

# LITERATURE *AND* LANGUAGE

*A Drama of Life*



A FESTSCHRIFT  
IN HONOUR OF  
**Z. A. ADEJUMO**



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**Edited by  
Adeyemi Daramola  
Olubukola Olugasa**

**BPrint  
Lagos, 2007**

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## FOREWORD

No honour is as good as that which seeks to etch, on a permanent basis, and on the memories of the people, the good works of the honoree.

This festschrift, a worthy compendium of monumental literary works of great magnitude is packaged by the Editors from the contributions of the galaxy of seasoned scholars in honour of no less a person than Dr. Zaccheus Adekunle Adejumo - an acknowledged great scholar and teacher of teachers whose life and contributions to humanity especially the academia, remain remarkably distinguished.

Perhaps nothing else better captured the necessity of this work than the homage paid by Adeyemi Daramola and Olubukola Olugasa, the Editors of this work in the following glowing terms:-

*"Thanks to the Almighty God that Dr. Zaccheus Adekunle Adejumo, one of the great teachers that cut across two centuries - twentieth and twenty-first is alive, healthy and strong to witness the honour being done to him by a few representatives of his numerous students who have become intellectual giants, Deans of Faculties, Heads of Departments, Professors, Doctors in various universities in Nigeria and abroad and, of course, in other professions such as medicine, engineering, accountancy, government, politics, business, insurance, legal practice etc."*

No doubt, Dr. Adejumo would be the happiest person seeing the products of his toil over the years becoming achievers in his own lifetime.

Thus in justifying the glowing tributes, the editors of this work effected this assemblage of scholarly works that cut across literature, language, Education and Mass Communication. In a nutshell, the topics encompass virtually all parts of human endeavour making it a must read for all and sundry. Since the taste of the pudding lies in the eating, I have no hesitation whatsoever in recommending **"LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE A DRAMA OF LIFE"** to students, teachers, the academia and, indeed, the entire public. It is a priceless treasure that everyone should endeavour to possess and keep.

**CHIEF AFE BABALOLA, OFR, CON, SAN, FCI Arb., LL.D**  
**EMMANUEL CHAMBERS,**  
**IBADAN**

JUNE 2007



## PREFATORY REMARKS

*Literature and Language: A Drama of Life* is a celebration of a great teacher, scholar, husband, uncle, brother, father, grandfather, mentor and humanist, **Dr. Zaccheus Adekunle Adejumo**. In the history of academia, many scholars have written texts of great intellectual merits that stand the test of time. Many other prominent scholars have taught great teachers but did not leave their names on textual mark. Ferdinand de Saussure, the great Swiss teacher, and the accredited father of modern linguistics died without writing any academic book. His students thought it wise to collect his lecture notes which resulted in one of the most cited linguistic works in contemporary linguistics study – *Cours de Linguistique Generale* (1916) [English translation by Wade Baskin, *Course in General Linguistics*] (1959). Thanks to the Almighty God that Dr. Zaccheus Adekunle Adejumo, one of the great teachers that cut across two centuries – twentieth and twenty-first, is alive, healthy and strong to witness the honour being done to him by a few representatives of his numerous students who have become intellectual giants, Deans of Faculties, Heads of Departments, professors, doctors in various universities in Nigeria and abroad and, of course, in other professions such as medicine, engineering, accountancy, government, politics, business, insurance, legal practice, etc.

The book has four major sections – Literature, Language, Education and Mass Communication. There are eight articles on literature; nine on language, four on education and three on mass communication – twenty-seven in all. On literature, works of prominent writers cited include those of William Shakespeare, Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Samuel Selvon, Bode Sowande, Niyi Osundare, Femi Osofisan, Tayo Olafioye, Zulu Sofola, Athol Fugard, Christopher Okigbo, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Tanure Ojaide, Ayi Kwei Armah, Tony Uchenna Ubesie, etc. The works of these writers are examined on different degrees of relevance – from socio-political, economic to cultural essence. Others are theatrical aspects of criminality, bureaucratic ineptitude, corruption, social and economic injustice, jurisprudential issues in renaissance drama, Caribbean world, traditional amalgam of myths, legends, rituals and histories, etc. On language, essays cover topics such as language demands of globalization, style in discourse, language acquisition and learning, collocations, syntactic categories, political discourse, code-mixing, Ubesie's use of Igbo language, Yoruba proverbs and incantations. On education, essays range from in-service training for teachers, advertising and teaching, language through literature-in-English, to sexism and public examinations. Finally, on mass communication, works include perception and language issues in mass media, Yoruba language and advertisements, and the roles of indigenous language media.

