LANGUAGE NEEDS OF AGRICULTURE STUDENTS' IN AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY COLLEGES OF AGRICULTURE

BY

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

1994.

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE. (TESL)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

1994.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project has been written by me and that it is a record of my research work. It has not been presented in any previous application for a high degree. All quotations are indicated by quotation marks and the sources of information are acknowledged by means of references.

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty Board of Education "Language Needs of Agriculture Students in Ahmadu Bello University Colleges of Agriculture", submitted by OSHAGBAMI, Ibidapo Elizabeth in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Teaching English As A Second Language (TESL).

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ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to certify the language needs of agriculture students offering courses in Agricultural Technology, Agricultural Engineering Technology, Home Economics, Animal Health and Production, and Horticulture and Landscape Technology in Ahmadu Bello University constituent and affiliated Colleges of Agriculture. The study was concerned with the general and the specialised use to which the students are to put English, The study is considered significant because it is the first of its kind in the colleges concerned.

The data for the study were collected through the administration of two sets of questionnaires - the students' and academic staff. The students' questionnaire contained 37 items and was administered to 268 students. The staff questionnaire contained 32 items and was administered to 29 lecturers and Heads of Section.

In the questionnaires, the researcher sought to find out the importance attached to the four language skills in performing general, agricultural and laboratory tasks. Also sought is to find the relevance of essay topics, comprehension passages and vocabulary taught in English Language to their agricultural courses.

The findings revealed that the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) were considered important in performing general and agricutlural tasks. From

the ranking of the skills, it was revealed that each of the skills was more important for specific agricultural tasks than others.

The result of the analysis of both sets of responses showed that the English Language course need to include listening speaking, reading and writing exercises and learning of vocabulary relevant to the students[1] specializations.

To improve the students' language performance, it was recommended that language syllabus should include what students need to help them perform their agricultural tasks easily and such that are relevant to their courses. Also, relevant text books of English language for agriculture students are urgently needed.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

Abbreviations

ANOWA - Analysis One-way Variance

EAP - *English for Academic Purposes*

ESP - *English for Specific Purposess*

GCE - General Certificate in Education

HND - Higher National Diploma

ICSA - Interim Common Services Agency

NA - Needs Analysis

ND - National Diploma

NBTE - National Board for Technical Education

NPE - National Policy on Education

SSSCE - Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations

WASC - West African Examination Council.

Definition of Terms

Content Lecturer is an academic member of staff who is teaching students in their professional courses.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a variety of English taught at a particular time to meet the specific needs of particular learners specialzing in a chosen field.

Extension Worker - is an advising technical farmer provided to assist in analysing the alternatives about farm operations to local farmers.

Primitive Curriculum - is an activity programme provided by the Greek Leaders for educating their youths.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background To The Study

The role English plays in Nigerian Institutions cannot be overemphasised. Besides using it as a medicum of instruction in the higher institutions especially, its use in technological fields could be more effectively felt if learners are able to explain with case what they do practically in the field of technology. This explains why English language course is made compulsory for agriculture students offering various agricultural courses in the College of Agriculture under Ahmadu Bello University and those affliated to it. This as assumed could help students to have better knowledge and understanding of the target language they need in their academic pursuit. Of course, it was not so thought at the initial stage that the college was established.

The College of Agriculture, Ahmadu Bello University, Samaru Zaria began as an Inservice Training Centre at Maigana in 1921. In 1928, the centre was converted to a full-fledged school and was transferred to Samaru, Zaria as a Technical Assistant Training School for extension workers. During that time all courses relating to agriculture extension experience were taught with English as the medium of instruction and not as a course.

In 1968, the administration of the college was transferred to Ahmadu Bello University from the Interim Common Service Agency (ICSA). Since then the college has become a constituent unit of the Division of Agricultural and Livestock Services. Other colleges are: College of Agriculture, Bakura in Sokoto State (which moved to Samaru College of Agriculture in 1990), College of Agriculture, Kaduna, Kaduna State, and College of Agriculture, Kabba in Kogi State. Those affiliated to it are: College of Agriculture, Lafia in Plateau State and College of Agriculture, Jalingo in Taraba State.

In 1977, when the University Senate approved a change of status for the college from a certificate school for training Agricultural Assistant to one that awards Ordinary Diploma Higher Diploma, English was then introduced as an academic course. In the opinion of the University, lack of English language in the college program before 1977 was responsible for English language deficiency among students of the college. The college then based the introduction of English course in the college on the following objectives:

Objectives for Introducing English Language in the College.

There are certain objectives upon which the introduction of English language into agricultural program is based. They are:

(i) to cater for the communicative needs of the students in and outside the classroom.

(ii) to enable students to interact effectively within and outside the campus since the Nigerian society is a heterogenous one in which English is commonly used by the educated.

(iii) to enable students to read, understand and explain the literature in their fields of specialization.

(iv) to enable students to give vivid description or reports of all practical works done in the laboratory.

(v) to help students to write meaningfully their projects during Higher Diploma Programmes (Ordinary Diploma Syllabus, English programme 1981).

A close look at the objectives for introducing English as an academic subject into the Diploma in Agriculture Programme will reveal that the WAEC SC/GCE "Ordinary" level English syllabus does not meet the needs of the students who need the language for specific purpose. This researcher agrees with Jakohovita (1970) that goals of a particular course in a foreign language programme must be clearly defined in specific terms that specify the terminal knowledge and skills to be reached and that the extent of specificity of goals to be defined for any particular course

should depend on the specific needs and interests of the students involved. In the case of the WAEC English syllabus adopted by the College of Agriculture authorities, the process of deciding what to teach was not based on what the students will need eventually to do with the language.

Consequently, by just teaching general skills, most of the students fail to derive any demonstrable value out of their English course. And so the complaints from content lectures and project supervisors which characterised the years before the introduction of English as a course of study still continued at the time of this study. It was as a result of the irrelevance of the existing syllabus to the students' needs and the present complaints of the lecturers and supervisors that the present researcher, a lecturer in English in the College of Agriculture, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria decided to investigate the English Language needs of the students of that college.

1.2 Statement Of The Problem

The purpose of learning English language at the College of Agriculture is essentially different from that of the Secondary School. The Secondary School English Language syllabus which was adopted for use in the Colleges of Agriculture has not met the various English language needs of the students. The syllabus

was designed to teach general language skills without consideration for specific needs of the students of Colleges of Agriculture. The students at the time of this study still remained deficient in their use of English for their specific purposes-the note-taking, tutorials, reporting and other professional assignments. This research was undertaken, therefore, to find answers to the following questions:

(i) What importance is attached to listening, speaking, reading and writing in performing general, agricultural and laboratory tasks?

(ii) Do the students regard their current reading exercises as relevant to their studies?

(iii) Do the students regard their current writing exercises as relevant to their studies?

(iv) Are the students taught registers relevant to their studies?

1.3 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses in their null form were formulated as a framework for this study:

(i) There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' perception of the significance of listening skill.

(ii) There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' perception of the importance of speaking skill.

(iii) There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' perception of the importance of reading skill.

(iv) There is no significant difference between the teachers' and students' perception of the importance of writing skill.

(v) There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' views regarding the relevance of reading exercises to agricultural courses.

(vi) There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' views regarding the relevance of writing exercises to agricultural courses.

(vii) There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' views regarding the relevance of registers to their courses.

1.4 Purpose Of The Study

It has been seen that agriculture students' lack of proficiency in English language has caused a lot of concern for university, content lecturers and project supervisors. It is this growing concern that has motivated the present researcher to wish to find out from both learners and teachers in the Colleges of Agriculture,

the English language needs of the students. The present researcher believed that the study would enable her to identify the students' language needs through the findings from the students and lecturers. The findings, it was also hoped, would enable the researcher, to make useful recommendations concerning

(a) the existing English language syllabus for Agriculture students.

(b) the real English language needs of the students, and

(c) the development of relevance of English language programme for Agricultural students.

1.5 Significance Of The Study

There are two justifications for the study of language needs of agriculture students. There is the pedagogical justification since views of students are sought in order to base what to teach on what they themselves feel they need; there is the theoretical justification which claims that needs analysis as a tool for syllabus design makes learners benefit from what they are taught (Munby, 1978). Also academic success is ensured since communicative English required for vocational courses like agricultural courses is given prominence, Adeyanju (1989).

This study is considered significant because, to the best of the knolwledge of the researcher, it is the first of its kind for agriculture students, and has important implications for the teaching of English for specific purposes among the students. English language is considered best taught to students in various fields of study in away that is relevant to the fields. This is what the study set out to investigate.

In Nigeria presently, people in various professions and occupations seem to be more aware of the role English language plays in their various fields. English is now taught to various students of different occupations in higher institutions. Much attention is therefore focused on special registers peculiar to different fields. This is appropriate because the knowledge of specific registers helps people to explain the use of devices exclusive to their different fields. For this reason, the type of language programme that will make learners functions in relevant situations is the ideal.

The present researcher also hope that:

(i) the study could inform language teachers in other Colleges of Agricutlture on the need to teach English that includes what is relevant to agriculture.

(ii) the study would help to pin-point areas on which to focus attention in the English language programme of agriculture students.

(iii) curriculum planners could uses the findings of the study as a basis for the design of English language programme for agriculture students.

(iv) the result of the study could help text book writers in their selection of teaching and learning materials for agriculture students.

(v) the study shows a new direction in curriculum planning in which students participate in what they are taught.

1.6 Basic Assumption

(i) This researcher assumed that agriculture students had language needs which the current syllabus does not adequately cater for.

(ii) It was also assumed that since the students were adults and agriculture-oriented in their different areas of specialization, they would be able to identify their language needs.

(iii) It was also assumed that teaching based on learners' needs produces the good results.

(iv) That content lecturers and Heads of Departments would be able to indicate the language needs of the relevant disciplines.

1.7 Scope And Delimitation Of The Study

The researcher aimed at identifying the language needs of agriculture studdents in the Colleges of Agriculture in Jalingo, Kabba, Kaduna, Lafia and Samaru. The study involved those studying Agricultural Technology, Agricultural Engineering Technology, Home Economics, Animal Health and Production, and Horticulture and Landscape Technology. All these courses were fully or partially accredited by the National Boards for Technological Education in Nigeria (NBTE). The study was concerned with language skill and vocational needs of the students and not with the methods and techniques of teaching the skills.

Other agricultural courses offered in those colleges include Forestry, Soil Science, Fishery, Agronomy, Crop Protection. But studies in these fields were not included in the study because accessibility to those Departments was not possible at the time of study. Also manageability of sample size would be out of the researcher's control.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, relevant literature in the field is examined to provide a framework for this study. The literature examined includes syllabus development especially on needs analysis as a source for analysing the needs of agriculture students. The chapter is divided into seven parts.

2.1 Trends In Curriculum Development

Following the trends which curriculum development had taken before now, it is noticed that there has been no students participation in any of the curriculum developments.

The first known curriculum, called "primitive curriculum", was an activity programme provided by the Greek leaders for educating their youths. It was planned in terms of needs for Plato's liberal education which emphasised intellectual discipine but was devoid of practical education. Isocrate, Plato and Aristotle with their famous rhetorical schools made use of such a curriculum (Eliot 1968).

It was later thought by the Roman Empire leaders that the inclusion of language (Greek Grammar) in the curriculum in developing 'orator' or 'good man' could make a complete educated man of that time. This was also to meet the goal of

their education. Youths were not perceived as important citizens to participate in what concerned them most even though they were the ones to use the curriculum. It is noted that curriculum planners since the beginning of education took no cognisance of their youths as important elements who interprete the social, economic and cultural conditions of the society through the curriculum. The schools have been in tune with their communities to serve them and have been taken as a channel to promote the good life for their citizens.

