

Curriculum Design in Contemporary Teacher Education: What Makes Job Analysis a Vital Preliminary Ingredient?

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Abstract: *Although subject matter knowledge and skills for teaching are widely acknowledged as a central component of what teachers need to master, the design of teacher education curriculum in colleges of education and universities seems to ignore the fact that prospective teachers need to master the relevant subject matter knowledge and skills in order for effective teaching to take place. This paper is based on a study which examined the products and curriculum of the English Language Teacher Education curriculum of a Zambian university whose curriculum was designed without consideration of the relevant knowledge and skills that are necessary for teaching in secondary school. The study endeavoured to find out what happens to the products of a professional curriculum such as that of teacher education when it is developed without conducting a job analysis to indentify the relevant knowledge and skills for inclusion in the curriculum. Using data from interviews of ten lecturers, questionnaires and tests that were administered to final year student teachers enrolled on a four year English Language Bachelor of Arts with Education programme, this paper explains why conducting a job analysis at the beginning of the curriculum design process is important for teacher education curriculum design. The main findings from this mixed method study indicated that student teachers were not being fully prepared for their future job of teaching English language because they had not acquired relevant knowledge and skills since the teacher education curriculum that they followed did not exposed them to the skills and knowledge found in the secondary school syllabus that they had to teach upon graduation.*

Keywords: *Teacher Education, Curriculum Design, Job analysis*

1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers are one of the most critical assets of any formal education system. They play a very important role in the facilitation of the learner's acquisition of desirable knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. Teacher quality is therefore crucial and has been globally accepted to be significantly important in order for effective learning to take place in schools. However, it should be acknowledged here that teacher quality is greatly determined by the teacher education regiment experience that a prospective teacher goes through. There is ample empirical research evidence to suggest that if anything is to be regarded as a specific preparation for teaching, priority should be given to a thorough grounding of the student teacher in the knowledge and skills to teach (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Lampert, 2001, Ball and Forzani, 2009). Thus, central to any discussion of teacher preparation is a judgement about what it is that teachers must be prepared for in order for them to be able to teach effectively. After all, if teaching entails helping others learn, then understanding what is to be taught is a vital requirement of teaching. The myriad tasks of teaching such as selecting worthwhile learning activities, giving helpful explanations, asking

productive questions, and evaluating pupils' learning, all depend on the teacher's understanding of what it is that pupils are to learn.

In Zambia, teacher preparation programmes are provided through three or four year undergraduate programmes in universities or colleges of education. This preparation entails student teachers exposure to foundational education, teaching subjects content and pedagogical knowledge and supervised field practice which is referred to as school teaching practice. According to the Zambia Ministry of Education policy titled *Educating our Future of 1996*, teacher training in Zambia is geared towards producing teachers who will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of their teaching subjects; appropriate pedagogical expertise and an understanding of their role as teachers. In order for student teachers to take their place as leaders in the Zambian society (*Vision 2030 Zambia: national Development Plan*), their preparation must provide them with quality educational experiences. As outlined by the Education Minister, Honourable John Phiri (2014) teachers are expected to play a greater role in transforming education to ensure the next generation is adequately equipped to engage in national development. To meet these expectations the teacher training institution, university, in this study offers a 4 year teacher education degree programme to suitably qualified individuals. This programme prepares student teachers for teaching at the secondary school level. Prior to admission, prospective student teachers are allowed to choose one major and one minor teaching subject. In addition to each specialised path, all student teachers must take pedagogical courses. The intent of this paper is to discuss the significance of designing a teacher education curriculum which is relevant to the job description of the student teacher. Through a combination of curriculum theoretical viewpoints the competency versus the content based curriculum design approaches, top-down and bottom-up curriculum development models and the professional versus the general curriculum design approaches, this paper discusses and reveals what is likely to be the end product or the quality of graduate teachers who are educated on a programme that does not take into account the practical significance of these curriculum design theoretical approaches.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

