

TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF INNOVATIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN ONDO STATE

BABALOLA Joseph Olurotimi and AGOYE Deborah Aanuoluwapo

Arts and Language Education Department
Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti

Abstract

This study examined the effect of innovative teaching strategies on students' academic achievement in English language in Ondo State. The population consisted of 161 Junior Secondary school three students made up of 103 males and 58 females selected from Federal Science and Technical College, Ikare-Akoko Ondo State. A total of 20 students (10 males) and (10 females) randomly selected from the school that constituted the sample. The twenty students were divided into two groups-Experimental and Control. Group A was used as experimental group while group B was used as the control group. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The data collected were analysed using mean and percentages to answer the research questions while t-test and chi-square statistics were used to test the hypotheses. The major findings showed that the students taught with Innovative Teaching Strategy (ITS) performed significantly better than those of the Control Group. The study also discovered that there was no significant gender difference in the students' achievement in English language. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that innovative teaching strategy should be adopted as a more effective strategy of teaching English Language at the Junior Secondary School levels.

Keywords: Teaching, Innovative Teaching Strategy, Traditional Teaching Strategy

Introduction

In Nigeria, English is the official language, it is used to perform most functions because it provides access to most important scientific, technological and cross-cultural domains of knowledge and interactions. It plays a crucial role in religion, education, politics, law and literacy. It is the major means by which people, regardless of ethnic and tribal background can communicate between and among themselves. In education, the English language plays a significant role. It is the instrument of communication in the primary, post primary institutions, higher institutions and tertiary institution. Therefore, secondary school students need effective knowledge of the English language to function properly or

perform better in all the domains of human activities. English language is spoken throughout the land: in families, schools, colleges, universities, churches, mosques etc. It is one language that has been widely used throughout the land. It is the medium of instruction in schools and a compulsory school subject that must be passed at all levels of education. In Nigeria, a good command of English is a function of quality education on the parts of the citizens; if one cannot speak English fluently, he or she is considered an illiterate or half educated. Therefore, the evidence of being an educated person is to be able to speak English very well, articulate the vocabulary distinctively and correctly too. It is also an important language, because it is the only medium through which

understanding is enhanced in formal transactions among the officials of government in departments, agencies, parastatals, and ministries. This language engenders smooth running of government programmes by the public servants.

However, it is disheartening to note that the poor performance of students in English language at public examinations in recent times has been explained as a major cause of decline in the general academic performance and standard of education in Nigeria. The Daily Trust of Wednesday, August 25, 2010 reports that “seventy-five per cent (75%) of candidates who sat for May/June WAEC 2010 examinations failed to meet the minimum entry requirement into tertiary institutions. The recently released WAEC results indicates that over seventy percent (70%) fails in November/December results in 2010. Eighty-six thousand, six hundred and twelve (86,612) candidates, representing 29.17 percent of the total number of candidates who sat for the NOV/DEC examinations of West African Examination Council (WAEC), obtained credits in five subjects and above, including English language and Mathematics. Again, the WAEC has released its May/June 2014 WASSCE results, recording mass failure in Mathematics and English language. Head of National Office, WAEC Charles Eguridu, while announcing the results said “A total of 529,425 candidates; representing 31.28 percent obtained credits. According to him when compared to the 2012 and 2013 May/June WASSCE, there was marginal decline in the performance of candidates as 38.81 percent was recorded in 2012 and 36.57 in 2013.

The poor performance of students in English language in public examinations could be traced to some factors which include teachers’ attitude toward innovative teaching strategies. Most Nigerian secondary school English

language teachers fail to take into account the dynamic nature of English language but they continued to feed students with definitions and drills in grammar, vocabulary and speech work. The traditional contents/knowledge-oriented teaching is still very much practiced by some teachers. Abdullahi, (2003) is of the view that teachers mostly prefer to use traditional ways of teaching which they have been familiar with as they were taught, which do not necessarily aid proper learning. Sometimes teachers of English Language do not consider the learners’ age, the topic, the time and the background of the learners in choosing the strategy to be used in teaching and this affects the level of learning of the students. Ya’u, (1993) categorically says that successful achievement of stated objectives in teaching and learning is always associated with using the right technique. Therefore, it is clear to us that poor attitude of teachers toward innovative strategies in English language teaching can lead to poor performance among secondary students in Nigeria.