It was the intention of the realists of the 19th century to set a curriculum which reflected the truth or realities of their contemporary life. As a result of this, subjects offered by students were expanded. Douglas (1947) called this "multiple curriculum". Students' eyes were opened to subjects of their choice. Language was in use through debating and literary use. It sounds educative when a curriculum makes changes in the learners within the scociety where it operates. Such changes in learners could be more meaningful if educational activities were based upon specific purposes for which the learners were learning and not just what were pushed to them by the philosophers, school masters, church leaders, politicans, etc.

The end of the 19th century marked the promotion of social forces like government agencies and professional organisations who determined what should be contained in the curriculum. Modern curriculum originated from the old tradition. Changes have been in form of addition to the existing one which has led to an over-crowded curriculum. This has brought about lack of mastery as a result of teaching too much but learning too little (Bamidele 1989).

The agitation for re-examining and re-evaluating the curriculum passed down by the British continued for some 20 years. Curriculum specialists based their agitations on various reasons: the curriculum was regarded as an imposition of white man's culture on another culture and that it was western-oriented, not Africa-oriented, Eliot (op.cit) Phelp Report (1925) earlier pointed out that it was an exposure of Africans to an unsound education. Tananarive (1962) says it is used for ends which are not purely educational. It is observed that a change from traditional curriculum to modern curriculum will accelerate the pace of qualitative education in a developing country like Nigeria.

2.2 Curriculum Trends In Language Teaching

Language curriculum has a long history which dates back to the ancient times. In all the changes effected in language curriculum the focus has been on the educational objectives of the existing nations and empires and the purpose which English language

served in these societies at the point in time. What would benefit learners in the curriculum was not a focus untill recently when innovation in science and technology has increased and the existing language curriculum has been found inadequate. National Policy on Education seems to be a frame-work upon which language teaching curriculum has been based and its objectives tailored to methods of teaching the language.

During the Roman Empire, Traditional language curriculum of that time employed the method describing languages (Greek and Latin) by analysing the role played by each word in a sentence. The present language curriculum is still a reflection of this traditional grammar. The method in the language classrooms is prescriptive learning of rules with the assumption that a knowledge of grammar represented proficiency in the language. According to Schofield (1972), language taught prescriptively is nothing other than mental training. The realisation that learners did not benefit much from such a century old method prompted people to seek for a change in language curriculum. For example, Schofield (ibid.) notices that much damage has been done to language teaching by employing the process of cramming in learning a language. Feel in Schofield (ibid) refers to such as developing just "verbal habit" which renders information inert and makes learners incapable of reasoning. It may be expedient to teach English prescriptively to second language learners at secondary school level because knowledge of rules tends to guide them in using the language. In addition, career entered into is not the focus of attention but the

use of English in its general sense. This type of method will not benefit agriculture students who, having passed the general level need to be geared towards a specialised orientation of language learning. They need to use English to function in their area of specialisation.

Although the traditional curriculum provides the learners with a systematic description of the "generative core" of the language, Chomsky (1957) says it is too superficial, Allen and Widdowson (1974) say it fails to provide the learners with an understanding of the communicative use of the structure. Banjo (1970) and Nwosu (1984) say language teaching programme which is based on the traditional grammar school system has left young learners with no saleable skill apart from his ability to speak and write fairly correct English.

In the 1960s, the change in curriculum started gearing towards the acquisition of communicative competence along with the teaching of grammar and rules of English. It was believed that being able to communicate generally meant being able to cope with academic and societal problem of language learning and teaching prevailed at that time. These methods only prepared students for general use of English but failed to prepare them for use of English in science and technology. Science students based their knowledge of English upon general English learnt in secondary schools. Agriculture students need to use English effectively

at tertiary level so as to function in their field. As supported by Ikonta (1984), knowing the language means nothing but to know how to use it effectively is desirable. Nwogu's findings have shown that many students perform poorl in WASC examination as a result of not being taught science and technology English. Since liberal arts students also perform poorly in WASC Examination, one can not base their failure on this only reason. The reasons may be based on teachers' poor method of teaching, textbooks used, students' attitude towards learning of English etc. Agriculture students have to learn a type of English different from the one they are exposed to in Secondary School so as to be able cope with their various academic and professional activities in and outside the college; their curriculum in language should therefore enhance the learning of Agriculture and related courses as part of science and technolgy courses.

In planning any curriculum in Nigeria, National Policy on Education must be reckoned with since it is upon its objectives that the teaching of any subject is based. The objectives of the national policy on language which portray "English as a subject and as a medium of instruction" (NPE 1977, 1981) have no direction towards what a language teacher should actually teach a particular level or category of learners. The objective of English language teaching in the country is then understood to be based on the role English plays. English is taught in all schools

as a subject up to secondary school. It is taught as 'use of English' in the College of Agriculture. English as a Language of Education ranks higher than any foreign language or any Nigerian language. A credit pass in English (as GCE ordinary level or its equivalent) is required for entry into most tertiary institutions in this country. At least a pass in it is required for entry into College of Agriculture, it is compulsory for all agriculture students to offer English as a course during the first two semesters of their National Diploma course. It is then understood why English Language should be rated as part of the important course in the college.

From the understanding of the role English plays in the Nigerian society and in the College of Agriculture in particular, the existing language curriculum should meet the needs of agriculture students. As observed by Bamidele (op.cit), failures of learners to face new challenges and responsibilities they are often not prepared for in English is as a result of the unrealistic and inappropriate curriculum they have been exposed to. Adeyanju (1983:4) also adds that "heavy commitment to grammatical and mechanical accurancy with little regard to fluency is a carry over from the traditional WASC, SC/GCE English syllabus".

The need for a change in language curriculum towards the use of English to function in areas of societal demands brought the idea of communicative approach to language teaching in which the

four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are integrated. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) believe that this would incorporate the relationship between meaning and form of language to be in line with how Chomsky (1957) viewed language (i.e. moving from language performance to language competence). In the opinion of Rivers (1968), language curriculum would change from formal to communicative if the four skills are integrated. It is thought that the integration of the skills would provide agriculture students with skills which will help them to communicate within and outside the classroom.

Finocchiaro (1968) emphasises the development of the four skills as making learners communcate effectively with in the social and cultural situation. This development will also help learners to increase ability to understand a native speaker of English in any situation. Also, it is believed that learners are able to read any material in English with comprehension, ease and enjoyment. The teacher is also able to develop in students the ability to write correctly, functionally and creatively in English. Devine (1987) in Nwogu (1989:7) sees the skills as those competences associated with "acquiring, recording, organising, synthesising, remembering and using information and ideas found in schools". The mastery of the four language skills will help agriculture students to cope effectively with agricultural tasks such as analysed by Widdowson

(1983) in Nwogu (op.cit: 1). These are identifying, classifying analysing, quantifying et certera. The exposure of students to such skills as 'communication skills in the university and 'Use of English' in the Collges of Agriculture is informed by the assumption that new entrants into this level of education come from the highly structured teaching background of secondary schools and so agriculture students need help in adjusting their study habits to cope with the instructions in the higher institutions so as to be able to tackle the new academic tasks they are exposed to.

2.3 The Four Language Skills

The four language skills help students to be involved actively in the classroom and to use target language to perform academic activities. Student-teacher interaction reveals how how much of the use of the target language involves mere rote imitation and how much of mere creative use of the language, in performing agricultural tasks.

The importance of the four language skills is expressed by Gritiner (1977). He bases his explanation on five levels of essential learning objectives which he feels are applicable to any of the European languages commonly taught in schools. Those levels are phonology, morphology, syntax, vocabulary and culture of the speakers of such a language. He says the ultimate goal of

using skills for instructions is to enable students to communicate effectively either orally or in writing. He posits that students are to be able to produce all the sounds, grammatical structures and word order sequences of English and be able to recognise all auditory and graphic symbols as they are used in writing and in normal flow of native speech. He also adds that mastery of phonology, morphology, and syntaz should be given preference before the acquisition of vocabulary items which, according to him, need to be mastered with their cultural implications carried by the foreign words. Rivers (op.cit) also claims that understanding the culture of the speakers of the target language is part of helping a learner in the language effectively, for examples, in the agriculture students' minds, the meaning attached to 'hoe' and 'plough' would be culturally based even theough the two perform the same function. The former which is locally made has its cultural meaning attached to a producers while the latter portrays its sophistication meaning with people who also make it. Gritiner also synthesises those five essentials of language learning objectives by bringing out the ultimate goals that must take place in the minds of students if genuine communication has taken place. Since each skill has different objectives and learning problems, they are discussed differently according to those essential levels.

2.3.1 Listening Skill

As argued by Rivers (1968) comprehension of spoken language is very important if adequate communication is the aim. Since this study is to seek how agriculture students will communicate better in their field, listening skills cannot be overlooked. Agriculture students need to comprehend lectures, audio visuals, films, announcements and so on ; what is spoken should therefore be understood by the students for appropriate reactions. At the phonological level, Grittner (op.cit.) says that the listening skills helps students to hear all the meaningful sound contrasts of English when spoken at a normal rate in complete utterances. Morphologically students can hear all the changes of meaning caused by modifications of word forms when the language is spoken at a normal rate in complete ulterance. The students can hear the target language without being confused by the syntax. They can develop the ability to hear and understand content words in normal conversational contexts especially when discussing in groups or comparing notes. Students therefore, can shade meanings relating to content, relationship, customs and so on of the speakers. Learners at the end, can develop ability to comprehend aurally new arrangements of familiar materials when spoken at normal tempo and with normal intonation and rhythm. If this skill is developed in agriculture students, they can comprehend with ease what is taught to them in their various courses.

2.3.2 Speaking Skill

In speaking skills, Rivers (op.cit.) and Grittner (op.cit.) ascertain that learners develop greater skill in encoding their thoughts in more complicated patterns of the foreign speech and are able to consolidate the muscular control involved in the new speech habits. Agriculture students are supposed to develop this skills in order to discuss cultural tasks such as discriminating differences among agricultural identities, predicting weather or diseases in plants or animals, explaining agricultural theories and intuition; classifying taxonomies and co-occurences of agricultural features etc., to express their ideas and be able to communicate their intentions to their clients during agricultural extension work. Through speech they are expected to react to other persons and situations or influence other farmers. The learners who are proficient in speaking skill should produce phonologically the significant sounds and intonation patterns of the target language in a manner intelligible to the native speakers. Morphologically, they should express their ideas orally using appropriate grammatical forms relevant to agricultural tasks. Syntactically, they should express their idea orally using word which is characteristic of the spoken language. Speaking skill helps to acquire an active speaking vocabulary appropriate to the age, maturity level and capacity of the students and one which

is appropriate for communication in the field of agriculture and in the modern world. It develops in the learner the ability to use culturally acceptable forms appropriate to the age, social standing and occupation of the learners and to reveal some knowledge of the heritage in agriculture of those who speak the target language. The ultimate goal is then achieved on the part of the learners if they can recognise familiar vocabulary and grammatical forms relevant to agriculture and apply such to new situations in a manner acceptable to a native speaker.

As agricultural activities also include students to perform the role of Veterinary Clinical Assistants, they are viewed as dramatists to whom speaking skills is of paramount importance. Everything they do with language in this situation should be meaningful and relevant to agricultural life. In this situation, as supported by River (op.cit.) the cliches of the language are embedded in typical acts of communication instead of being learned artificially as isolated phrases or sentences. Agriculture student in this situation learns to speak in the first and second persons whereas in discussions of literary texts, he is nearly always using the third person. He learns rhythms and intonations, the assimilations of the spoken language and learns to understand and reproduce these at a normal speed of ultrance unconsciously. The grammatical structure in which the

learner has been drilled or will be drilled separately are practiced in a natural matrix of meaning.