Although subject matter knowledge and skills for teaching are widely acknowledged as a central component of what teachers need to master, the design of teacher education curriculum in colleges of education and universities seems to ignore the fact that prospective teachers need to master the subject matter knowledge and the skills that are specific to their subject area in order for effective teaching to take place (Frazier, 1999 and Clarke 1971). Ball and McDiarmid (2010) reported that recent research which focused on the ways in which teachers and teacher candidates understood the subjects that they taught, revealed that teachers often had gaps in knowledge and skills similar to those of their pupils. According to Korthagen, Loughran and Russell (2006) teacher education programmes are increasingly critiqued for their limited relationship to student teachers' needs and for their little impact on practice. Other critiques of teaching quality consistently point a finger at teacher education (Cohen, 2009). This may imply that to improve teacher quality, there is need to improve teacher education programmes. Cohen (2009) further noted that teacher educators recognize all kinds of peripheral factors which weaken their efforts to improve teacher education such as poor funding, large class sizes and the socializing effects of school cultures. However, they also accept that there are internal weaknesses within their programme. There have been general views that there is need for a radical reform and effective pedagogy of teacher education in which theory and practice are properly linked for effective impact on practice (Korthagen, Loughran and Russell, 2006).

Although there may be exceptions, Shulman (1987) also reported that the overwhelming majority of subject matter courses for teachers and teacher education courses in general, tend to have little bearing on the day-to-day realities of teaching and thus little effect on the improvement of teaching and learning. In addition, teacher education curriculum design in most colleges and universities of education in America and Europe have been routinely criticized as reported by Ball and Forzani (2009); Ball, and Mc Diarmid (2010); Grossman, Hammerness and McDonald (2009); Grossman and McDonald (2008) and Lampert, Beasley, Ghousseini, Kazemi and Franke (2010) for preparing teachers based on courses that are too distant from what is taught in classrooms. Furthermore, Pandey (2009) reported that a major problem facing teacher education programmes in India is the unrelatedness of the theoretical discourses at the colleges of education

and classroom realities of schools. This divorce between the classroom realities a teacher has to face upon graduation and the teacher education programmes he/she receives also finds an expression in the World Bank Report (1997). Additionally, Raina (1999) reported that teacher education programmes in India have remained procrustean, offering the same menu to all without slightest regard for the syllabi in primary and secondary schools. Similar concerns were reported by the Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER) which was conducted over a four year period in Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa and Trinidad and Tobago that initial teacher education curriculum knowledge and skills was linked quite loosely to the content in the school syllabus. MUSTER made a recommendation that teacher education curriculum should be matched more closely to the subject needs of learners in schools (Lewin and Stuart, 2003).

Similarly, concerns about the quality of teachers graduating from Zambian universities have been expressed in educational research in the recent past. Banja (2012 a), Banja (2012 b), Chabatama (2012), Manchishi and Masaiti (2011), Manchishi (2004) and Manchishi and Mwanza (2013), all lecturers at the University of Zambia have seriously questioned the quality of the products of the Teacher Education from Zambian universities in terms of the knowledge and skills that they possess for teaching. Although these researchers have questioned the quality of university teacher education graduates and also bearing in mind that there are so many factors to consider when referring to the quality of a teacher education programme and its products, no study has so far investigated some of the possible root causes such as the curriculum design of the programmes of the teacher education institutions in Zambia.

Zambian universities offer several teacher education programmes in the social sciences, environmental education, special education, adult education, science and mathematics. However, this study focused on the English language teacher education curriculum design in one university as a way of delimiting the study. To the best knowledge of the researcher, the English language teacher education curriculum in the university in question is not based on the job analysis of the teacher of English for Zambian schools and most research conducted on Teacher Education in Zambia and English language teacher education in particular do not focus on teacher education curriculum design. A critical question that one may ask at this point is that; how then should colleges and universities of education arrive at a teacher education curriculum that would prepare teachers for their future duties of teaching specific subjects? Theory of curriculum design for a professional curriculum such as the teacher education curriculum, recommends that the preliminary step in teacher education curriculum design should be job analysis/description, which some scholars such as Print (2007) refer to as situational analysis. The theoretical foundations of curriculum design for teacher education curriculum that are explained in the preceding sections give insight into this matter.

3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM DESIGN

A review of the theories concerning quality teacher education curriculum indicates that there is a way of arriving at the core body of knowledge and skills with which a teacher must be equipped with in order to provide them with the appropriate knowledge and skills of effective teaching for their particular subjects (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005; Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Kline, 1999; Fajet, Bello, Leftwich, Mesler, & Shaver, 2005; Murphy, Delli, & Edwards, 2004). How then is this knowledge and skills arrived at? Curriculum development theory elaborates on the approaches that should inform teacher education curriculum design.