A teacher is an important element in teaching and learning process because he/she follows the curriculum to ensure that students receive all the necessary knowledge needed in the language class. The major reason for teaching at any level of education is to bring out significant change in the learner’s behaviour (Tebabal & Kahssay, 2011). Most of the traditional strategies are teacher-centered with little or no activities for the students and this makes them passive learners in teaching programme. Student centered strategies are more effective and more encouraged because they embrace the concept of discovery learning (Brindley, 2015). Transmitting knowledge requires teachers to use the appropriate strategies that best suit the learners, appropriate to realize the stated objectives that will promote the desired learning outcomes. The poor academic performance by majority of the students in English Language is basically linked

with the usage of ineffective teaching strategies by teachers who transmit knowledge to students. Therefore, teachers need to be conversant with numerous teaching strategies for better delivery (Adunola, 2011).

Daluba (2013) opines that, the choice of a particular strategies of teaching by the teacher is determined by the number of factors which include the contents to be taught, the objectives which the teachers plan to achieve, and the ability and the willingness of the teacher to improvise if conventional teaching aids are not available. According to Ayeni (2011), teaching is a process that involves bringing about desirable changes in students so as to achieve specific, outcomes. In order for the strategy used for teaching to be effective, Adunola (2011) maintains that teachers need to be conversant with various teaching strategies that take recognition of the magnitude of complexity of the concepts to be taught.

The pedagogical knowledge base of teachers includes all the required cognitive knowledge for creating effective teaching and learning environments. The teacher's knowledge can be categorised into two: general pedagogical knowledge (principles and strategies of classroom management and organisation that are cross-curricular) and pedagogical content knowledge (the knowledge of a specific subject and the pedagogical knowledge for teaching a particular subject). The latter is considered as the most fundamental element for teachers' knowledge and has been studied widely. Though there have not been much studies on the general pedagogical knowledge, even though it has been indicated that it is essential for developing quality teachers. Teacher's knowledge is used in decision making and this is suggesting that in order to make informed pedagogical decisions, teachers should be able to analyse and evaluate specific learning episodes, in combination with contextual and situational factors and to be able to

connect all this information to their specific knowledge of the teaching-learning process in order to guide the subsequent teaching processes. Thus, making good decision on the methods of teaching that hinge on the quality of the knowledge held by the teacher which can be adjudged as his/ her knowledge of innovative strategies.

There is an assumption by some researchers that gender could influence learning of English language. Consequently, Murni (2018) in research on gender differences in English language teaching at Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia concludes that gender differences are important aspect to be considered in English language teaching. However, the extent to which knowledge is dependent on gender appears not to be resolved yet. Some authorities such as (Eze, 2000; Gbodi and Laleye 2006) believe that good teaching should break the boundaries of gender. This is in line with the postulate of Babalola and Oyinloye (2012) that the concept that one sex naturally performs better than the other should be cast off. But Opara, (2001) opines that knowledge is gender-related. The students' academic achievement in secondary schools in English language has been worrisome and there are various concerns from general public on this worsened academic achievement.

Innovative Teaching Strategy in English Language Teaching

As for the issue of innovations in English language teaching process, when it comes to English language teaching, there is no one -size- fits all strategy. Each student is different and therefore requires a unique strategy to learning. It should be stated that English language teaching is significantly evolving under the influence of technology advances. Mobile devices, Whatsapp, Facebook, Goggle Classroom, Multimedia technology, have gained popularity as

tools of teaching English language and contributed to the current changes in the teaching process. Clearly, information and communication technology is an important tool in English language teaching (Marchlik, Wichrowska Zubala, 2021).