2.3.3. Reading Skill

Reading skill according to Rivers (op.cit.) helps students to learn how to extract from the printed patterns lexical meaning, structural or grammtical meaning and social-cultural meaning. In reference to agriculture students, it helps them to understand agricultural texts written in the target language without further help from the students' content lecturers. Reading skill is very useful to agriculture students in performing agricultural task such as reading laboratory samples to comfirm animal plant diseases, reading of procedure taken to perform agricultural operations, reading to get information on how to effect treatment on certain agricultural pests as well as reading handouts, notes amd textbooks for tests and examinations. In doing all these, reading skill builds in the students the ability to recognise certain patterns of arrangement like paragraph division, punctuation and their functions. Also words which indicate logical relationships among segments of sentences or sections of discourse are recognised by the students. For this reason, they can approach books, magazine articles independently for relevant information they need in their course. Grittner (op.cit.) also believes that reading skill, phonogically helps students to associate the graphic symbol with the sounds for which

they stand. Morphologically, agriculture students can draw appropriate meaning directly from the printed page through recognition of changes in meaning caused by modifications in word structure. At the syntactical level, ability to read agricultural texts directly in English language without being confused by syntactical arrangements are developed by the learners. In the area of vocabulary, Grittner sees reading skills as the ability to recognise in context a wide range of vocabulary items with sensitivity to the differences between spoken and written vocabulary and between words and expressions. As this skill is developed in the students they can read wide and differenciate between their textbooks which contain content words specific to agricultural field and words of everyday conversation from newspapers, magazines novels and so on.

At the cultural level, this skill helps agriculture students to read local and foreign literatures related to agriculture. The ability to read such literature enhances the work of the students as they can gain from other cultures than theirs in the area of agriculture. They can read directly any text in their area of specialization without much dependence on content lecturers for information that are in the library and without seeking explanations or having constant recourse to dictionary.

expression in their written or oral reports.

The four language skills have been explained above as essential tools for communication which will help students to apply what they have learned to situations. They demonstrate learners' ability to understand the relationship between spoken symbols and written sysmbols.

2.4 Register

The fact that professional occupations, (Agriculture being one of them) have vocabularies peculiar to each, it is pertinent to examine some facts on register.

Recent development in language teaching demands interest in the way one speaks or writes according to the circumstance in which one finds oneself. Stevens (1964) operates on the principle that the English of each group of specialists constitutes a specific register different from that of others. Ure (1969a) defines register as situationally differenciated language variety. Moody (1970) says it is a dialect associated with particular function or professions; Williams (1983) sees it as that term used linguistically to mean different uses to which language is put, and Hutchinson and Waters (1987) explain that in which the identification of grammatical and lexical features peculiar to specific vocations are prevalent. It is understood

that many technical and professional occupations give rise to special registers usually with vocabulary items outside the range of an ordinary educated man and with distinctive restricted sentence patterns. Moody (op.cit.) says that such special vocabulary was scorned and classified as "Jargon" by literary people before the "60s".

Register helps to differentiate between occupations in terms of language use and vocabulary of one vocation from another. It is what helps to differentiate the language and vocabulary of agriculture from that of medicine or commerce. For example, in agricultural tasks, students' activities include writing reports, giving instructions, constructing structures etc. The language used in all these is different from that of commerce, in advertising business, accounting transactions etc. White (op.cit.) adds that the importance of certain words, idioms and constructions is not identical in all registers of language and that some words appear more often than others in different areas of specializations. For example, words like "weed", "harrow", "furrow", "ridge", "plough", are peculiar to agriculture whereas words like "examine", "diagnose", "prescribe", are peculiar to the medical line.

Ure (op.cit.:107) believes that second language learners should know the registers appropriate to their professions. Such learners will not go wrong in explaining the use of devices

peculiar to their fields. They can assemble such devices properly. She calls the use of English in that way 'practical English' or 'practical language-in-action'. The studdents in real life need to deal with objects that are before them and tools they are actually holding. They need to speak of them not as if they are cut of sight and out of reach. Linguistic inadequacies in the practical use of language can place the speaker at a disadvantage in practical matters.

It is the practical use of language, that is, doing things with language which is the concern of the researcher of this study. A language learner who lacks the ability to use language in relation to his vocation lacks practical application to life in what he is doing.

As English continues to favour the area of Science and Technology, more work on specific area of words to be given priority emerged. At present, there has been a call for making modern language curriculum meet the needs of modern world. Banjo (1978) suggests the reflection of such a curriculum that help learners acquire competence in the variety of English relevant to their professions and to include that which is communicative in terms of materials determined by a prior analysis of communicative needs of the learners.

2.5 The Syllabus

Schofield (1972:123) defines a syllabus as "subject, projects and areas of study". It is also defined by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) as a document which says what will (or at least should) be learnt. Bloor (1984) notes the term 'syllabus' (Europeans term to be very close in meaning to its North American counterpart, 'curriculum', Shaw (1977) in Adeyanju (1989:60) establishes clear distinction between syllabus and curriculum thus:"Curriculum is a very general concept which involves consideration of the whole complex of philosophical programme. Syllabus on the other hand refers to that subpart of curriculum which is concerned with a specification of what units will be taught which is a matter for methodology".

The present syllabus for agriculture students is considered inadequate. The exclusion of learners' participation in syllabus planning has been a consistent pattern since the introduction of western education in Nigeria. The higher executive of the Division of Agricultural Colleges simply adopted the WASC/GCE "Ordinary Level". According to Adeyanju (op.cit.), a syllabus like this is structure-based because it involves heavy commitments to grammatical and mechanical accuracy. It seems such a syllabus will not make students proficient enough in English to perform specialized tasks. In such a language class, Widdowson (1981) observes the ritualised behaviour of both teachers

amd students in which little learning of language is taking place. Littlewood (1981) adds that in such a syllabus, grammatical structure is defined before language is used and students are exposed to the boredom of pattern drills.

In an attempt to improve syllabus to benefit both learners and educational practitioners, different approaches have been suggested. Finocchiaro (1979) explains in her educational principles underlying the syllabus that individual learners is to be considered and that resources available to be made to serve his communicative purposes. It is then assumed that agriculture students should be taught English they really need within a limited period of language class with the available materials. The English taught to agriculture students need to be functional. In addition, Howart (1984) advocates communicative approach to language learning by integrating the four language skills. In doing this, he argues that teachers are aware of necessary strategies learners themselves need to develop in relating structures to their communicative functions in real situations. Further on syllabus improvement, a syllabus which reflects the use of English relevant to students' field is demanded. Presently, as much need for English use in technology is felt, Ikonta (1984) says that aspirants to promote English use across the ESL curriculum have risen. Graham (1988) suggests on English syllabus for the use of people involved in Agriculture.

This she assumed will help to achieve the desired objectives of making English language more communicative towards the correct situation. Ikonta (op.cit.) suggests that the cooperation of the content teachers with the teachers of English could make learners learn their special subjects effectively and that teachers of the subjects will be conscious of the registers of their subjects and not just of those subjects only.

In syllabus development, needs analysis as a tool for designing a syllabus has been employed in an attempt to make learners benefit from what they are taught. Munby (1978) supports that needs of the learners are paramount before any attempt to design a syllabus is made. Graham and Bearsely (1986) add that needs analysis considers the needs expressed by the teaching establishment, the learners, the institutions, the content teachers, the ESL teachers, and Educational Policy of the country. Bamidele (1989) adds that needs analysis helps to focus on what it designed to be taught in the language course. Adeyanju (1989) also adds that it leads to the kind of syllabus relevant to academic success and that it is a relevant tool for a course planning in which communicative English like that required for vocational course is given prominence. In using the tool, the views of the students concerned are first sought so as to base what to teach on what they themselves feel they need.

2.6 Needs Analysis

This part reviews the literature on needs analysis. Included in the review are:

(i) what is meant by 'need'

(ii) needs analysis and syllabus design;

(iii) needs analysis methodologies and models;

(iv) needs analysis employed in the study.

2.6.1 What Is Meant by "Need"

Tyler (1949) in his work on the development of curriculum describes need as a "gap". We also adds that need is the identification of the difference between the present condition of the learners and the acceptable norm. Brush (1976) argues that needs is a status of "what should be" and that several persons can help to tell what another person's needs are. According to Schofield (1972:72 and 73) need mean "lack" and "what is desirable". Komisar in Schofield (ibid) adds that the terms could be used prescriptively. For example, 'We needs to be warned'. The interpretation of the 'need' is in the mind of the person who makes such a statement and be to whom it is said may not be aware of such needs to tally with his proconceptions. In the area of educational practice, need is seen by Berwick (1989) as not just defining a target language behaviour but, in its process-oriented interpretation, as identification and account

of a multiplicity of affective and cognitive variables affecting learning such as learners' attititudes, motivation, awareness, personality, wants, expectation and learning styles.

The above definitions although given in different uses are similar in meaning. They all mean a 'gap' between "current outcomes' and 'desired outcomes'. Definition of this type supports the fact that any sound programme is to be based on a careful analysis and thorough understanding of the term 'needs'.

2. .2 Needs Analysis And Syllabus Design

Needs analysis being a characteristic feature of ESP course design is employed in this study in seeking the language needs of agriculture students. It is seen as part of an overall educational planning process. Brush (1976) sees it as process involving. The process is by stating potential educational goals and by desiding which of the goals are of highest priority. such a priority helps to determine how well the existing educational programme is meeting the needs. It is a process in which one identifies a discrepancy which becomes a need viewed as a critical problem that required a solution, according to Afolayan (1978). Bamidel (op.cit.) too sees it as an 'approach to syllabus development which counter-racts the existing approach to syllabus development. In addition, he says contents based on the input of society, learners

and teachers are developed. According to Kaufman (1972), it helps the educational planners translate needs into performance objectives. This implies that the needs expressed by agriculture students and their content teachers will help in plann$_i$ng their language syllabus so as to attain effective language objectives in the college.

2.6.2a Needs Analysis Methodologies

Works on needs analysis abound from the late "60s" up to date Okonkwo (1984) citing Kaufman (1977) says although they vary in methods, instruments used and in numbers of groups of people involved, they commonly determine 'discrepancies' which require suggestions based on these 'discripancies'. Some methods employed in needs analysis studies are; interviews, (Krebs and Steven (1971)and Brush (1976); questionnarie, Twelker et.al. (1984); both interview and questionnaire, Okonkwo (1984); analysis of existing records and documents, Afolayan (1978) and Bamidele (1989); classroom interaction analysis with survey, Adeyanju (1983) and Graham and Beardsley (1986).

The instrument usually used in needs analysis studies are questionnnarie and interview schedules. The development of the instrument is often based on a review of related literature. The collection of data is usually based on an analysis of relevant

programme documents according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) or on a review of literature and interview with key persons and experts, Nwogu (1989), observations are usually quantified and items are ranked of those which constitute important future process according to Berwick (op.cit.). He also adds that items to be incorporated into a syllabus are those which receive high ranking in the categories of use.

The fact that needs analysis considered the needs expressed by the learners themselves, the educational establishment and the user, it best stands its position as a design for language programme planning in the College of Agriculture. An ESP needs analysis is target centred, that is, it looks at the learners' future and roles attempts to specify what language skills or linguistic knowledge the learners need in order to perform the role(s) adequately. The present study seeks to find how adequately agriculture students will be able to perform agricultural tasks in the four language skills as far as communication is concerned in relevance to situations. Needs analysis is also seen as learner-centred by Berwick (op.cit.), it examines what a learner can do at the commencement of the course, what problems he may have or what skills he may possess that will enable him learn well in certain directions. The teacher is then to prepare materials appropriate for the learners in a situation like this. Bloor

(1984) aims at both target-centred and learner-centred types of needs assessment. Hutchinson and Waters (op.cit.) desire learning-centred. They believe this makes a learner look beyond the competence to how one acquires that competence. Richterich and Chancerel (1987) in Nwogu (1989) posit that systems of learning centred on the learner cannot be built up other than with the learners' help. Berwick (1989) posits that although a language syllabus based on the learner-centred needs makes for greater demands on teachers in counselling learners, negotiating the curriculum, assessing learning processes etc., the learners' goals which in turn can be translated into learning objectives are attained.