Zeichner (2010, p.91) explains that “the old paradigm of university-based or college-based teacher education where academic knowledge is viewed as the authoritative source of knowledge about teaching is archaic on the content-based approach to teacher education”. Chishimba (2001, p.15) describes a content-based teacher education curriculum as “one that follows a common curriculum which is based on the traditionally accepted subject divisions which does not take into account the link that exist between theory and practice in teaching”. More often than not each course outline or syllabus is designed independently of the others risking a considerable amount of overlap and repetition. Thus the fundamental integration that is required in order to give direction and meaning to the diverse components does not exist. Teacher education courses in the content-based approach as Shulman (1987) further explains are developed without having in mind the school curriculum subject matter which the student teacher is being prepared for and hence

they tend to be academic in both the best and worst sense of the word, scholarly and irrelevant, either way remote from classroom teaching. Consequently content-based teacher education creates a gap between theory and practice in teacher education. This is the gap that Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005), Hammerness (2006), and Niemi and Jakku-Sihoven (2006) have all identified between theory and practice as the possible core problem for teacher education. The lack of connection between school-based practical experience and the academic content in teacher education programmes is believed to be the main reason why graduating teachers are not adequately prepared for teaching their subject areas in schools. Could this be the problem with the Zambian University English language teacher education curriculum? This study has tried to find answers to these concerns. On the other hand, Bowles (2012) describes the competency based teacher education (CBTE) approach to curriculum design in which there are specific competences to be acquired, with corresponding explicit criteria for assessing these competences. Chishimba (2001, p.16) further explains “that the competency-based teacher education approach to programme development ensures that the competences to be learned and demonstrated by student-teachers are specified in advance”. It also ensures that the criteria to be utilized in making this determination are indicated. What Bowles (2012) and Chishimba (2001) are explaining is achieved through a process of job analysis which is done prior to curriculum design. Job analysis or situational analysis, as some scholars puts it, helps to ensure that all components of the CBTE programme are as close to the realities of actual classroom teaching as possible. Eventually, whatever, student teachers will study following the CBTE will be similar, in respect of all situational factors to what they will be expected to do in their subsequent teaching. In this connection, Haberman and Stinnett (1973) as cited by Chishimba (2001) state that many educational administrators and curriculum scholars feel that the graduate of the content-based teacher education curriculum is a ‘short in the dark’, while the graduate of CBTE curriculum comes with a verified checklist of knowledge and skills which he or she has mastered. Thus the rationale for the competency-based teacher education curriculum design forces teacher educators to take a hard look at what their teaching is designed to accomplish and to review carefully the way they go about accomplishing it. This makes the teacher education curriculum ‘fit for the purpose’ which is a definition of quality teacher education curriculum as defined by Biggs (2001). ‘Fit for the purpose’, is what Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008, p.82) also meant when they stated that “there is a special domain of teacher knowledge and skills, for each subject, which is key to the profession of teaching”.

The different curriculum models also depict the principles and procedures of how curriculum planners view the curriculum as it relates to the specific purposes of education and particular approach to curriculum making as well. An analysis of the different curriculum models reveals two major approaches in the design of the curriculum: *top-down* and *bottom-up*. To-down models use a deductive approach of curriculum planning and development. The deductive approach of curriculum development starts with the general design or the global aspects of the curriculum before working down to the specifics. Curriculum developers of the top-down approach usually start curriculum development by deciding what the curriculum should be and then plan accordingly. The curriculum reform is initiated by curriculum developers, usually those in authority then bringing down to the implementers of the curriculum, for instance the teachers. The approach is often linear and prescriptive. Curriculum developers begin with a statement of aims or philosophy of what they want students to know and then design the content of the curriculum and the learners’ activities accordingly without finding out the needs of the targeted learner (beneficiary).