Innovative teaching strategy improves the creativity and problem – solving, by providing the students with real- world experiences or corresponding circumstances are fabricated in the classroom using various innovative strategies. Also, in contrast to the traditional teaching strategies, innovative teaching strategies allow for two - way dialogue; Students are allowed to share their thoughts on a subject, topic and mistakes can be corrected right away. In the innovative strategies, teacher serves as the facilitator in the classroom, by guiding and supporting the student’s exploration of ideas. Innovative teaching strategies in English language are numerous, few out of it are:

- Instructional Conversations
- Gamification,
- Help from the multimedia etc

Instructional Conversations

This is a generally well known as a way to English language teaching. These conversations provide opportunities for students to talk about the main ideas they are learning in content- area units and enhance both students' conceptual learning and their linguistics abilities. This strategy is interesting and engaging, and students are active participants, building on classmates’ ideas with their own comments. Teachers are participant in the discussion, making comments much like the students do, but they also assume the teacher’s role to clarify misconceptions, ask questions and provide instruction. Instructional conversations are useful for helping

students grapple with important ideas they are learning in thematic units. Goldeberg identifies the following content and linguistic elements of an instructional conversation:

- the conversation focuses on a content- area topic
- students activate or build knowledge about the topic during the instructional conversation
- teachers provide information and directly teach concepts when necessary
- teachers promote students' use of more complex vocabulary and language to express the ideas being discussed
- students participate actively in the instructional conversation and make comments that build upon and expand classmates' comments
- the classroom is a community of learners where both students' and teachers' comments are respected and encouraged.

Gamification

Game is a natural means for students to understand the world around them (Klimova (2015). Students and children generally tend to like games and want to play them more and more. Traditional methods dictated for study and games to be separate but the fact remains that the students tend to be more interested in playing games rather than sitting down to study. Any logical reasoning would dictate us to combine the two aspects to solve the problem. The games part of learning would help the students keep their interest as the desire to win is very strong: It keeps us going and when included with different aspects of learning the learning process would continue almost throughout the day without the children getting tired or bored of studying. Moreover, Martinson Barbara (2008) highlights the fact that any game that is played in

the classroom should have three attributes: 1. It must be fun; 2. It must be age appropriate; 3. It must have some educational merit. The most important part of any language is the vocabulary. To understand the meaning of the words and to use them in day-to-day activities may be very difficult. Games like scrabble, housie etc. have been designed for this specific purpose. (Lorenzetti, 2016).

These games are just based on words and help the students develop their vocabulary. In addition, these games can be played to help improve the word database of the students such as simple dictation competitions, synonym competitions, words puzzle, anagrams and hangman word search, crossword, jigsaw and brain teasers. All these games are very addictive and help a lot in improving our vocabulary as whenever the student hears a new word the first question that comes up is "what is its meaning?" and in this way the vocabulary improves and most of the times we don't even have to consult the dictionary

Helps from the Multimedia in Artificial Intelligence Age

Multimedia sources like songs, movies, TV series, magazines, newspapers play a very vital role at improving our mode of expression in the use of language. We don't even realize that they have helped us. We just wake up one fine day and realize that we are better than we were yesterday. Such sources can be used to help the students improve their language. But great precautions must be taken. This method should be used in the final stages of learning as that is the only place where there is no scope of damage as most of the movies and songs etc. use colloquial English most of the times which is grammatically wrong and it is very important that the students understand this fact so that they do not

use that form of the language in their everyday usage, especially in formal setting. Apart from this, the source could be very helpful as it is not programmed in the style of traditional classroom setting. This is something that the students could do in their spare times. Songs are the best way to communicate how to use a language to express our feelings. Movies are a very common pastime but apart from that most of the times they are also very instructional and educational. Also, this method appeals to the students as most of the times they are able to connect with the songs and the movies which help them understand the meaning of expressions, usage of tools of the language like comparisons, personifications etc. These sources help them understand why such tools are necessary and also help them understand their usage. Hence this method is again very effective in teaching the language.