There is no doubt in our minds that these are works of great scholarly research and effort.

Adeyemi Daramola  
Olubukola Olugasa  
2007



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## CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Foreword   | iii       |
| Prefatory Remarks  | v         |
| Notes on Contributors  | vii       |
| Table of Contents  | ix        |
| <b>PART ONE: LITERATURE</b>  | <b>1</b>  |
| "Please Let Me Shape My Fate": Interrogating the Contemporary in Contemporary Imaginative Writing – Hope Eghegha   | 3         |
| Criminality in Modern Nigerian Drama: A Study of Bode Sowande's <i>Flamingo</i> – Okey Okwechime & Kola Eke  | 13        |
| Elite Corruption: A Reading of Femi Osofisan's <i>Midnight Blackout</i> and Zulu Sofola's <i>Wizard of Law</i> – Felicia Ohwovoriole   | 23        |
| The Politics of Power and Supremacy in Post War Drama: A Critical Appraisal of Soyinka's Death and <i>The King's Horseman</i> and Harold Pinter's <i>The Caretaker</i> – Osita C. Ezenwanebe | 31        |
| Traces of Jurisprudential Issues in Renaissance Drama: A Study of Shakespeare's Plays – Bukola Olugasa   | 41        |
| A Backward Step for a Firmer Footing: Selvon's <i>Turn Again Tiger</i> as Black Orpheus – Julia Udofia   | 49        |
| Modern African Drama: Rethinking Critical Discourse – Henri Oripeloyo  | 57        |
| Osundare and Olafioye: A Commitment to Novelty in Modern African Literature – Stanley Adelodun Oriola  | 63        |
| <b>PART TWO: LANGUAGE</b>  | <b>77</b> |
| The Language Demands of Globalisation in Nigeria – Abiodun Adetugbo  | 79        |
| Invitation as Style and Discourse in Nigerian English – 'Segun Awonusi   | 87        |
| Language Acquisition and Learning in Nigerian English – Adeyemi Daramola   | 99        |
| Exploring Collocations in Nigerian English Usage – Oko Okoro   | 115       |
| Language Use in Ubesie's <i>E Nenebe Eje Oju</i> – Chigozie Bright Nnabuihe  | 143       |



|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <i>Differentiating Between 'Aux' and 'Infl' As English Syntactic Categories</i><br>—Sola Osoba  | 157        |
| A Study of Aspects of Cohesion in Nigerian Political<br>Discourse — Tunde Opeibi  | 163        |
| Language Use: An Exploration of Yoruba Proverbs and<br>Incantations — Moses Ayoola  | 185        |
| Code-Mixing in Nigerian Gospel Choruses — Abiodun Akintayo  | 191        |
| <b>PART THREE: EDUCATION</b>  | <b>199</b> |
| In-Service Training for Primary School Teachers: Need, Focus,<br>Problem and Prospects — Funke Lawal & Nike Adeosun                           | 201        |
| The Relevance of Advertising to the Teaching of English<br>in Secondary Schools — E. A. Adedun  | 211        |
| Enhancing Students' Performance in the English Language through<br>Literature-In-English in the Secondary Schools — Sunday Amuseghan          | 217        |
| Sexism and Public Examination in Nigeria: A Case Study<br>of University Matriculation Examination (Ume) Use<br>of English Test — Sola Owonibi | 231        |
| <b>PART FOUR: MASS COMMUNICATION</b>  | <b>243</b> |
| Perception and Language Issues in the Mass Media — Femi Onabajo   | 245        |
| Yoruba Language Advertisements in Indigenous Language<br>Newspapers — Soji Alabi  | 253        |
| Mobilising Nigerians towards National Census: The Role<br>of Indigenous Language Media — Sunday Oloruntola                                    | 259        |
| <b>INDEX</b>  | <b>265</b> |



## IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: NEED, FOCUS, PROBLEM AND PROSPECTS♦

### *Abstract*

*The paper focuses on the need for in-service training for primary school teachers of English Language and its benefits for the teachers, learners and the educational system in general. A analysis of the content, implementation and perceived effects of two workshops organized by a publishing company for primary school teachers was done. Topics covered in the workshop include effective language teaching strategies, development and use of instructional materials, understanding and interpreting the curriculum, selecting textbooks, learners' need, and upgrading teachers' skills and competencies in speaking, reading and grammar. The workshop was found to be rich in content and activity, adequate in pedagogy and effective in meeting the needs of the participants. The paper concluded by suggesting the need for regular workshop and seminar for teachers at all levels of education.*

### **Introduction**

Learners' performances or achievements are intricately linked to teachers' competence and classroom practices. In a situation where the teacher is knowledgeable in content, creative in the use of pedagogy and effective in classroom management, his/her students are expected to perform well. Ezeokoli (2002) observed that teacher effectiveness is logically measurable by the amount of learning his/her teaching induces. Brodhagen (1998) also noted that good teachers are the most important elements of successful learning.