2.6.3b Needs Analysis Models

Berwick (op.cit.) notes a vareity of needs assessment types in educational practice. One of them is a democratic approach to needs assessment. This emphasises examination of a reference groups' views: when majority of the reference groups with a change in some form of educational practice and make their wishes known, a need is thereby expressed.

Another model is an analytic view of needs assessment familiar to applied linguists comprising of experts most often involved in goal-setting. This is called expert-centred approach to needs analysis.

The next model is called diagnostic approach which has its greatest application in second language learning situation. In this approach, a need is defined in terms of the harmful consequences of a deficiency. The approach creates a situation in which 'survival' seems to be the major rationals for course content. For example, not knowing how to describe the tools agriculture students are using might be considered a deficiency serious enough to acquire treatment in a syallbus, if experts are able to diagnose particular groups as 'suffering' from the deficiency.

Afolyan (1978) develops a needs analysis procedure called 'discrepancy analysis'. It is the process of determining and documenting a measurable difference between two states of affairs. The following activities constitute the basic procedure:

(i) List of the full range of possible goals or objectives.

(ii) Determining the relative importance of the goals.

(iii) Assessing the degree to which the important goals are being achieved by the programme (i.e. identifying discrepancies between desired and actual performance).

Again Okonkwo (op.cit.) acertains that needs analysis helps educational planners to translate needs into performance objectives. One of his six models of needs analysis is relevant to this study. It is Beta model. In the model,

the perceived needs of learners are identified, analysed and are assigned a priority. A programme is then designed to meet the needs.

It is understood that in the existing English language syllabus of agriculture, what students need was not provided and so English for Agriculture students should include what the students need for their career. This may promote students' interests in the language as the English is taught is relevant to their courses and will help them to achieve their academic and professional objectives.

2.7 English For Specific Purpose

The proposed language syllabus for agriculture students is a branch of English teaching under the large umbrella of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), its sub-area is English for Academic Purposes(EAP) but Hutchinson and Waters (op.cit.) hold the view that it still takes its cover under ESP. According to them ESP emerged to meet the language demand of aftermath of 2nd world war which ended in 1945. There was a demand for an international language as a result of expansion in scientific, technical and economic activities. As new people want to learn English to gain international currencies of technology so are the demands for relevant language to be

used by different academics pursuing different science and technology courses. Presently, a new generation of learners have emerged. They are those who know that they learn English because they need it in their various activities. This development helps educated men realise that a knowledge of General English is not enough to acquire competence in the variety of English relevant to their occupations and courses. It then means there is a variety of English relevant to health conditions for doctors, another for engineers and another for agriculturalists etc. Agriculture students need to be taught English registers relevant to their career so as to make learners' behaviour in the classroom meaningful, Nwogu (1984). It seems that at present, the traditional leisure attached to English language is no longer appropriate. The knowledge gained from the works of Ewer and Latorre (1969) shows that the English needed a particular group of learners could be identified by those groups and a linguist can analyse the linguistic characteristics of their special areas of study. The rise of ESP was also reinforced according to Hutchinson and Waters (op.cit.) by the new educational psychological idea of the '60s' which emphasised the central importance of the learners and their attitude to learning. Roger (1969) posits that learners have different needs and different interests and that before they can be motivated to learn effectively, their needs and interests must first be met.

It is also noted by Graham and Beardlsy (op.cit.) that taking texts from the learner's specialist areas improve their motivation to learn since such texts are relevant to their needs especially when such needs are those perceived by the learners themselves. Garder and Lambert (1972) also see the importance of motivation in such language learning. They suggest that the motivation could either be instrumental or integrative, but they believe that it can be both for ESP course. It is to be noted that ESP course is not teaching a form of English that is outside General English. Knowledge of ESP is based on that already got in General English. The idea is not to learn basic grammer but to learn how to use language in context. The development of English for agriculture students to reflect the content of their courses will mark a shift from just learning the forms of language to learning language in context which Widdowson (1978) calls "real communication".

2.8 Theoretical Framework

The literature reviewed provided a framework upon which the work is to be built. For example, need analysis models, those for identifying descrepancies between what 'exist' and what ought to be are relevant to this study. Since this study seeks to identify discrepancies between the existing English language syllabus in the College of Agriculture and what the

syllabus should be, a model based on Kaufman's Beta model and Discrepancy Analysis was employed. The followings steps were followed.

(i) listing of full range of possible goals,

(ii) determining the relative importance of the goals and

(iii) assessing the degree to which the important goals are being achieved by the programme.

The four language skills reviewed helped as a frame work upon which the questionnaire for collecting data for the study was built. The use of each skill was found relevant to agricultural tasks. Also relevant to the study was the integrative approach of those skills, if it is incorporated into language teaching in the college, it will help students effectively in language use.

2.9 Summary

This chapter has described the various trends in curriculum development. The trends have shown that learners have not been allowed to participate in it. Agitations to re-examine curriculum so as to favour learners and to meet the demands of the present developing country like

Nigeria include the idea of teaching English to enhance professional activities. The existing language syllabus seems inadequate. There is the need for the language syllabus to meet the needs of agriculture students. The idea of communicative approach to language learning and teaching is brough towards the use of English to function in relevant situations through the integration of the four language skills. It is assumed that students will adjust their study habits to cope with unstructured style of instructions in the higher institutions so as to tackle academic tasks. The importance of the four language skills are thought to be relevant to agricultural tasks. When integratively used in the classrooms, communication is meaningful and language profeciency is ensured among students. Also the knowledge of registers appropriate to learners profession as assumed is to make them explain the use of devices peculiar to their fields easily. Language is in that way used in context and students are motivated to learn English language.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

In this chapter, the methods and procedures employed in this study are described. It describes the data gathering instrument, the population, selection of sample, the design and administration of instrument, and treatment of data.

3.1 Population

Since this study was designed to survey the languages needs of agriculture students of Ahmadu Bello University constituent and affiliated Colleges of Agriculture, the researcher felt that such needs could be known by finding out from the affected students themselves and their content lecturers. The researcher regarded all National Diploma and Higher National Diploma students of Agriculture in the Ahmadu Bello University Colleges of Agriculture and those affiliated to it and their content lecturers as an entire population in the present study. So the study covered five Agricultural Colleges in the Ahmadu Bello University complex. They are those offering partially or fully accredited courses for Agricultural Technology, Agricultural Engineering Technology, Home Economics, Animal Health and Production, and Horticultural and Landscape Technology in the Colleges of Agriculture, Kabba, Kaduna, Jalingo, Lafia and Samaru. College of Agriculture in Kabba,

Kaduna and Samru were at the time of this study constituent Colleges of Ahmadu Bello University while those of Jalingo, and Lafia were affiliated to Ahmadu Bello University. The population of each college was as follows:

Table 3.1: College Population

S/No	Colleges	Students
1.	Kabba	224
2.	Kaduna	221
3.	Jalingo	850
4.	Lafia	710
5.	Samaru	900
Total		2,905

(1991/92 Students List Record).

Table 3.2: Staff Population

S/No	Colleges	Academic Staff
1.	Kabba	11
2.	Kaduna	9
3.	Jalingo	25
4.	Lafia	35
5.	Samaru	38
Total		118

(1991/92 staff list record).

3.2 Sample

There were 238 National Diploma II students, 125 Higher National Diploma I students and 35 academic staff who were used as the subjects of this study. All students making all the accredited courses in National Diploma II and Higher National Diploma I in those colleges were included in the study. All their content leaturers and their lecturers in English were included in the study.

3.3 Sampling Procedure

Given the large number of agriculture students, (2,905 students) and content lecturers, (118 teachers) a representative sample of 363 students and 29 content lecturers was used. The figure contained the National Diploma II and Higher National Diploma I students who had taken the English language course at the initial stage of their National Diploma Courses were used for the study. This was based on the fact that English language is studied in the first year of all the National Diploma students of those colleges. All National Diploma II and Higher National Diploma I students offering those five courses in the five colleges were used in the study. It was believed that they would be able to provide reasonable data on their language needs. It was also believed that they would be able to assess

the usefulness of the various language skills for their academic and professional programme. Their content lecturers were expected to be able to give an assessment of the needs of students and the information provided by them would complement the students' own idea of their English language needs. The researcher hoped that the two groups would also help her know the extent to which the various skills were covered and where priority should be given to help the students to perform agricultural tasks with ease. 29 members of academic staff were those teaching those courses used for the study. They were sampled as follows:

(i) College of Agriculture, Kabba offering Horticultural and Landscape Technology at Higher National Diploma only: Number of students = 43 and Members of academic staff = 5.

(ii) College of Agriculture, Kaduna offering Animal Health and Production only at Higher National Diploma level only: Number of students - 52 and Members of academic staff - 5.

(iii) College of Agriculture, Jalingo offering courses at National Diploma level in Agricultural Technology. Animal Health and Production and Home Economics: Agriculture students - 35, Animal Health and Production

students - 30, Home Economics - 5 and Members of academic staff - 7.

(iv) College of Agriculture, Lafia offering the following agricultural courses at National Diploma level only: Agricultural Technology - 31 students, Animal Health and Production - 30 students, Agricultural Engineering Technology - 20 students, Home Economics - 10 students and Members of academic staff - 6.

(v) College of Agriculture, Samaru offering both National Diploma and Higher National Diploma levels in: Agricultural Technology - 66 students, Agricultural Engineering Technology - 32 students, Home Economics - 5 and Members of academics staff 12.

3.4 Research Instrument

Since this study aimed at finding our information on English language needs of Agriculture Students for possible programme modification, the researcher considered the questionnaire technique as appropriate for finding out what the learners who had gone through the course considered as their needs.

(a) Questionnaire is used for gathering information in this study because according to Adeyanju (1980), questionnaires have assess to large number of individuals at a minimum cost and respondents' anonymity is guaranted. Brumfit (1984) adds that it is an approach to assessment based on common kind of prepared statements to check. The researcher considered the questionnaire technique useful in a study like this which involved a large number of students.

(b) Higher Diploma I students were selected because they had completed National Diploma courses and had done English language course at that period. For this reason, they were able to tell what was useful for them in their courses which English language course had lacked. Also the National Diploma II selected had just completed English language course and would tell what they need in the language course which could have helped them in agricultural courses.

(c) The content lecturers selected were those who teach students agricultural courses. They know the degree at which students use English language to perform agricultural tasks. They could tell areas of emphasis a language teacher should have so as to help students use language in their classes effectively.

The researchers designed two sets of questionnaire one for students and another for the academic staff.

3.4.1 The Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire contained thirty-seven items which were divided into three parts as shown below:

(a) Part I - sought background information of the students and information on situations in which students used English to communicate in and outside the classroom. There were eight items.

(b) Part II.- sought information on academic and professional tasks which required the use of each of the four language skills. This section sought students' opinion on how important each skill was. There were twenty-five items in that section. Items twenty-six to twenty-eight sought information on how relevant to their courses the comprehension passages, essay topics and vocabulary items in their language had been.

(c) Part III of the questionnaire required respondents to rank the skills according to the importance of each of the skills to various agriculture courses. A sample of the questionnaire is in Appendix 'c'.

3.4.2 The Academic Staff Questionnaire

The academic staff questionnaire contained thirty-two items. It was divided into three parts as shown below:

(a) Part I of the questionnaire containing three items sought information about the academic staff.

(b) Part II sought the opinions of the teachers on the importance of each of the four language skills for performing specific tasks in students' specific areas of study. There were twenty-five items in this section. In addition, items twenty-six to twenty-eight sought information about whether comprehension passages, essay topics and vocabulary items taught in English should be relevant to courses students study.