On the other hand, the *bottom-up* approach begins curriculum planning from the grass roots for example by consulting teachers, learners or analyse the job description for which the curriculum is being designed. It is thus, inductive in approach starting curriculum planning and development with specifics, which include needs and situation analysis of the learners and the external forces, which provide the strong foundation of what curriculum should be (Taba, 1962). The strong involvement of grass root sources such as the active involvement of the teachers and learners in curriculum development is essential in curriculum decision-making because it will enable curriculum developers identify the knowledge, skills and values that are relevant to the learners of the curriculum. Curriculum decision-making is built around the concerns of the direct

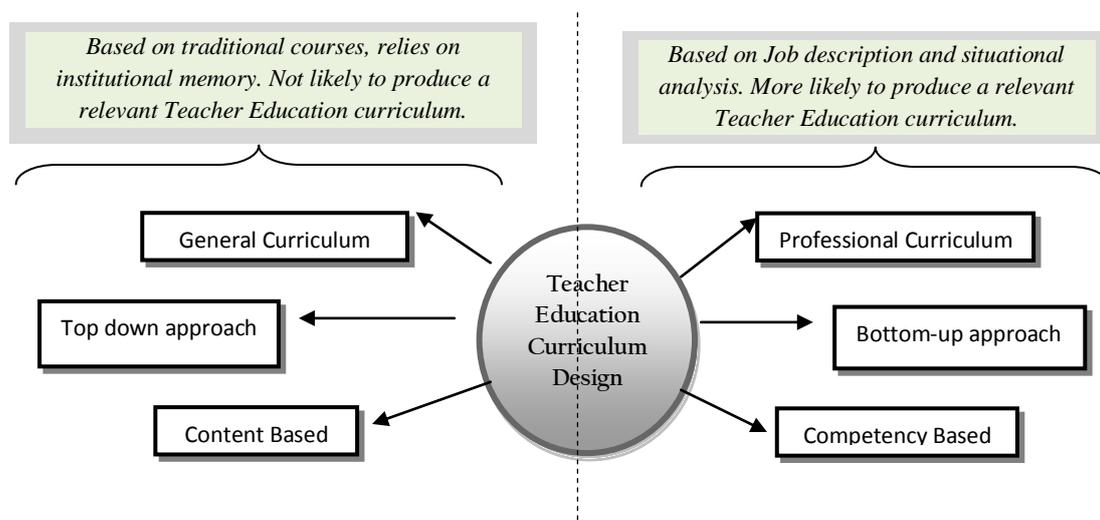
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beneficiaries of a particular curriculum. The needs assessment provides the baseline data before building up to the general design of the curriculum (Print, 2007).

Although universities and colleges of education enjoy a considerable level of academic freedom, curriculum design and review for higher education institutions such as universities, should be based on a clear distinction that exists between a general curriculum and a professional curriculum. A general curriculum is one in which the knowledge and skills that a learner acquires prepares such a one for general conceptualisation of the discipline where as a professional curriculum, as Bobbitt (1924) and Jones (1999) puts it is designed according to the job analysis or description of the profession. Thus, a student who is under the programme that is designed according to the principles of a general curriculum will study with a general view that he or she will venture in any relevant field of work upon graduation and the objectives, content, learning activities and evaluation procedures of such a programme will be development accordingly. However, the design of a professional curriculum requires that the curriculum developer first identifies the knowledge and skills that a particular profession demands from the graduate. Principles of curriculum design for a professional curriculum recommends that the preliminary step in curriculum design should be job analysis / description, which scholars such as Print (2007), Taba (1962), Biggs (1999) and other scholars behind the bottom-up curriculum design models, refer to as situational analysis. Jones (1999); Charters (2008); and Bobbitt (1924) all had recommended that when designing a professional curriculum job analysis should commence the process before the subsequent stages of formulation of objectives, selection and organisation of content, selection and organisation of learning activities and evaluation procedures are done. It is important for job analysis to precede all the other stages of curriculum design in a professional curriculum design process because it will enable the curriculum designer to capture the needed knowledge and skills for the student's future responsibilities in the labour market for which the programme is designed (Jones, 1999). All teacher education curricula are professional curricula in the sense that the future teacher's required competencies are clearly stipulated as reflected in the particular syllabi for each school subject that the teacher has to teach upon graduation.