The professional training of teachers is two-fold; pre-service training and in-service training. The pre-service training involves exposure to varied concepts of teaching and learning. In addition to this is a rigorous exposure to the content of different subject areas depending on the area of specialization of each teacher. For the primary school teachers, it is often a process of three years post-secondary education leading to the award of Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE). Such certificate, according to Olude (2004) is an approval or a testimony of an individual's potentials as a teacher, and not that of competence. Despite the rigorous exposure to 'what to teach' and how to teach it, the teacher's actual competence is determined in the classroom situation.

In the course of his/her professional practice, a competent teacher, according to Williams (1990) needs to have a knowledge of variety of approaches to teaching, be familiar with established teaching methods and get acquainted with new ones. He/she should be able to choose, from a variety of sources, the method that is most appropriate for his/her learners, for himself/herself and for the specific teaching environment. In addition, he/she needs to up-date the knowledge in the content of

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♦ 'Funke Lawal (Mrs.), PhD, Professor, and 'Nike Adeosun (Mrs.), PhD, Department of Curriculum Studies, University of Lagos, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria.



his/her areas of specialization. Curricula of various subjects are often reviewed and new methods of teaching incorporated. He/she should be able to interpret the curricula and the teaching techniques to meet specific teaching situations.

At the primary school level, according to Obanya (2002), teachers are usually generalists who are expected to be competent in all content areas of the curriculum. To teach English language, they have greater challenges. They among other things must be worthy models of the linguistic and communication skills they want to impart and also have a clear idea of the best methods to achieve their goals. Most primary school teachers in Nigeria could not meet these challenges as they are noted with the following deficiencies: poor pronunciation, grammatical incompetence, poor writing skills, and so on.

The pre-service training of teachers cannot possibly equip them enough to meet the challenges. This is because, in addition to changes in the curricula and pedagogy, the classroom situations they were exposed to while training are often different from what they face daily. There is therefore a demand for a lot of initiative from the teacher to be able to meet up with his/her job specifications. Every teacher needs to be aware of the opportunities, programmes and resources to make him/her grow professionally in his/her area of specialization, in order to help students grow academically and remain in competition with other professions.

In-service training helps to adequately handle these challenges. Seminars and workshops are organized and implemented to equip teachers with necessary skills and competencies and expose them to innovations in their areas of specialization. though the workshops/seminars are often far in between, they are assumed to be of benefit to the teachers who are expected to use such new knowledge and attitude to improve their mastery of the subject matter and classroom practices. Ezeokoli (2002) noted that attendance at workshops and seminars is one of the hallmarks of an effective teacher.

In order to ascertain that teachers find such workshops/seminars useful and are disposed to practice the new ways of approaching their work, appraisal is necessary. The teaching and learning can be improved through feedback from teachers on the benefits of the workshops attended. The paper therefore seeks to evaluate two sets of workshops organized by a publishing company for primary school English language teachers and determine, from the perceptions of the teachers, the benefits of these workshops. Specifically, the study addresses the following questions.

1. How do teachers respond to workshops/seminars?
2. What is the quality of these programmes?
3. Are the expectations/needs of the teachers actually met in these programmes?

#### **Clarification Of Concepts: Workshops/Seminars.**

Workshops and seminars are structured opportunities for teachers to learn from facilitators and leaders with specialized expertise as well as from peers. They usually



occur outside the classroom and often bring together teachers from different locations for common experience. The structures of workshops and seminars provide teachers with opportunities to connect with outside sources of knowledge in a focused way. Teachers do need time away from the classroom to reflect, interact with other educators and practice new techniques in a safe setting. (Brodhagen, 1998). According to him, workshops and seminars are designed to include a variety of modes through which teachers can process information. These include journal-writing, analysis of case studies, role playing, small group discussions, engaging in problem solving and creating instructional materials.

