Chapter 15

Post–Paradigm Pedagogy: Empowering Educators to Meet the Multifaceted Challenges of Teaching English Language in Jamaica

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ABSTRACT

The Jamaican language environment is complex and unique. The two languages, Jamaican Creole and Jamaican Standard English, have been perpetually at odds with the root of this being the language politics. Compounding this situation is the varied language backgrounds of learners. A qualitative research was done to explore the perspectives and experiences of a teacher and fourteen students in order to get a deeper understanding of how they are affected by the controversy surrounding the ‘methods’ approach and how post method pedagogy would fit into their context. Interviews done with the teacher and students validated the importance of a post-method paradigm by confirming the value and possibilities of employing this approach in Jamaican classrooms. It was found that once instruction informed by action research and that responds to the language situation is employed in English language teaching, there will be much improvement in the teaching and learning of English in Jamaican classrooms. Therefore, the solution-based approach that is much needed is a post-method pedagogy.

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INTRODUCTION

As reflected in scholarly writings, for decades, the community of researchers, theorists and policy makers, have embarked on endless journeys with the sole obsession of unearthing the ‘ultimate method’ to create the ideal language classroom across all learning contexts (Scholl, 2017). This ‘ultimate method frenzy’ has only been met by road blocks. Subsequently, in recent times many have abandoned such familiar paths as there has been a general dissatisfaction and outcry in the educational sphere as these rigidly prescribed bodies of conventional instructional procedures (as communicative language approach), “characterized by serious intellectual confusion …and choked by jargons” (Swan 1985, as cited by Didenko & Pichugova, 2016. p.1), lack context sensitivity and as such have failed to address the multiplicity of needs across endless language contexts (Chen, 2014; Scholl, 2017). Such an entanglement in the method web has resulted in an “unending search for unavailable solutions” which drives the recycling of old ideas (Kumaradivelu,1994. p.28), embedded in the misguided assumption that all learning contexts are somehow homogenous. This has resulted in the local educators simply being served prepacked, archaic and irrelevant methodologies. This marginalizes local educators and translates in all its dimensions to a mockery and insult of teachers as experts within their own learning contexts. Furthermore, Clarke (1994) contends that the method-based approach ignores the political, contextual and social restrictions teachers face.

The aim of this research, therefore, is to explore the perspectives and experiences of one teacher as well as students in order to develop a deeper understanding of the challenges related to English language pedagogy in the Jamaican context and to make the connection between these challenges and the teaching approaches employed. In examining these factors, three main questions will be addressed:

1. What implications does Jamaica’s language situation have for the teaching and learning of English?
2. How can teachers capitalize on Jamaica’s language realities in catering to students’ language learning?
3. How can the utilization of the post-method pedagogy aid teachers in meeting the context related challenges in their learning environment in the Jamaican context?

BACKGROUND

Jamaica’s language politics and its language situation which are both deeply rooted in its colonial past, have contributed to its uniqueness and the call for a unique
Multilingualism, Identities and Language Hegemony: A Case Study of Five Ethnic Minority Students in China
Jing Li and Danièle Moore (2020). Language Learning and Literacy: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice (pp. 374-390).
www.igi-global.com/chapter/multilingualism-identities-and-language-hegemony/233104?camid=4v1a

Human vs. AI: An Assessment of the Translation Quality Between Translators and Machine Translation
www.igi-global.com/article/human-vs-ai/222826?camid=4v1a