In summary, the theoretical perspectives of curriculum design for a professional curriculum such as the teacher education curriculum and the theory underpinning effective teacher education are all pointing to the fact that curriculum design for all teacher education programmes should be anchored on the purpose of the programme which is usually well defined by job description so as to capture the relevant skills and knowledge for teaching. The theoretical perspectives of teacher education curriculum design as explained in the preceding sections are summarised in the figure that follows;

Summary of the theoretical perspectives of teacher education curriculum design



What is likely to happen if a teacher education curriculum is designed in such a way that job analysis is ignored as is the case with the English language teacher education curriculum that this study is exploring? The findings that are presented in this paper have tried to give some answers to this question.

4. AIM

The main objective of this study was to find out whether student teachers on the English language teacher education programme did acquire the relevant knowledge and skills for their future teaching job in Zambian secondary schools despite the programme they followed not being aligned with the secondary school curriculum.

5. METHODOLOGY

This study used a mixed method design which is simply a process of collecting, analysing and integrating both quantitative and qualitative data sets within a single research so as to understand a research problem deeply (Creswell, 2012; Creswell and Clark, 2011). Specifically, the study used the convergent parallel design which is one of the six mixed method research designs. The convergent parallel design allowed the researcher to simultaneously collect both quantitative and qualitative data, analysed it separately and then merged it so as to use the results to understand the problem (Creswell, 2012). In this way the researcher compared the results from both data sets and made interpretations as to whether the results supported each other or not. This direct comparison of the two data sets by the researcher provided a ‘convergence’ of the data sources (Creswell, 2012).

The researcher administered tests to 82 fourth year, 2013 cohort, English major students who were willing to take part in the writing of tests. This was done after they had willingly filled in consent form. The tests were based on the knowledge and skills that teachers teach in secondary schools. In order to achieve this, the tests were gotten from secondary school grades 10, 11 and 12 pupils’ books in sentence transformation, pronunciation, comprehension, punctuation, summary, reported speech and composition. All the tests were marked out of 10. These tests were given to students before they left for teaching practice. Secondly, 120 students filled in a questionnaire after they came back from teaching practice. In these questionnaires they were asked to rate themselves on how competent they were in teaching various skills and knowledge of the English language. Thirdly, they were asked to give views on the English teacher education curriculum that they had just gone through in the university. Finally the researcher conducted interviews with 10 lecturers, 5 from each of the content and methodology departments of the English language teacher education programme.

Quantitative data were then analysed using the SPSS statistical package while qualitative data were analysed according to themes.

6. RESULTS

6.1. Student Teachers’ Performance in the Secondary School English Language Tests

Table1. Results of the tests that student teachers wrote on various skills and knowledge of the English language that is taught in Zambian secondary schools

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Mean
Rewrites/Sentence transformation	0.00	4.00	4.00	0.89
Pronunciation	1.00	9.00	8.00	4.78
Comprehension	2.00	7.00	5.00	4.39
Punctuation	4.00	10.00	6.00	6.52
Summary	0.00	7.00	7.00	2.77
Reported Speech	0.00	6.00	6.00	1.77
Composition	3.00	7.50	4.50	5.44
TOTAL	17.60	36.50	18.90	26.49

Table 1 shows the minimum, maximum, range and mean of the scores, out of ten, that student teachers got in the tests that they wrote in various aspects of the secondary school English language. For instance in sentence transformation the lowest got zero while the highest got four. However the mean was 0.89, an indication that most of the students were batched around zero and one. Take summary as another case where the lowest got zero while the highest got seven however, the mean gives the true picture that most of the students got around three. The same thing applies to reported speech. The total which is out of seventy indicates that the lowest got 17.6 while the highest got slightly above half, 36.5, and a mean of far way below half, 26.49, an

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indication that the student teachers masterly of the skills and knowledge for teaching these skills is far from what is expected of a teacher of English in Zambian secondary schools.

This cohort was composed of pre-service and in-service students. The in-service students are those who already have a secondary teacher's diploma in English. A sample t-test was performed to compare the two groups, students test scores so as to find out if there was any significant difference in the means of the two groups. It is expected that in-service students should be better than the pre-service ones. Thus the test scores were subjected to an independent t-test. Table 2 shows in the p value column that they was no statistical significant difference at $p < 0.05$ between the pre-service students and the in-service students. These results therefore point to the fact that both groups are the same in terms of their skills and knowledge acquisition for teaching English language in secondary schools in Zambia.