Most teachers after their professional qualification do not have opportunities to develop themselves professionally, either from lack of interest, or fund or they don't even see the need for such. For this group of teachers, attending workshops and seminars is the only way to get up-to-date information on new initiatives. Hence there is need to emphasize workshop attendance. However, teachers in Nigeria don't often have the opportunity to attend workshops. One major constraint is finance. According to Adeshina (2004), unlike their counterparts in the civil service or other sectors of the economy, teachers are often made to finance such training themselves; hence most don't answer the call for retraining. Even after undergoing the rigours, it doesn't fetch them any recognition. Also, Obanya (2002) noted that the overload imposed by regulations that require primary school teachers to work for eight periods a day not only makes serious application of effective teaching principles impossible, but also makes the yearn for professional development difficult. He however emphasized that since effective curriculum is determined by what teachers usually do in the classroom, most of Nigeria's curriculum enrichment work will have to focus on teacher improvement.

### **The Study**

The subjects for the study were male and female primary school teachers and administrators selected from some private schools in Lagos. They were participants at two workshops organized by a publishing company which was aimed at enriching teachers' knowledge of English Language as well as effective techniques of its teaching. Invitations to the workshops were randomly sent out to one hundred private schools within identified eight zones in Lagos state. A minimum of two representatives were expected from each school. The workshops lasted eight days (one day per zone) and between one hundred and forty to one hundred and fifty (140-150) teachers attended each day, giving a total of one thousand, one hundred and eighty-four (1,184) teachers/participants. The characteristics of the participants are fully discussed under results. The instruments used in the study comprised:

- a) An observation schedule to determine the level of participation during the sessions.
- b) A checklist of content (skills and sub skills covered) and the activities explored in the workshop.
- c) Teachers' questionnaire to determine their workshop experiences and to elicit responses on the perceived benefits of the workshop.



Data analysis involved the use of descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages.

## Results

The results are taken according to the research questions.

### a) Teachers' Response to the workshops:

The records of attendance showed that invitation letters were sent to one hundred schools within each zone. Each school was expected to send two participants. In effect, one thousand, six hundred teachers were expected to participate in the workshop. Two hundred teachers were to be present each day. However, between 140-150 teachers were present each day, giving an approximate of 70% attendance at the workshop. This is rather fair. An interview with the organizers revealed that the turnout was quite impressive compared with their previous efforts. This is attributed to the fact that the teachers/schools had to be highly mobilized through constant reminder notes and text messages.

### b) Focus/content of the Workshop:

The programmes covered sessions on all the four skills of language – listening, speaking, reading and writing. The discrete nature of each of these skills was highlighted as well as their integration. The concept of development of communicative competence of learners was emphasized. Teachers were exposed to the primary school English language curriculum, its objectives, its contents, and how teachers can achieve the stated objectives with/without the aid of textbooks. They were also exposed to current approaches, methods, and techniques of language teaching. Learners' differences and needs were also explored. Lectures were given, discussions generated and teachers/participants were made to develop and engage in some learning activities such as drilling, demonstration, reading and writing exercises, developing dialogues, discussion, role playing, repetition, conversations, substitution and story writing. All these activities were practically illustrated. Teachers' concerns were also addressed during the question and answer sessions. From the responses of the participants, the following subjects (listed in Table 1) were perceived as the focus of the workshop.

**Table 1: Workshop Focus**

| <i>Responses</i>                        | <i>Percentage of Respondents</i> |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Knowledge of subject matter             | 86.3%                            |
| Techniques of teaching                  | 83.2%                            |
| Better Interpretation of the curriculum | 56.4%                            |
| Better understanding of learners        | 57.2%                            |
| Classroom interaction                   | 69.6%                            |
| Developing Instructional materials      | 69.3%                            |

From the responses of the participants, knowledge of subject matter and better techniques of teaching were the most significant of the focus of the workshop.



### **c) Needs/Expectations of Participants:**

Before this could be determined, some salient issues need to be discussed. These include the following:

#### **(i) Characteristics of the Participants.**

The teachers were drawn from private schools. While 35.6% of them were males, 64.4% are females. This is a pointer to the fact that teaching at the primary school level is dominated by the female gender. The ages of the participants range from 21-51 (and above). However, age-range 21 - 30 years dominated teaching at this level, with a percentage of 42.8, followed by age range 31-40 years with a percentage of 38.0. This showed that teaching at this level is dominated by able and agile young men and women who not only possess the ability to cope with their work load, but also have the stamina to pursue self improvement and professional competence. The qualifications of the teachers range from SSCE to masters degree level. However, the dominant qualification is NCE (Nigerian Certificate in Education) with a percentage of 43.2 percent. This is followed by masters degree with a percentage of 19.2 and by holders of National Diploma with a percentage of 12.4. SSCE holders came last with a percentage of 4.4. This is a pointer to the fact that the teaching profession at the primary school level is still averagely dominated by qualified people.