(c) Part III sought information on how important the teachers considered the four language skills and in which order they wanted the English language lecturer to emphasis them in his teaching so as to help students carry out their various academic and professional assignments easily. A sample of this questionnaire is on Appendix 'B'.

The two sets of questionnaire sought the respondents opinion regarding:

(i) The relevance of the listed skills to a teacher using English as a medium of instruction. These featured in the academic staff questionnaire only.

(ii) The tasks in which those skills were used.

(iii) The importance of those skills to students courses.

3.5 Pre-Test Of Instrument

A pilot study was conducted to determine the adequacy, effectiveness and validity of the instrument for this study. Five students from Higher National Diploma II were used for the pilot. Three members of academic staff excluding those used for this study were included in the pilot study.

As a result of this pre-test, a slight modification was made in the two sets of the questionnaire. Under the section which sought respondents' opinions on the importance of the four skills for agricultural tasks, the fourth option 'Not applicable' was deleted, leaving 'not important' 'important' and 'very important' in the frame-work of the questionnaire before it was administered to the respondents. It was assumed that every skill was applicable since nobody indicated that any was not in the pre-test. The respondents were considered competent enough to respond to the questionnaire because all of them had at least secondary education.

3.6 Distribution Of Questionnaire

Copies of the questionnaire were personally distributed to the respondents during the fourth semester of the session. This period was towards the students' last semester to end their courses in National Diploma II and in Higher Diploma I. Lafia College of Agriculture was already on vacation during the time the researcher was to distribute the questionnaire to both students and staff. National Diploma II and Higher Diploma I students and academic staff were the major participants in this study. All other questionnaires were personally administered and collected immediately.

3.7 Treatment Of Data

The responses were tabulated in percentages for the purposes of comparing and ranking. The perceptions of the respondents were compared by using t-test to establish any difference in the perception of different groups of respondents on the importance of each skill in performing different tasks. Chi-square test was used to establish the views of respondents on the relevance of essay topics, comprehension passages and vocabulary taught in English language to agricultural courses.

For item 29, the skills were ranked as 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th. The ranks were scord as follows:

1st - 4 points

2nd - 3 points

3rd - 2 points

4th - 1 points.

The total points for each skill were derived by multiplying the number of respondents awarding the rank with the number of points allocated to the rank. The skill which had the highest number of points was considered first and that arrangement was followed up to the skill with lowest number of points which was ranked fourth.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter, the methodology used for collecting the data needed was presented. The data gathering instrument was in two sets. The first, which was a student questionnaire had 37 items. The second set, which was academic staff questionnaire, had 32 items.

All National Diploma II and Higher National Diploma I students offering five agricultural courses and their content teachers in the four Colleges of Agriculture were for the study. There were 268 students and 29 members of

academic staff. The responses were tabulated and converted to percentages for the purpose of interpretation.

Chapter 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this chapter, the data gathered from both students and content lecturers are presented and analysed. The importance attached to each language, skill, (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) for general tasks, and specific tasks related to agriculture are presented and analysed separately. The opinions of the two sets of respondents concerning the needs for relevance of reading passages, easy topics and vocabulary items are also analysed. Then the results of the seven hypotheses tested are shown in tables and discussed.

4.1. Students Questionnaire on General Tasks.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Listening Skill for General Tasks. N = 268

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For Lectures	3(1.12%)	59(22.01%)	200(74.63%)	6(24%)
For Listening to Tutorials	8(2.77%)	125(46.64%)	120(44.78%)	15((5.60%)
For Group Discussions	5(1.87%)	103(38.43%)	147(54.85%)	13(4.35%)

Information in Table 4.1 above shows that a high percentage of the respondents considered skills as important for general tasks. In fact, a very high percentage of respondents regarded the skills as very important for lectures.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Speaking skill for General Tasks. N = 268

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For Speaking during Tutorials	19(7.09)	100(37.31)	134(50.00)	15(5.60)
For Asking Questions	2(0.75)	91(33.96)	159(59.33)	16(5.97)
For Answering Questions	2(0.75)	79(29.48)	178(66.42)	9(3.36)

From Table 4.2 above, speaking skill was also considered important by many respondents, while majority of them consider it very important for tutorials and questions. In fact, more than 60% of the respondent students considered the skill important for answering questions.

Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Reading Skill for General Tasks. N = 268.

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For Reading tests and Examinations	2(0.75)	53(19.78)	203(75.75)	10(3.73)
For Reading Lectures notes & handouts	4(1.49)	91(33.96)	161(60.07)	12(4.48)
For Reading Text-books	8(2.99)	147(54.85)	147(54.85)	14(5.22)
For Making Inference	15(5.60)	131(48.88)	107(39.93)	15(5.60)

Information in Table 4.3. above shows that majority of the respondents considered reading skill to be very important or important for general tasks specially for tests and examinations as well as for lecture notes and handout. However, only 40% of the respondents considered the skill very important for inferences.

Table 4.4.: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Writing Skill for General Tasks. N = 268

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For Note taking during lectures	7(2.61)	62(23.13)	186(69.40)	13(4.85)
For Writing Tests and Examinations	3(1.12)	74(27.61)	177(66.04)	14(5.22)

Information in Table 4.4 above shows that the respondents considered writing skill very important for general tasks of note-taking and writing tests and examinations.

Table 4.5: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Listening Skill for Agricultural Tasks. N =268

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For Understanding Films audio visuals in Agric ultural courses.	(7.09)	126(47.01)	167(40.67)	14(5.22)

Information above shows how important the respondents considered listening skill for agricultural tasks. More than 80% of them considered the skill either important or very important for understanding films/audio visual in agricultural courses.

Table: 4.6: Distribution of Respondents by Important of Speaking Skills for Agricultural Tasks.

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For explaining agricultural concepts theoretically	7(2.61)	75(27.99)	175(64.18)	14(5.22)
For predicting agricultural events	48(17.91)	75(27.99)	18(6.72)	18(6.72)

Information in Table 4.6 above shows that while a majority (64.18%) of respondents saw as very important for explaining agricultural concepts only about 28% regarded it as very important for predicting agricultural events. However, a majority of the respondents considered the skills as, at least, important for the two tasks.

Table 4.7: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Reading skill for Agricultural Tasks.

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For reading agricultural instructions	11(4.10)	97(36.19)	142(52.99)	18(6.72)
For reading technical terms in your area of specialization	10(3.73)	90(33.58)	157(58.58)	11(4.10)

From the above Table 4.7, it is seen that imajority of the respondents considered reading skill very important for the agricultural tasks in the area of reading instructions and technical terms in their field of specialization. Only 7.83% of the 268 respondents considered the skill as not important for the two tasks.

Table 4.8: Distribution of Respondents by importance of Writing Skill for Agricultural Tasks.
N = 268

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For reporting agricultural activities	4(1.49)	70(26.12)	186(69.40)	8(2.99)
For listening technical terms in the area of your specialization.	7(2.61)	95(35.45)	153(57.09)	13(4.85)

From Table 4.8 above, shows a majority of the respondents considered writing skill very important for reporting agricultural activities and for listing technical terms in their fields of specialization.

Table 4.9: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Listening skill for Laboratory Workshop Field Tasks. N = 268

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For Listening to Laboratory/Workshop instructions	10(3.73)	105(39.18)	137(51.12)	16(5.97)

Information in Table 4.9 shows that majority of the respondents considered listening skill as important for laboratory and workshop experiments and instructions. Only 10(3.73%) of the 268 respondents said that it was not important.

Table 4.10: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Reading Skill for Laboratory, Workshop or Field Tasks. N = 268.

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For reading laboratory/workshop calculations	27(10.82)	112(41.79)	114(42.54)	13(4.85)
For finding basic rules of equipment/ machinery	22(8.21)	101(37.69)	133(49.63)	12(4.48)

Information in Table 4.10 above shows that majority of the respondents considered the reading skill as, at least, important for reading laboratory calculations and basic rules of equipment/machinery. Less than 30% of the sampled population considered the skill as not important for the stated tasks.

Table 4.11: Distribution of Respondents by Important of Writing Skill for Laboratory, Workshop or Field Tasks. N = 268.

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For labelling agric ultural specimens	17(6.24)	109(40.67)	125(46.64)	17(6.34)
For Writing field experiment reports	5(1.87)	106(39.55)	142(52.99)	15(5.60)
For writing workshop reports	8(2.99)	113(42.16)	133(49.63)	14(5.22)

From the Table 4.11 above, information shows that majority of the respondents held the view that the writing skill was important or very important for labelling agricultural specimen, writing field experiment reports as well as workshop reports.

Note that three tables are shown under the laboratory/ workshop tasks. The reason is that speaking skill is not relevant to laboratory or workshop tasks, and for this reason, no table represents speaking skill.

Table 4.12: Distribution of Respondents by Relevance of Topics Taught in the English Course (1) N = 268 (2) N = 268 (3) N = 268.

	Relevant	Not Relevant	No Response
Reading Comprehension	248(92.54)	16(5.57)	4(1.49)
Essay Topics	253(94.40)	12(4.48)	3(1.12)
Vocabulary	257(92.16)	16(5.57)	5(1.87)

Information from the above Table 4.12 shows that majority of respondents felt that comprehension passages in English Language class should be related to their area of specialisation. It is also shown that essay topics given to them should be relevant to their study and that vocabulary items relevant to their course be included in the English course.

Table 4.13: Distribution of Respondents by Rank Skills
N = 268.

	1st = 4 Points	2nd = 3 Points	3rd = 2 Points	4th = 1 Point	No Response	Total
Listening Skill	121(484)	42(126)	27(54)	56(56)	22	720
Speaking Skill	94(376)	63(189)	34(68)	54(54)	23	687
Reading Skill	60(240)	63(189)	87(174)	34(34)	24	637
Writing Skill	52(108)	65(195)	66(132)	66(66)	19	501

The rank order in Table 4.13 shows that listening skill was ranked first with a total point of 720, speaking skill second with a total point of 687, reading skill third with a total point of 637 and writing skill fourth with a total point of 501.

Table 4.14: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Listening for General Tasks. N = 29.

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For Lectures	-	-	29(100%)	-
For listening to tutorials	-	13(44.83%)	16(55.17%)	-
For group discussion	-	13(44.83%)	16(55.17%)	-

Information in Table 4.14 above shows that all the respondents even considered listening skill as very important for lectures, while majority of them (95%) considered it very important for tutorials and group discussions. No respondent considered the skill unimportant.

Table 4.15: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Speaking Skill for General Tasks. N = 29.

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For speaking during tutorials	1(3.45%)	15(51.72%)	13(44.83%)	-
For asking questions	-	10(34.48%)	19(65.52%)	-
For answering questions	-	8(27.59%)	21(72.41%)	-

From Table 4.15 above, it is shown that majority of the respondents considered the answering questions, while majority considered it important for tutorials. Only one respondent considered the skill unimportant for tutorials.

Table 4.16: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Reading Skill for General Tasks. N = 29.

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For reading tests and Examinations	2(6.90%)	6(20.69%)	21(72.41%)	-
For reading lecture notes/handouts	1(3.45%)	11(37.93%)	17(58.62%)	-
For reading text-books	2(6.90%)	15(51.72%)	12(41.33%)	-
For making inferences	-	10(34.48%)	19(65.52%)	-

Information in the above Table 4.16 shows that majority of the respondents considered reading skill as very important for tests and examinations, lectures, notes and handouts, and for making inferences, while majority regarded the skill as important for reading textbooks. It is note worthy that a few respondents regarded the reading skill as not important for the listed general tasks.