Table2.

Variable	Type of Student	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Rewrites/Sentence Transformation	Pre-service	1.03	0.96	1.39	80.00	0.17
	In-service	0.77	0.72	1.37	70.01	0.18
Pronunciation	Pre-service	4.87	2.09	0.41	80.00	0.63
	In-service	4.69	1.75	0.41	74.48	0.69
Comprehension	Pre-service	4.46	1.29	0.49	80.00	0.62
	In-service	4.33	1.21	0.49	77.84	0.63
Punctuation	Pre-service	6.54	1.42	0.08	80.00	0.94
	In-service	6.51	1.76	0.08	79.04	0.94
Summary	Pre-service	2.92	1.91	0.69	80.00	0.49
	In-service	2.62	1.93	0.69	79.35	0.49
Reported Speech	Pre-service	1.46	1.67	-1.56	80.00	0.12
	In-service	2.05	1.72	-1.59	79.62	0.12
Composition	Pre-service	5.38	0.69	-0.58	80.00	0.56
	In-service	5.48	0.77	-0.59	79.99	0.56
TOTAL	Pre-service	26.67	4.32	0.36	80.00	0.72
	In-service	26.34	3.83	0.36	76.37	0.72

6.2. Student Teachers Self Rating on their Competence to Teach Some English Language Skills During Their Teaching Practice

Student teachers were asked to rate themselves on their competence to teach some English language skills during their teaching practice which they had just completed. Figure 1 gives a summary of their rating. Most of the students as shown in figure 1 were not competent enough to teach the secondary school English language skills since the majority of them indicated that they were either not well or were fairly well competent.

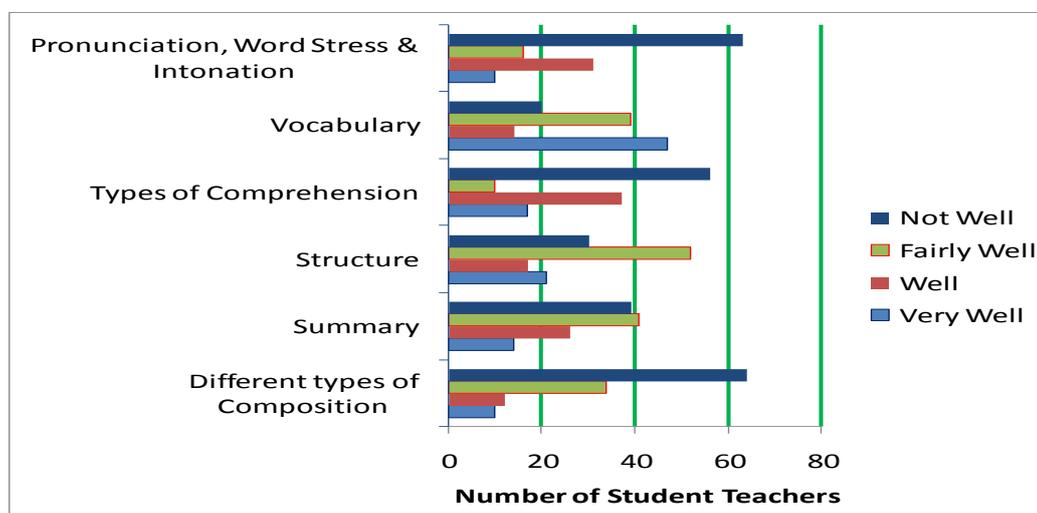


Figure1. Student teachers self rating on their competence to teach some English language skills during their teaching practice in secondary school

This actually matches with the test results in tables 1 and 2 which revealed poor understanding of the knowledge and skills that these student teachers were being prepared for.

6.3. Student Teachers Views on the Nature of the English Language Teacher Education Programme in Relation to the Secondary School Syllabus

Student teachers were asked in the questionnaire about their opinions on the nature of the English language teacher education curriculum in relation to their future job of teaching English language to learners in secondary school. Student-teachers held perceptions about how the curriculum should be structured and what it should entail. They felt their degree programme focused too heavily on general content issues and less on content or subject matter that is relevant for teaching in secondary schools.