The teaching experiences of the participants also range from 1 – 16 years and above. However the dominant group is those of below 5 years experience, with a percentage of 42.4. Those of below 10 years experience follow, with a percentage of 31.2 and by those of 16 years and above with a percentage of 16.8. By implication, the majority of the teachers have below 10 years teaching experience. This could be a pointer that these are young graduates from schools who are still familiar with the current trends and innovations in the teaching profession. This notwithstanding, there is still the need for in-service training for them due to the reasons mentioned at the beginning of this paper.

The professional status of the participants is of three main categories – classroom teachers (49.2%) school administrators (31.2%) and school proprietors (15.2%). Though the workshop was intended for classroom teachers, interviews with the school administrators/proprietors showed that these groups attended the workshop in order to adopt the “train the trainer’s approach” where they pledge to organize mini-workshops for their teachers and share the experiences gained from the workshop with them. The classroom teachers also made the same promise.

#### **(ii) Participants’ Workshop Experience.**

This aspect was not encouraging, as according to the participants, there were no opportunities for workshop attendance for most teachers. Thirty-nine percent of the participants had never attended any workshop, 31.6% had attended about three workshops while only 29.6% had attended between 5 and 25 workshops. This is



rather too low. It is attributed to the fact that most organizations responsible for the in-service training of teachers hardly plan and implement training programmes. In response to the question 'who organizes the workshops previously attended', the responses are shown in Table 2:

**Table 2: Organizers of Previous Workshops Attended by the Teachers**

| Workshop Organizers                        | Percentage of respondents |
|--|---------------------------|
| Employers (private schools)                | 66.8%                     |
| Research Institutes                        | 16.4%                     |
| Publishers                                 | 72.0%                     |
| Teachers' Associations                     | 23.2%                     |
| Others (NGOs, Charity organizations, etc.) | 10.2%                     |

This implied that of all the institutions charged with the responsibility of organizing workshop for teachers, only the textbook publishers have been able to meet this challenge with little efforts by the private schools. However, interview with participants showed that the workshops organized by the schools are always between school administrators/proprietors and the school staff, and that often, no effort is made to involve experts with well organized programmes in the workshops. However, those with workshop experience observed that they have been exposed to the following areas, listed in order of emphasis: better techniques of teaching (83.2%), understanding new teaching concepts (78.6%), development and use of instructional materials (63.2), and exposure to the process of textbook selection (57.6%).

Also, in response to the question in frequency of workshop attendance, 38.8% of respondents had no record of workshop attendance, while 28.4% attend workshops very occasionally while the rest attended once or twice in a year. This fact corroborated the earlier assertion that workshop attendance rate is not very encouraging.

**d) Needs/expectations of the participants at the workshop under study.**  
The experiences gained by the participants at the particular workshop vary. This is presented in table 3.

**Table 3: Workshop Experiences**

| Experiences                              | Yes   | No    |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1. Better techniques of teaching.        | 83.2% | 16.8% |
| 2. Better Interpretation of Curriculum.  | 43.6% | 56.4% |
| 3. Better knowledge of grammar.          | 86.3% | 13.7% |
| 4. Better understanding of learners.     | 57.2% | 42.8% |
| 5. Better class interaction.             | 70.8% | 29.2% |
| 6. Better use of Instructional Materials | 63.2% | 36.8% |
| 7. Understanding new teaching concepts   | 78.8% | 21.2% |
| 8. Developing broader perspectives       | 56.4% | 43.6% |
| 9. Insight into new pedagogy             | 64.0% | 36.0% |



|   |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|
| 10. Exposure to process of text selection                             | 58.0% | 42.0% |
| 11. Devising Instructional materials                                  | 64.0% | 36.0% |
| 12. Opportunity for interaction with others.                          | 69.6% | 30.4% |
| 13. Gaining better understanding of learners.                         | 68.8% | 31.2% |
| 14. Changing focus of classroom Interaction from teaching to learning | 72.0% | 28.0% |
| 15. Effective class management  | 71.6% | 28.4% |
| 16. Clarification of problems/issues                                  | 64.8% | 35.2% |

From the above table, one can deduce that the workshop is perceived to be beneficial to the participants. The most perceived benefits of the workshop are understanding 'better techniques of teaching' and new teaching concepts' which take the highest percentage of responses (83.2%) and (78.8%) respectively, followed by 'changing the focus of classroom interaction from teaching to learning (72%), then 'effective class management (71.6%)'. The least benefit is seen in 'developing broader perspectives of teaching' with a percentage of 56.4%. This shows that the workshop was able to meet the needs/expectations of the participants.