Table 4.17: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Writing Skill for General Tasks. N = 29

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For note taking during lectures	1(3.45)	9(31.03)	19(65.52)	-
For writing tests and Examinations	-	10(34.48)	19(65.52)	-

Data in Table 4.17 above show that majority of the respondents 065.52% considered writing skill as very important. In fact only one of the respondents considered it not important. Others considered the skill important for the listed general tasks.

TABLES ON AGRICULTURAL TASKS

Table 4.18: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Listening Skill for Agricultural Tasks. N = 29

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For understanding agricultural films/ audio visuals	-	10(34.48%)	19(65.52%)	-

From Table 4.18 above, it is shown that 34% of the respondents considered listening skill important while about 66% considered it very important.

Table 4.19: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Speaking Skill for Agricultural Tasks. N = 29

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For explaining agricultural concepts theoretically	-	7(24.14%)	22(75.86%)	-
For predicting agricultural events	-	7(24.14%)	22(75.86%)	-

From Table 4.19 above, it is shown that majority of respondents considered speaking skill as very important for explaining agricultural concepts and for predicting agricultural events. Others regarded the skill as important.

Table 4.20: Distribution of Respondents by Importance of Reading Skill for Agricultural Tasks. N = 29

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
For reading agricultural instructions	-	7(24.14%)	22(75.86%)	-
For reading Technical terms in your area of specialization.	1(3.45%)	4(13.79%)	24(82.76%)	-

Information in Table 4.20 above shows that majority of the respondents felt that reading skill was very important for reading agricultural instructions and technical terms.

	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No Response
Reading Skill for Laboratory, Workshop and Field Tasks				
For reading Laboratory, workshop or field calculations	-	17(58.62%)	12(41.38%)	-
For basic rules of equipment/machinery	-	15(57.72%)	14(48.28%)	-
Writing Skill for Laboratory, Workshop or Field Tasks				
For labelling agricultural specimens	-	13(44.83%)	16(55.17%)	-
For writing field laboratory experiment reports	-	6(20.69%)	23(79.31%)	-
For writing workshop reports	-	9(31.03%)	20(68.93%)	-

Information in Table 4.22 above shows that listening skill for laboratory or workshop demonstrations was considered even very important. It also shows that respondents considered reading skill important. No respondents showed it was not important. Information from the table, in addition, shows that respondents considered writing skill important. It is shown that a higher percentage rated writing skill very important to labelling agricultural specimens, writing field or laboratory experiment reports and workshop reports.

The tables under laboratory, workshop and field experimental tasks show that speaking skill is not relevant to those tasks since no table represents the skill in the analysis.

Table 4.23: Distribution of Respondents by Need for Relevance of Topics Taught in the English Course to Specialised Fields. (1) N=29; (2) N=29, (3) N=29.

		Relevant	Not Relevant	No Response
1.	Reading comprehension	248(92.54)	16(5.97)	4(1.49)
2.	Essay Topics	253(94.40)	12(4.48)	3(1.12)
3.	Vocabulary	247(92.16)	16(5.97)	5(1.87)

Information from the above Table 4.23 shows that majority of respondents felt comprehension passages in English language class should reflect the special areas of their students' courses. Essay topics given to students should be relevant to their students' study and vocabulary items relevant to their students' courses be included in the English course.

Table 4:24: Distribution of Respondents by Rank of Skills

(1) N = 268

(2) N = 268

(3) N = 268

(4) N = 268

		1st = 4Points	2nd = 3Points	3rd = 2Points	4th = 1Point	No Response	Total
1.	Listening Skill	13(52)	4(12)	3(6)	9(9)	-	79
2.	Speaking Skill	10(40)	5(15)	7(14)	7(7)	-	76
3.	Reading Skill	2(8)	15(45)	5(10)	7(7)	-	70
4.	Writing Skill	8(32)	3(9)	12(24)	6(6)	-	71

The rank order in Table 4.24 shows that listening skill was ranked first with a total point of 79, speaking skill second with a total point of 76, writing skill third with a total point of 71 and reading skill fourth, with a total point of 70. All the questionnaires were responded to fully and appropriately.

Differences Between The Importance Attached to the Four English Language Skills by Both Respondents.

The analysis in this chapter has provided the inventory importance attached to the four English language skills by students themselves and their content lecturers. The result showed that the four language skills were used by agriculture students in performing their agricultural, general and laboratory tasks. However, to verify the hypotheses formulated for the study, the data were further subjected to statistical analysis using the t-test techniques.

Hypothesis 1.

This H_o states that there is no significant difference between teachers' and students' perception of the importance of listening skill.

To test this H_o, a two-sample t-test was done. The results are shown in Table 4.25 below.

Table 4.25

Status	n	$\bar{X}$	St. deu	$SE\bar{X}$	df	t	P
Students	237	2.53	0.33	0.022	264	-2.90	0.0041
Teachers	29	2.71	0.24	0.045			

From Table 4.25 above, it is shown that with df = 264 and t value of -2.90, there is a significant difference between students and teachers in their perception of the importance of listening skill. This is because the probability level stands at 0.0041 (t = 2.90 0.05). As can be found in the analysis, the negative value of t might have resulted from the difference in number between the total number of students and total number of teachers used for this study. For t-value to be significant at 0.05, it should be equal to or more than the P-value (0.0041). The analysis on Table 4.25 shows the value of t at -2.90 which is more than that of P at 0.0041. It then means that the difference between the importance attached to listening skill is significant. The hypothesis is therefore rejected. It means both students and teachers perceived listening skill important to agricultural tasks.

Hypothesis 2

This HO states that there is no significant difference between teachers' and students' perception of the importance of speaking skill.

To test this hypothesis, a two - sample t test was done, the results of which are shown in Table 4.26 below.

Table 4.26

Status	n	$\bar{X}$	St. deu	$SE\bar{X}$	df	t	P
Students	240	2.52	0.36	0.023			
					267	-2.13	0.034
Teachers	29	2.66	0.30	0.055			

A look at Table 4.26 shows that with df. 267 at t value of -2.13, there is significant difference between students and teachers in their perception of the importance of speaking skill. This is because the probability level stands at 0.034 t = 2-2.13 0.05. The negative value of t might have resulted from the difference in number between the total number of students and teachers used for this study.

This means that the difference between students' and teachers' perceptions of the importance of speaking skill is significant, therefore the hypothesis is rejected. It means both students and teachers perceived speaking skill important to agricultural tasks.

Hypothesis 3

This HO states that there is no significant difference between teachers' and students' perception of the importance of reading skill.

To test this hypothesis, a two-sample, t test was done, the results of which are shown in Table 4.27 below.

Table 4.27

Status	n	$\bar{X}$	St. dev	$SE\bar{X}$	df	t	P
Students	239	2.53	0.33	0.021			
					266	-0.82	0.41
Teachers	29	2.58	0.24	0.045			

A look at Table 4.27 shows that with df 266 and t value of -0.82 there is no significant difference between students and teachers in their perception of the importance of reading skill. This is because the probability level stands at 0.41 (t = -0.82 0.05). However, the negative value of t might have resulted from the difference between the total number of students and teachers used for this study. Since the t value is less than the P value, the hypothesis is accepted. It means both students and teachers did not perceive reading skill important to agricultural tasks.

Hypothesis 4

This HO states that there is no significant difference between the teachers' and students' perception of the importance of writing skill.

To test this hypothesis, a two sample t test was done, the results of which are shown in Table 4.28.

Table 4.28

Status	n	$\bar{X}$	St. dev	$SE\bar{X}$	df	t	P
Students	242	2.60	0.30	0.019			
					269	0-0.61	0.54
Teachers	29	2.63	0.24	0.046			

A look at Table 4.28 shows that with df 269 and t value of -0.61 there is no significant difference between students and teachers in their perception of the importance of writing skill. This is because the probability level stands at 0.54 (t = -0.61 0.05). As expected or as found in the analysis, the negative value of t might have resulted from the difference between the total number of students and teachers used for this study. Because the t value is less than the P value, the hypothesis is accepted. It means both students and teachers did not perceive writing skill important to agricultural tasks.

Hypothesis 5

This HO states that there is no significant difference between the teachers' and students' views regarding the relevance of reading exercises to agricultural courses..

To test this hypothesis, a chi-square test was done, the results of which are shown in Table 4.28. Chi-square is used to establish the views of respondents on relevance of essay topics, comprehension passages and vocabulary taught in English language course to agriculture.

Table 4.29

Rows	1	2	All	df.	Chi-square	P
Students	248	22	270			
Teachers	15	7	22		12.74	0.05
All	263	29	292	1		

From the Table 4.29 above, it is shown that with df = 1 and chi-square 12.74 P 0.05 there is a significant difference between students and teachers in their perception of the relevance of reading exercises to agricultural courses. This is because the probability level stands at 0.05 (chi-square = 12.74 P 0.05). This is based on the fact that the negative value of chi-square might have resulted from the difference in number between the total number of students and that of teachers used for this study. The hypothesis is therefore rejected. It then means both teachers and students regarded reading exercises in English language course as relevant to agricultural courses.

Hypothesis 6

This HO states that there is no significant difference between the teachers' and students' views regarding the relevance of writing exercises to agricultural courses.

To test this hypothesis, a chi-square test was done, the results of which are shown in Table 4.30 below.

Table 4.30

Rows	1	2	All	df	Chi-square	P
Students	253	20	273			
Teachers	12	9	21		27.69	0.05
All	265	29	294	1		

From the Table 4.30 above, it is shown that with df = 1 and chi-square = 27.69 P 0.05, there is a significant difference between students and teachers in their perception of the relevance of writing exercises to agricultural courses. This is because the probability level stands at 0.05 (chi-square = 27.69 P 0.05). As seen from the analysis, the negative value of chi-square might have resulted from the difference between the total number of students and teachers used for this study. The hypothesis is therefore rejected. It means both teachers and students regarded writing exercises in English language to be relevant to agricultural courses.

Hypothesis 7

This hypothesis states that there is no significant difference between teachers' and students' views regarding the relevance of registers to their courses.

To test this hypothesis, a chi-square test was done and the results are shown in Table 4.31 below.

Table 4.31

Rows	1	2	All	df	Chi-square	P
Students	247	21	268			
Teachers	16	8	24		16.01	0.05
All	263	29	292	1		

From the Table 4.31 above, it is shown that with df = 1 and chi-square = 16.01 P 0.05, there is a significant difference between students' and teachers' in their views regarding the relevance of registers to their courses. This is because the probability level stands at 0.05 (Chi-square = 16.01 P 0.05). As seen in the analysis, the negative value of chi-square might have resulted from the difference between the total number of students and teachers for this study. The hypothesis is therefore rejected. It means both teachers and students regarded the relevance of registers in English language course to agricultural courses.

4.4 Discussion of the Overall Findings

The analysis of agriculture students' questionnaire and that of the academic showed that the four English language skills were found relevant to agriculture related tasks. They were also found very important to the respondents courses. The order of ranking of those skills showed that both students and teachers ranked them in almost equal position viz:

Listening skill was ranked first by both students and teachers and speaking skill as second. Reading skill was ranked third by the students but ranked fourth by the teachers. Writing skill was ranked fourth by the students and as third by their content teachers.

4.4.1 The Importance Attached To Each Skill In Hierarchical Order

Listening Skill	Students(268)	Teachers(29)
For lectures	200(74.63%)	29(100%)
For Group Discussions	147(54.85%)	16(65.19%)
For listening to laboratory/workshop instructions	137(51.12%)	23(79.31%)
For listening to tutorials	120(44.78%)	16(55.17%)
For understanding film/audio visuals in agricultural topics	107(40.67%)	19(65.52%)

A very high percentage of both respondents attached much importance to listening skill in performing the listed tasks.

Speaking Skill	Students(268)	Teachers(29)
For answering questions	178(66.42%)	21(72.41%)
For explaining agricultural concepts theoretically	175(27.99%)	22(75.86%)
For asking questions	159(59.33%)	19(65.52%)
For speaking during tutorials	134(50%)	13(44.83%)
For predicting agricultural events	75(27.99%)	22(75.86%)

A high percentage of respondents ranging from 75% to 28% attached much importance to this skill in performing the listed tasks. This skill is not useful in the laboratory.

