

Teaching English in Low Resource-Environments: Problems and Prospects

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Abstract : The teaching of English is a resource-driven activity that requires rich resource-classroom settings for the delivery of effective lessons and the acquisition of interpersonal skills for integration in a target-language environment. However, throughout the world, English is often taught in low-resource classrooms. This paper is aimed to reveal the common problems associated with teaching English in low-resource environments and the prospects for teachers who found themselves in such undefined teaching settings. Self-structured and validated questionnaire in a closed-ended format, open question format and scaling format was administered to teachers across five countries: Nigeria, Cameroun, Iraq, Turkey, and Sudan. The study adopts situational language teaching theory (SLTT), which emphasizes a performance improvement imperative. This study inclines to this model because it maintains that learning must be fun and enjoyable like playing a favorite sport, just as in real life. Since teaching resources make learning engaging, we found this model apt for the current study. The perceptions of teachers about accessibility and functionality of teaching material resources, the nature of teaching outcomes in resource-less environments, their levels of involvement in improvisation and the prospects associated with resource limitations were sourced. Data were analysed using percentages and presented in frequency tables. Results: showed that a greater number of teachers across these nations do not have access to sufficient productive resource materials that can aid effective English language teaching. Teaching outcomes, from the findings, are affected by low material resources; however, results show certain advantages to teaching English with limited resources: flexibility and autonomy with students and creativity and innovation amongst teachers. Results further revealed group work, story, critical thinking strategy, flex, cardboards and flashcards, dictation and dramatization as common teaching strategies, as well as materials adopted by teachers to overcome low resource-related challenges in classrooms.

Keywords : teaching materials, low-resource environments, English language teaching, situational language theory

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