To determine the level of adequacy of the content of the workshops, the following responses are noted table 4:

**TABLE 4: Workshop Content Adequacy**

| SKILLS     |                        | RESPONDENTS |
|------------|------------------------|-------------|
|            | Listening              | 95.6%       |
|            | Reading                | 92%         |
|            | Writing                | 86.4%       |
| SUB-SKILLS | Phonetics              | 84.8%       |
|            | Vocabulary             | 82.4%       |
|            | Grammar                | 88.4%       |
|            | Composition            | 75.6%       |
| ACTIVITIES | Demonstration          | 84.6%       |
|            | Substitution           | 60%         |
|            | Role playing           | 85.6%       |
|            | Group work             | 72.0%       |
|            | Peer work              | 63.2%       |
|            | Transactional dialogue | 79.2%       |
|            | Drills                 | 80.8%       |

The overall response of the participants showed that the workshop on the whole was very useful (98.8%) and very adequate (98.9%). One unique feature of the workshop, according to the participants, was the incorporation of knowledge of subject matter, especially grammar, spoken English skills and story-writing activities in the workshop. They appreciated the exposure and they were unanimous (100% of participants) in requesting for more time, more exposure, and more workshops in the areas.



## **Conclusion & Recommendation**

It is non-debatable that high quality of professional development is an essential component of any effective educational programme, hence it is imperative that adequate attention should be given to the professional development of teachers, both at pre-service and in-service levels. Teachers need to be provided with curriculum development and self-development opportunities that will enhance their subject content expertise and instructional skills and to challenge them to present more challenging and stimulating instruction to their students. Apart from this, teachers need to be aware of the innovations and changes in the world and make appropriate choices in their classrooms concerning the curriculum, teaching strategies and technology. In essence, pre-service teachers must have improved quality of teacher training and in-service teachers must have continuing professional education.

One way of ensuring this is to make sure teachers have adequate time for workshop attendance. Ordinarily, teachers' workload does not give enough room for this. A teacher's daily responsibility consists of many different things - planning, teaching, grading, meetings, report cards and other administrative duties. Often, the consideration that if they go to meetings/workshops, they lose teaching time or fall behind the curriculum debars teachers' professional growth. To combat this, schools/educators can organize workshops to fall on summer vacations. In cases where it is imperative to organize such during school sessions, the courses can take shorter durations and arrangement should be made for substitute teacher(s) to relieve the classroom teachers.

Workshop attendance should not be a one-time act like most of our respondents experienced. Research in teacher change (Little, 1993) reveals that one-time workshop is unlikely to result in significant, long-term change in the practice of a teacher. Rather, professional development requires multiple opportunities to learn, practice and reinforce new behaviors. According to him, (Little, 1993), a single workshop may be a good kick-off for learning, but additional opportunities are needed for long-lasting change. It is appalling that of the institutions concerned with education (employer/school, research institutes, teachers' association, textbook publishers and government), only textbook publishers have been able to afford the participants the opportunity to attend workshops. Every new educational innovation in the country would require orientation for teachers, hence, concerned bodies should take up the tasks. There should be incentives for teachers for attending these workshops so that they will have something to look towards.

Aside attending workshops, there are other professional development opportunities teachers can pursue. One of these includes reading professional publications/journals. With this, teachers can easily stay up-to-date on the trends in their areas of specialization.



Also, research reports in our institutions can be developed into monographs and booklets and circulated to the classroom teachers who are supposed to be the end-users of these reports. The usual practice is for thesis and dissertations to end either in libraries or published in professional journals where these teachers hardly have access to them. Schools, especially those used in our researches should be given feedbacks so that the teachers/students can gain insight into the research findings.

Teachers also need to realize that workshop attendance is not for the employer's benefits, but for their own self-improvement. As Olujide (2004) puts it 'in service training is a life-long form of education for the improvement of the teacher and the educational system (p.226).

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