Reading Skill	Student(268)	Teachers(29)
For reading tests and examinations	203(75.75%)	21(72.41%)
For reading lecture notes and handouts	161(60.07%)	17(58.62%)
For reading technical terms in your areas of specialization	157(58.58%)	24(82.76%)
For reading textbooks	147(54.85%)	12(41.33%)
For reading agricultural instructions	142(52.99%)	22(75.86%)
For findings basic rules of equipment/machinery	133(49.65%)	14(48.28%)
For reading laboratory/workshop calculations	114(42.54%)	12(41.38%)
For making inferences	107(39.93%)	19(65.52%)

Many agricultural activities are performed in the reading skill more than other skills, and those tasks are done by the students not the teachers.

Writing Skill	Students(268)	Teachers(29)
For note-taking during lectures	186(69.40%)	19(65.52%)
For reporting agricultural activities	186(69.40%)	20(68.93%)
For writing tests and examinations	177(66.04%)	19(65.52%)
For listing technical terms in the area of your specialization	153(57.09%)	13(44.83%)
For field experiment reports	142(52.99%)	23(79.31%)
For writing workshop reports	133(49.63%)	20(79.31%)
For labelling agricultural specimens	125(46.64%)	16(55.17%)

Writing skill for performing the listed tasks are rated much important to agriculture by students and teachers. It could be noted, this order of hierarchy is based on students responses on the basis

that they are the ones performing those activities and the language syllabus envisaged is to be used by them too.

On the relevance of reading comprehension passages to agricultural courses, respondents felt such reading passages should reflect the special areas of the students courses. Since students use English language for general discussions outside the classroom, a topic or two on different situations in a semester could be used for comprehension.

On essay topics, both respondents viewed that writing exercises be relevant to agricultural courses. These should include reporting experiments, describing plants or animal behaviour, labelling and so on.

On vocabulary items, both respondents felt registers of agricultural courses should be reflected in topics used in language classes. For example, in Agricultural Technology, vocabulary peculiar to the fields should be known like site, cultivate, nursery, rich soil etcetera; in Engineering Technology words like mechanics, load, effort, force, forque, in Animal Health and Production words like cattle, insemination, breed, fertilization, motality mordibity, in Home Economics words like dress, gabage, knitting, steaming, wring, storage, extension etc should be understood from comprehension passages and essay topics.

In ranking the four skills, listening skill was ranked first by both respondents (students = 720 points, teachers 79 points). Speaking skill was ranked second by both respondents (students 687 points, teachers 76 points). There was a conflicting view in ranking reading and writing skills. Students ranked reading skill third while teachers ranked it fourth (students 637 points, teachers

70 points). Writing skill was ranked fourth by the students while teachers ranked it third (students 50 points, teachers 71 points).

The difference in opinion of both respondents may not be far fetched. Teachers may not be exposed to much reading as students do in those colleges. Their teachers are experienced ones with at least five years of teaching the same agricultural courses. Such teachers might feel it was not necessary to contact books so as to accumulate knowledge enough before their courses. Since it is the same courses they have been teaching for so lonh, they felt they could be repeating their former lecture notes or handouts. For this reason, they could be repeating the same lecture notes strictly without any additional knowledge; and as such, reading might be viewed as less important to them. Of course, renewal of knowledge by reading up-to-date books helps to up-grade old knowledge and method of teaching.

The difference in opinion on writing skill revealed that according to students writing skill is less important in performing their tasks contrary to how teachers felt. The difference in opinion may be due to the fact that teachers in preparing their lecture notes and handouts involve in much writing than students do. The lengthy notes or handout scripts might just be formed into summary or read along with the teachers in the class. It could be noted that agriculture students are not exposed to lengthy essays but short descriptive reports of practical experiments and writing tests and examinations.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The two questionnaires were set which aimed at finding answers to the following questions:

1. What importance is attached to listening, speaking, reading and writing in performing general, agricultural and laboratory tasks?
2. Do both teachers and students regard the current reading exercises in English language as relevant to their studies?
3. Do both teachers and students regard the current writing exercises in English language as relevant to their studies?
4. Are the students taught registers relevant to their studies?

These questions led to the formation of the following hypotheses which were tested to provide answers for them.

Hypotheses

The study also set out to test the following hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' perception of the significance of listening skill.

2. There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' perception of the importance of speaking skill.
3. There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' perception of the importance of reading skill.
4. There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' perception of the importance of writing skill.
5. There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' views regarding the relevance of reading exercises to agricultural courses.
6. There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' views regarding the relevance of writing exercises to agricultural courses.
7. There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' views regarding the relevance of registers to their courses.

To test these hypotheses, two types of questionnaires were distributed to two groups of respondents. The first was to National Diploma II and Higher National Diploma I students offering five Agricultural courses in five Colleges of Agriculture under Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The other questionnaire was to those students' content teachers. The students' questionnaire contained 37 items and that of teachers' contained 33 items. 268 questionnaires were distributed to students and 29 to content teachers. To enhance objectivity, these questionnaires were distributed, collected and analysed by the researcher in order to find areas of need to be incorporated into English language of agriculture students. The main objective of the study was to identify the language skills

which the students of Agriculture would like to be given prominence in their English language course as well as the various language learning components which they would like to be related to their special fields. Listening, speaking, reading and writing skills as well as comprehension passages, essay topics and vocabulary items were the variables considered in the study.

The statistical procedures adopted in the analysis of the data included frequency count, percentages of those responses and T-test which was used to find out the differences between these two groups of respondents. Chi-square test was used to establish the views of respondents on relev ance of essay topics, comprehension passages and vocabulary taught in English language course to Agriculture.

5.1.1 Findings of the Study

1. It was found that both respondents considered listening, speaking, reading and writing skills important to general, agricultural and laboratory tasks. It means that the difference between the importance attached to listening is significant. It also means both students and teachers perceived listening skill important to those tasks.
2. The result on speaking skill showed that the difference between students' and teachers' perceptions of the importance of it is significant. Therefore, they both perceived the skill important to those tasks.

3. On reading skill, both respondents' perception of the importance of the skill is not significant. It means both did not perceive reading skill important. Students felt reading skill was more important to them but teachers felt it was less important. The reasons might be those tasks under reading are performed by students mostly.

4. The result on writing skill showed there is no significant difference between both respondents of the importance of the skill. Again they both did not perceive writing exercises are peculiar tasks. Short writing exercises are peculiar to agricultural courses. These include reporting workshop, laboratory and field experiments but teachers write lecture notes, seminar and other long essays which could be read in form of handouts or booklets by the students.

5. The result on what to include in English language in reading exercises showed there is a significant different between both respondents in their perception of relevance of those exercises in English language course and agricultural courses. They felt what is taught in reading lessons should be relevant to Agriculture.

6. As regards to writing skill, the result showed there is a significant difference between students' and teachers' views regarding the relevance of writing exercises in English language course to agricultural courses. It means both respondents regarded writing exercises in English course to be relevant to agricultural courses. Essay topics could be encouraged if given as assignments. Students should be encouraged to add to information given in the classroom.

7. The result on relevance of registers taught in English language course to agriculture related registers showed a significant difference of both respondents. It means registers taught should include agricultural registers. For example passages featuring vocabularies associated with those fields could constantly be used to teach both vocabulary as well as reading.

5.2.1 Implications for Students

Students need to read wider before assignments are done. They need to contact books, journals and magazines in the library so as to get more facts to support those gotten from their textbooks or handouts. In this way ability to write long essays effectively could be developed since they will be able to collect much information they need from what they have read. Extra curricula activities like reading debating, press club etc need to be encouraged among students. In such activities, students could use language freely and practically. Improptu speeches could also be encouraged among students in which agricultural topics are given to individuals who will give talks on them during the class. The four language skills are integratively used by students in this way. This is another way students themselves can teach their colleagues what they feel they should be taught.

5.2.2 Implications for Language Teachers

Since both students and teachers considered the four language skills important for the students' academic and professional development, and since the program in use at the time of this study

Jakobovits (1970) says. Therefore, the teachers of English for Specific Purposes are almost totally dependent on the available texts and teaching materials. And since the quality of instruction cannot be higher than the states of knowledge as contained in the best texts available, it may be difficult for the teachers of English to know how to teach English for Agriculture Students because relevant texts in the area are scarce. The study, therefore, has serious implications for curriculum planners and text-book writers who have the tasks of producing relevant texts.

5.3 Conclusion

In view of the needs of Agriculture students in English language, it could be concluded that the English language syllabus in use at the time of study did not incorporate the four language skills which are considered necessary. Students have not been built in those language skills and as such it has not been easy for them to perform their agricultural tasks using English effectively. Also registers relevant to students' special areas were not incorporated in the language syllabus. Based on the findings, it could be concluded also that these students had inadequate exposure to language in use.

The researcher has been able to present agricultural students' language needs which the present language syllabus lacks and has suggested the incorporation of what it lacks that will help to improve the language use of those students. This it is hoped that this study has contributed to the theoretical issues related to

language teaching and has provided results that would be used to produce useful teaching materials in the Colleges of Agriculture or at a tertiary level.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

This study is not without some limitations. Firstly, the use of agriculture students from four states out of thirty states of Nigeria and five Colleges out of fifty-one Colleges of Agriculture in Nigeria limits it to a few geographical regions and limits generalization of the findings to the five Colleges. Secondly, the nature of the instrument used, structured questionnaire in which the respondents made a choice among the options proposed by the researcher, does not permit them either to give their unguided opinions. There is no assurance of the accuracy and genuineness of the responses because there was no opportunity for further probe. The respondents' views may be partial reflections of the needs perceived by the researcher.

5.5 Suggestions for further Research

Similar studies of English language needs of students of Colleges of Agriculture in the southern part of Nigeria are necessary for purposes of comparison and possible harmonization of the English language program.

The same kind of study can be done in other fields such as Engineering, Accounting, Medicine etcetera.

5.6 Recommendations

1. English language syllabus for agriculture students is to include what can benefit the students to use language functionally and effectively. Integration of the four language skills in teaching need to be encouraged among content and language teachers. Those skills need to be developed in the language course.

2. Essay topics treated in language class should include such that will make students look for relevant information in the library or contact specialists around them to get facts they can use to develop long essays.

3. English teachers should work with the content teachers so as to get relevant comprehension passages and to be assisted in registers relevant to agriculture. Comprehension passages should include agricultural related subjects in which students can be exposed to vocabulary of their field.

4. Curriculum planners should design a syllabus for English for agricultural students.

5. Arrangement is to be made for relevant textbooks for English text for students.

6. Activities in which students can use language effectively like debating society, press club etc. should be introduced in the College.

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APPENDIX A

Ordinary Diploma English Language Syllabus:
Proposal

Objective:

The purpose of the course is to improve and develop communication skills (written and oral) of the students in English Language. The focus will be in the three areas of language study:

1. Basic principles of grammar - their practical application so as to improve the students' power of self expression by expanding their vocabulary.
2. Reading comprehension and exercises
3. Composition or essay.

Period.

2 semesters of about 15 weeks each of intensive study of English language for 4 hours per week:

1. Listening skill on agricultural passages for students to perform various language activities . For example, Listening to comprehend lecturers, note taking strategies, main ideas, theories, note conversion from lectures, inferencing, critical evaluation, anticipation etc. = 2 hours per week.
2. Speaking skill discussing agricultural topics practically and theoretically, expressing what affect students and their reactions to them - 1 hour per week.

3. Reading Skill. Reading articles on agricultural topics to make summary, drawing inferences and evaluating etc. = 40 minutes per week.

