botswana 1997. *Long Term Vision for Botswana, Vision 2016: Towards Prosperity for All*. Gaborone: Government Printers.
- Republic of Botswana 1996. *The Three-Year Junior Secondary Syllabus (English)*. Gaborone: Department of Curriculum and Evaluation.
- Republic of Botswana 2002. *Curriculum Blueprint: Ten Year Basic Education Programme*. Gaborone: Government Printers.
- Republic of Botswana 2001. *Report on the Monitoring of Learning Achievement*. Gaborone, Botswana: Examinations and Testing Division.
- Republic of Botswana 1997. *Long Term Vision for Botswana, Vision 201: Towards Prosperity for All*. Gaborone: Government Printers.
- Republic of Botswana 1996. *The Three-Year Junior Secondary Syllabus (English)*. Gaborone: Department of Curriculum and Evaluation.
- Republic of Botswana 1994. *Revised National Policy on Education*. Gaborone: Government Printer.
- Republic of Botswana 1993. *Report of the National Commission on Education*. Gaborone: Government Printers.
- Republic of Botswana 1977. *National Policy on Education*, Government Paper No. 1. Gaborone: Government Printer.
- Stumpf T 1995. A Colorado school's unrocky road to trimesters. *Educational Leadership*, 52: 20-22.
- Widdowson HG 1978. *Teaching Language as Communication*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.