One of my concerns is that the courses are more of the area of general specialization and less of the teaching aspect. We need more of the content that will prepare us for what we will be teaching in schools and not the abstract and high theories, principles and concepts of the English language.

We need to go more in depth in the teaching courses so we would have better outcome in the teaching – practice. Areas such as writing different types of compositions, parts of speech, tenses, comprehension and structure are what we need most for teaching in schools.

This view was shared by almost all the students who filled in the questionnaire. 88% of them had the same concern but expressed in different ways although what has been expressed above was gotten from two of the participants. About 73% of students had expressed the following concerns about the curriculum that they followed though they put it in different ways;

Methods, Micro Teaching, and peer teaching need more time so that we can have a go at teaching. Methods of teaching should focus on what is taught in secondary schools and not assume that we have the content already and all we need is the practice part of it.

The education courses should be focused more on just as much as the specialized areas. This will ensure student teachers are capable of teaching with less error in the lesson plans.

Teachers need to spend more time on the content for teaching because students are going on teaching practice not knowing/understanding certain subject matter and so they can't transfer knowledge to the students when deployed in schools unless they study the material for a very long time.

In addition to what should be included in the curriculum and how the curriculum should be delivered, student-teachers had specific concerns related to the amount of time allocated to certain course and how these were timetabled. Some felt more time could be given to teaching and learning on certain courses whereas others felt that too many courses of a particular nature were delivered.

Too many theoretical courses are offered in most semesters. They could place or divide the Secondary school related courses evenly throughout the programme. (66% said something related to this view)

Content lecturers teach without having in mind that we are being prepared to go and teach in secondary school, so even their examples are of no link to what is in secondary school but simply theoretical and scholarly. (69% held such views)

Both methodology and content lecturers were interviewed on the intent and design of the programme. Table 3 below summaries their views.

Table3. Content and Teaching Methods lecturers' views on aims of the programme and curriculum design procedures for the programme

Content Lectures n 5	Methodology Lecturers n 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Held the view that their intent was to produce a linguist and not a teacher of English. Students are free to enter any industry upon graduation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To produce a teacher of English language for secondary schools

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believed that it was the duty of the methods lecturers (Applied Linguistics) to make the content relevant for schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumed that students had learnt the relevant content from the content courses and thus in methods they are taught how to teach that content.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses are also arrived at based on what lecturers in the department have specialised in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have been accused of wanting to dilute the degree each time they intend to make the courses related to the secondary school syllabus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses are arrived at based on institutional memory and what is viewed as important for any student of English language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on what is taught in secondary school.

What is in table 3 reveals a situation where the lecturers on the programme have different and opposing intentions for the same programme. For instance, content lecturers hold the view that their teaching is geared towards producing a linguist out of the same students whom methodology lecturers intend to produce a teacher of English language. Secondly, methodology lecturers assume that students on the programme have the relevant content for teaching in secondary schools while content lecturers provide a general curriculum in English language with the view that what is relevant for teaching in schools is to be defined by the methodology lecturers. These opposing views and intentions existing about the programme are likely to be compromising the quality of students graduating from the institution in relation to their future responsibilities of teaching English language in schools.

7. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Educational quality is a contested field of inquiry viewed in relation to processes or outcomes and products (Harvey, 2006). Student-teachers in this study have shown in the tests, in their opinions about the programme that they followed and in their own rating of teaching competences that as prospective teachers they were not being adequately prepared to teach English language in secondary schools and their lecturers were not providing them with quality learning experiences of the relevant curriculum. This can be linked to the definition of quality, as defined by Biggs (2001) as 'fit for the purpose'. The core function of any teacher preparation programme offered by teacher education institutions is to help students acquire appropriate skills, knowledge, values and attitudes so that they can offer quality teaching learning experiences to their learners (Futrell, 2010). If the institutional curriculum does not allow for this to happen, student-teachers can experience learned helplessness, the end result of which could be that expected quality outcomes will not materialise. In the case of the findings in this study it is unlikely that student teachers graduating from the programme will effectively facilitate the process of learning English language among learners in Zambian secondary schools.