Statement of the Problem

Students' performance in English language especially in various external examinations organized in Nigeria is poor in spite of its importance in the school curriculum. This trend which has been noticeable over the years has continued to get worse and this is of great concern to educators and the general public. There is the need to give prompt and serious attention to address the present anomaly in the teaching and learning of English language. The conventional strategy of teaching English language might not have been yielding the desired result, there is the need to consider another strategy such as the innovative teaching strategies which could be of immense assistance to both the teachers and the learners. The focus of this work therefore is to determine the effect of Teacher's knowledge of innovative teaching strategy on English

language academic achievement and the extent to which the achievement varies between the genders.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to:

1. determine the English language mean achievement scores of students taught with innovative teaching strategy (ITS) and those taught with traditional teaching strategy (TTS).
2. examine the English language achievement scores of male and female students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the English language mean achievement scores of students taught with innovative teaching strategy (ITS) and those taught with traditional teaching strategy (TTS)?
2. What is the English language achievement scores of male and female students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS? '

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated for the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the English language mean achievement scores of junior secondary school three students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS.
2. There is no significant difference in English language achievement scores of male and female students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS.

Methodology

The study adopted quasi-experimental design. The population consists of one hundred and sixty-one (161) Junior Secondary School Three

(JSS III) students of Federal Science and Technical College, Ikare-Akoko, Ondo State. A total of twenty (20) students (10 males and 10 females) randomly selected from the JSS III classes in the College constituted the sample. Ten of the selected students were used as experimental group while the other ten were used as the control group. The instrument used for the study was a self-designed Achievement Test. Six experienced English language teachers helped to revalidate the instrument. The innovative teaching strategy teachers are exposed to some innovative teaching strategies and they taught those in the experimental group with the selected innovative strategies while those in the control group were taught through the conventional strategy. The Two research questions and two hypotheses were raised and formulated respectively for this study. The research questions were answered with the mean and percentage while the hypotheses were tested with t-test and chi-square statistics

Results

Research Question 1: What is the mean achievement scores in English language of students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS?

Table 1: Mean achievement scores in English language of students taught with ITS and TTS

Strategy	Mea
Innovative Teaching Strategy (ITS)	65.6
Traditional Teaching Strategy (TTS)	55.7

Table 1 shows mean scores of 65.6 and 55.7 for ITS group and TTS group respectively. The mean score for the ITS group was 65.6 while that of the TTS group was 55.7. This shows that students in the ITS group had a higher mean achievement score than the students in TTS group.

Research Question 2: What is the

English language achievement scores of male and female students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS?

Table 2: English language achievement scores of male and female students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS

Strategy	Percentage	
	Male	Female
Innovative Strategy (ITS) Teaching	66.0	57.6
Traditional Strategy Teaching	55.4	56.0

Table 2 shows English language achievement scores of 66.0% and 57.6% for male and female students in the ITS group. The male students have a percentage of 66.0% which is slightly higher than their female counterparts (57.6%). In the TTS group, male students have score of 55.4% which is lower than that of their female

counterparts (56.0%) although with small margin.

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between English language mean achievement scores of junior secondary three students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS

Table 3: English language mean achievement scores of students taught with innovative teaching strategy (ITS) and traditional teaching strategy (TTS)

Strategy	N	Mean	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
ITS	10	65.6	9.12	18	2.59	2.11	
TTS	10	55.7	7.97				

*Significant

As shown in table 3, the t-cal (2.59) is greater than the t-crit (2.11). Since the t-cal is greater than t-crit, the null hypothesis earlier stated that there is no significant difference between the mean achievements scores in English language of junior secondary three students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS is therefore rejected.

This means there is significant difference in the mean of the two groups.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in English language achievement scores of male and female students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS.

Table 4: English language achievement scores of male and female students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS

Strategy	Male	Female	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
ITS	66	57.6	1	0.31	3.84	NS'
TTS	55.4	56				

ITS = Innovative Teaching Strategy; TTS = Traditional Teaching Strategy; NS= Not Significant.

As shown in table 4, the t-crit of 3.84 is greater than the t-cal of 0.31. Since the t-crit is greater than t-cal, the null hypothesis earlier stated that there is no significant difference in English language achievement scores of male and female junior secondary three students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS is hereby retained. This means that there is no gender difference in the English language achievement scores of junior secondary three students taught with ITS and those taught with TTS.