4. Writing Skill. Essays on agricultural topics. For example descriptive type = 20 minutes per week.

To be able to meet the objectives:

(i) English agricultural textbook is recommended which should be produced by a joint effort of both English and content teachers.

(ii) Students should be encouraged to have the textbook recommended and a standard dictionary.

(iii) Multiple copies of the textbook recommended should be made available in the college library.

The Syllabus (Proposal).

1. Listening Skill. The students need this skill for:-

lectures

understanding film/audio visuals

laboratory/workshop instructions

group discussions

tutorials.

Students need to listen to short passages on agricultural topics to train their listening ability. Questions are to be asked after each topic given.

2. Speaking Skill. The students need this skill for;

answering questions

asking questions

explaining concepts

speaking during tutorials

predicting agricultural events.

Students are to be encouraged to speak during lectures in reaction to what they are taught by discriminating differences among agricultural identities. This skill should be on the time-table.

3. Reading Skill. Students need this skill for;

reading tests and examinations

reading lecture notes and handouts

reading agricultural textbooks/notices

making inferences.

Students need to be encouraged to read library books for relevant information which they need in their fields. Also they should read magazines, newspapers, novels etc for extra information needed in their course.

4. Writing Skill. Students need this skill for;

writing field experiments

workshop/laboratory reports

labelling agricultural specimen

note taking during lectures

writing examinations

listing technical terms.

Students should be encouraged to write authentically in reporting experiments, recording agricultural data, requesting or passing agricultural information and drawing information from foreign language sources. Grammatically passive statements should be used for actions performed in experiments. Students need to know the correct tense forms of verbs used. Vocabulary items is appropriate to each occasion and content should be taught along within their context.

Comprehension passages should include topics gathered from the content teachers of each of the agriculutal courses taught. Vocabulary items of each course should be taught as used in their contents.

Essay topics to include such which help students to develop skills for reporting, describing, instructing, exemplifying exercises.

B

APPENDIX B

ORDINARY DIPLOMA

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SYLLABUS (IN USE)

OBJECTIVE:

The purpose of the course is to improve and develop communication skills (written and oral) of the students in English language. The focus will be in the three areas of language study:

1. Basic principles of grammar - their practical application so as to improve the students' power of self expression by expanding their vocabulary.

2. Reading comprehension and exercises.

3. Composition or essay.

PERIOD:

2 terms of about 10 weeks each of intensive study of English language for 4 hours per week:

1. Grammar and vocabulary drills = 2 hours per week
2. Comprehension (reading and exercises) = 1 hour per week
3. Composition (continuous writing) = 1 hour per week.

To be able to meet the objective:

i) A basic standard textbook should be recommended and followed throughout the 2 terms.

ii) Students should be encouraged to have the basic textbook recommended and a standard Dictionary.

iii) Multiple copies of the textbook recommended should be made available in the College library.

THE SYLLABUS (PROPOSAL)

1. A. Articles:
   - The indefinite article
   - The definite article
   - Countable and uncountable nouns.

   B. Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 1

   C. Composition: Introduction:
      Stages of writing composition:
      - Choosing the subject
      - Collecting and sorting out ideas
      - Writing the essay.

2. A. Adjectives and Pronouns

   B. Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 3

   C. Composition: Paragraph development.

3. A. Adverbs

   B. Comprehension - 'Effective English' Unit 4

   C. Composition - Narrative essay

4. A. Prepositions and Conjunctions

   B. Comprehension 'Effective English' Unit

   C. Composition - Description.

5. A. Introduction to Verbs.
      Ordinary Verbs, Auxiliary verbs
      Tense formation.

   B. Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 6

   C. Composition: Explanation.

6. A. The Present Continuous tense.
   B. Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 7
   C. Composition: Discussion argument.

7. A. The past and perfect tenses.
   B. Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 8
   C. Composition: Letter writing - personal.

8. A. The Future tenses.
   B. Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 9
   C. Composition: Business or formal letters.

9. A. Tenses Continued (revision)
   B. Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 10
   CC. Composition: Letter to the press.

10. A. Exercises on tenses.
    B. Comprehension: Exercises
    C. Composition: short article on a current event.

11. A. Uses of 'Will', W'Would', 'Shall', 'Should'.
    B. Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 11
    C. Composition: A short story

12. A. Direct and reported speech.
    B. Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 12
    C. Composition: Reply to an article in a news-paper.

13. Direct speech and Reported speech continued

Comprehension - 'Effective English' Unit 14

Composition: Annual and monthly reports.

14. Punctuation

Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 15

Composition: Compare and contrast essay.

15. Punctuation continued

Comprehension: 'Effective English Unit 16

Composition: Letter to a parent.

16. Idioms

Composition: Making a speech.

Comprehension: 'Effective English' unit 17

17. Idioms

Comprehension: ' fective English' Unit 18

Composition: Report writing - (Technical).

18. Antonyms

Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 19

Composition: Writing minutes of meetings.

19. Synonyms

Comprehension - 'Effective English' Unit 20

20. Writing a summary of a speech or a passage.
Comprehension: 'Effective English' Unit 21.
Sentence completion - exercises.

BOOKS

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* STRONGLY RECOMMENDED AS BASIC TEXTBOOK AND A DICTIONARY RESPECTIVELY.

APPENDIX C

Division Of Agricultural Colleges
Ahmadu Bello University,
Zaria.

Language Needs of Agricultural Students

Students Questionnaire

Part I: Background Information.

Please fill in the spaces and tick ( ) the boxes where necessary so as to enable the researcher describe those who respond to the questionnaire.

1. College _____

2. Department/Section: _____

3. Year of course (National Diploma II) _____

4 Entry qualification: Tick ( ) as applicable

(i) WASC/GCE ( )

(ii) Grade II Teachers' Certificate ( )

(iii) Pre-National Diploma ( )

5. Grade in English ( ) one

Distinction ( ) Credit ( ) Pass ( )

Fail ( )

6. Has English course in your college helped you to communicate better in your different courses? Tick.

(a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( )

7. If yes, in what areas? Tick as applicable

(i) In discussion ( ) (ii) in writing ( )

(iii) in reading ( ) (iv) in listening ( )

8. How has the English course in the college helped you to communicate outside the classroom? Tick as applicable.

(i) Very ( ) (ii) A little ( )

(iii) Not at all ( ).

Information on Tasks.

Listening (L), speaking (S), reading (R) and writing (W) are language skills which learners of any modern language should develop. In this section, you are required to state the level of importance to you of each skill for the indicated aspect of your study. Three opinions are provided. Not important, Important and Very Important; for each aspect tick ( ) the option that suits you.

Part II a: General Tasks. How important are the skills to three tasks for:

	Not Important				Important				Very Important			
	L	S	R	W	L	S	R	W	L	S	R	W
1. Lecturer?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Listening to tutorials?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Group discussions?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Speaking during tutorials?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Asking questions?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. Answering questions?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7. Reading tests and examinations?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8. Reading lecture notes/handouts?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9. Reading textbooks?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10. Inferences?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11. Note-taking during lectures?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12. Writing tests and examination	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Part IIb: Taks specific to Agriculture. How important are the the skills to these tasks for:

	Not Important	Important	Very Important
	L S R W	L S R W	L S R W
13. Understanding films/audio visuals in your agricultural courses?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
14. Explaining agricultural concepts theoretically?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
15. Predicting agricultural events?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
16. Reading agricultural instructions?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
17. Reading technical terms in your area of specialisations?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
18. Reporting agricultural activities?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
19. Listening technical terms in the area of your specializations?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -

Part IIc: Tasks specific to Laboratory/Field work. How important are the skills to these tasks for

20. Labory/Workshop instructions?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
21. Reading laboratory/workshop calculations?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
22. Finding basic rules of equipment/ machinery?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
23. Labelling agricultural specimens?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
24. Writing field work/experiment reportings?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
25. Writing workshop reports?	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -

26. Do you think that reading comprehension passages should reflect the special areas of your courses?

(a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( ).

27. Do you think essay topics given to you should be relevant to your study? Yes ( ) No ( )

28. Do you think vocabulary items which are relevant to your courses should be included in the English courses?

(a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( )

Part III.

29. In this section you are required to rank the 4 skills listed below 1st, end, 3rd and 4th in order of importance to you. The most important should be ranked 1st, the next in importance should be ranked 2 and etc. The ranks should be indicated in the boxes.

1. Listening ( ) 3. Reading ( )

2. Speaking ( ) 4. Writing ( )

APPENDIX D

D.A.C. COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, A.B.U. SAMARU, ZARIA

LANGUAGE NEEDS OF AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Date:----------19------

Dear Colleague,

This questionnaire is intended to find out the English language needs of students of the College of Agriculture. To improve English langauge course in our Agricultural Colleges, it is felt the contributions of lecturers in agricultural courses would be essential.

Your response will be treated confidentially and used solely for academic purposes.

Yours sincerely,

E. I. Oshagbami (Mrs)

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, A.B.U. ZARIA ENGLISH

SECTION LANGUAGE NEEDS OF AGRICULTURE STUDENTS.

ACADEMIC STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

PART I

Please fill in the spaces below to help describe those who respond to the questionnaire.

1. College: ----------
2. Department/Section: ----------
3. Courses you Teach: ----------
4. (i) National Diploma I : ----------
   (ii) National Diploma II : ----------

PART II

4. INFORMATION ON TASKS:

Listening (L), Speaking (S), Reading (R), and Writing (W) are language skills which learners of any modern language should develop. In this section, you are required to state the level of importance to you of each skill for the indicated aspect of your study. Three opinions are provided. Not important, Important and Very important; for each aspect tick ( ) the option that suits you.

a. General Tasks

How important are the skills to these general tasks for:

../2

	Not Important				Important				Very Important			
	L	S	R	W	L	S	R	W	L	S	R	W
1. Lectures ?												
2. Listening to tutorials?												
3. Group discussions ?												
4. Speaking during tutorials ?												
5. Asking questions ?												
6. Reading tests and examinations ?												
7. Reading lecture notes/ handouts ?												
8. Answering questions ?												
9. Reviewing testbooks ?												
10. Logical expressions ?												
11. Carving out other written assignments in courses you teach ?												
12. Writing tests and Exams?												

b. Tasks Specific to Agriculture

How important are the skills to these tacks for:

	Not Important				Important				Very Important			
	L	S	R	W	L	S	R	W	L	S	R	W
13. Understanding agricultural films/ audio-visuals ?												
14. Explaining agricultural theoretically ?												

../3

	Not Important				Important				Very Important			
	L	S	R	W	L	S	R	W	L	S	R	W
15. Discussing various aspects and events of the course(s) you teach?												
16. Reading agricultural instructions ?												
17. Reading various specialised aspects of agricultural course(s) you teach ?												
18. Writing various reports in the agricultural course(s) you teach												
19. Listing technical terms and order of work ?												

c. Tasks Specific to Laboratory/Field work

How important are the skills to these tasks for:

	Not Important				Important				Very Important			
	L	S	R	W	L	S	F	W	L	S	R	W
20. Listening to laboratory/workshop demonstrations ?												
21. Reading laboratory/ workshop calculations?												
22. Finding basic rules of equipment/machinery ?												

../4

	Not Important	Important	Very Important
23. Labelling agricultural specimens			
24. Writing laboratory experiment reports ?			
25. Writing workshop/field reports?			

26. Do you think that reading comprehension passages should reflect the special areas of students' courses ? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

27. Do you think essay topics given to students should be relevant to their courses of study ? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

28. Do you think vocabulary items which are relevant to the course you teach should be included in the English course ?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

29. In this part, you are required to rank, the 4 skills listed below 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th in order of importance to you. The most important should be ranked 1st, the next in importance should be ranked 2nd e.t.c. The rank should be indicated in boxes.

1. Listening ( )
2. Speaking ( )
3. Reading ( )
4. Writing ( )