Additionally, since student teachers form their identities by modelling behaviours of those who teach them the university needs to examine the placement of staff in relation to those who are trained in pedagogy versus those who are not. The role of teacher educators is becoming increasingly demanding, based on external changes and inherent professional needs (Ben-Perez 2001). One of the roles of the teacher educator is to assist students in becoming effective practitioners within their field. However, this can only be achieved if the teacher educator understands his/her role and is guided by the course outlines or the whole curriculum with necessary competencies needed to effectively guide student-teachers. Findings in this study indicated that teacher educators had contradictory intent and focus of the programme. Teacher educators for methodology and content had opposing aims for the programme, while the former felt that student teachers needed to be prepared for their future duties of teaching the later did not have such an intention for the programme. Additionally, this concern requires teacher educators to reflect on their practice and address weaknesses where possible (Miller et al, 2011). The student-teachers in this study expressed concern about the balance between theory and practice in their teacher preparation programme. They felt that they were not getting enough practice in their preparation for classroom teaching. Practice in teacher preparation is critical as this is what allows the student teacher to interact with lecturers, fellow student teachers and content; engage in proactive decision-making then model observed behaviours (Hollins, 2011). One assumes

therefore that this process should translate into helping student teachers acquire the competencies for teaching a particular subject area. Creating a balance between students' expectations and institution expectations can be more problematic for some institutions. While university education would want to make the student study theories and abstract content it is also important that this is guided by job analysis of the particular future duties of the profession. The curriculum of any teacher preparation programme is one of the criteria used to judge the quality of the programme. Therefore it must be carefully designed to incorporate all the elements that will contribute to positive outcomes. Students' performances in tests, their self rating of teaching experiences, their opinions about the curriculum that they followed and lecturers' interviews suggest that the curriculum needs to be reviewed to allow for the student teacher's success in teaching and to enable them to make a credible contribution to society's future development. This view is supported by some researchers who hold an outcomes-based approach to education, as explained earlier and those who judge quality in relation to outcomes (Harvey 2006). This approach is also based on the premise that if the curriculum is designed to achieve clearly defined outcomes then it would increase the likelihood of all students being successful. Teacher education curriculum is a professional curriculum and thus, its content should be based on the demands of the profession. By employing a bottom-up approach to curriculum development, designers of the teacher education curriculum in Zambia and indeed in any other institution in the world are likely to provide the trainee teacher with the relevant and appropriate skills, values, attitudes and knowledge for their future responsibilities of teaching. In our view, a teacher preparation curriculum should have clearly defined outcomes which may then be used to judge its quality. The curriculum in practice therefore becomes a major component of student-teachers' experience.

8. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have used the Content – Based and Competency–Based Teacher education curriculum approaches, the top-down and bottom up curriculum design models and the general and professional curriculum design approaches to examine and understand challenges of the English language teacher education curriculum at a Zambian university. All the data that was analysed suggested that student-teachers were not being adequately prepared for their future duties of teaching English language based on the experiences of their teacher preparation programme. It therefore means, that teacher educators and administrators within this institution should seek, possible solutions to the concerns expressed by the finding of this study. Teacher educators should reconsider how they influence the professional learning of student teachers in preparation for their future roles by conducting job analysis as a preliminary ingredient of teacher education curriculum design. This should lead them to reflect on the adequacy of their skills and competencies in preparing student teachers and take actions where necessary. Based on the interviews of lecturers for both methodology and content, the institution should provide continuous professional development which is in line with the school curriculum for those charged with the responsibility of preparing teachers. This will ensure that teacher educators are equipped with the necessary skills and competencies to influence positive teacher education. If not addressed, these concerns are likely to have negative implications for these student teachers' knowledge and skills for teaching and the dispositions they form towards their chosen profession. An understanding of these issues will help institutions better align their teacher preparation programmes to achieve positive teacher competency which should translate to quality students' outcomes. Further research needs to be undertaken to ascertain the quality of student teachers on other programmes in the same institutions so as to find out if this problem is wide spread. The possible ripple effects for the institution itself should also not be ignored for, if the issue of students quality (products) are not addressed the institution may experience problems in terms of both the retention and recruitment of students. What will attract students in such a context is the quality of teacher preparation programmes offered by particular institutions and suitably qualified, skilled and experienced teacher-educators. Once in place each institution will be on its way to positively realise national, school and teacher efficacy goals.

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