Discussion of Findings

The thrust of this study is to find out whether innovative teaching strategy provides better students' academic achievements in English language than the traditional teaching strategy. It is discovered that innovative teaching strategy provides a better academic achievement in English language. From table 1, the mean achievement score of the students taught with the innovative teaching strategy is higher (65.6) than those taught with the traditional teaching strategy (55.7). This result was further confirmed by the result of table 3 which indicates that the innovative teaching strategy was a significant factor in the achievement of students in English language. This is shown by the rejection of the null hypothesis of no statistical difference in the mean achievement scores in English language of students taught with the innovative teaching strategy and those taught with the traditional teaching strategy. Thus, this result confirms that the group taught English language with ITS performed better than the group taught with TTS. This agrees with the study of Abdullahi

and Omer (2018)

Table 4 shows the result of hypothesis 2 which indicates that gender is not a significant factor in students' achievement in English language. The result of the study concurs with the findings of Babalola and Oyinloye (2012) that male and female have equal chance of learning and acquiring tools of language apart from individuals' language variations. This study is in variance with Opara (2001) who reports that females perform better in languages than the males. Also; Murni (2018) confirms that gender differences are important aspect to be considered in English language teaching.

Conclusion

From the results obtained from the investigation into the effects of innovative teaching strategy on students' academic achievements in English language, the following conclusions were drawn: The study has proved that ITS used in teaching English language is more effective than the TTS. This has therefore provided empirical basis for improving and enhancing classroom teaching and learning of English Language. This is evident from the fact that the group taught with ITS performed significantly better than the group that was taught with TTS. Again, the notion that gender plays prominent role in students' achievement in the English language as a school subject is not a trendy view in the age of Information Communication Technology with the emerging power of Artificial Intelligence in our society.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research study, the following recommendations were made:

- ✚ Teachers should learn how to use two or more innovative strategies together during learning experience so as to achieve the desire objectives.
- ✚ Teachers should create an atmosphere which is conducive to learning in order to enhance the development of students' learning experiences.
- ✚ Teacher should also increase their knowledge of various teaching strategies in order to keep students engaged and motivated throughout the learning process.
- ✚ Innovative teaching strategies require modern tools in the ICT to prompt the AI for easy execution of the strategies at the realm of language pedagogy. Government, parents and the concerned stakeholders should make the tools available.
- ✚ Teachers are to be periodically trained and retrained in the use of the tools as the innovative teaching strategies embrace diverse approaches in the use of the different handles for effective pedagogical orientations.

Reference

- Abdullahi, M. (2003). The attitude of science teachers in the use of instructional media. *Kano Journal of Education*, 2(1), 30-33.
- Adunola, O. (2011). The impact of teachers' teaching methods on the academic performance of primary school pupils in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State. *Ego Booster Books*.
- Babalola, J. O., & Oyinloye, G. O. (2012). Language and gender distinctions. *Review of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(2), 236-242.
- Brindley, S. (2015, August). Teacher perspectives on integration ICT into Kenyan system of education. Paper presented at the 1st Regional Conference on e-Learning.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Longman.
- Daluba, N. E. (2013). Effect of demonstration method of teaching on students' achievement in agricultural sciences. *World Journal of Education*, 36, 1-7.
- Eguiridu, C. (2014, August 21). [Article title]. *Daily Trust*.
- Gbodi, B. E., & Laleye, A. M. (2006). Effects of video-taped instruction on learning of integrated science. *Journal of Research in Curriculum and Teaching*, (1), 10-19.
- Goetz, K. (2000). Perspectives on team teaching: A semester 1 independent inquiry. *A Peer Reviewed Journal*, (4), 1-10.
- Klimova, B. F. (2015). Games in the teaching of English. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 191, 1157-1160.
- Lorenzutti, N. (2016). Vocabulary games: More than just wordplay. *English Teaching Forum*, 2016.
- Mahmud, M. (2018). Gender differences in English language teaching. *Asian EFL Journal Professional Teaching Articles*, 20.
- Martinson, B. E., & Chu, S. (2008). Impact of learning style on achievement when using course content delivered via a game-based learning object. In R. E. Ferdig (Ed.), *Handbook of research on effective electronic gaming in*

- education (pp. 371-386). IGI Global.
- Marchlik, E., Wichrowska, S., & Zubala, A. (2021). The use of ICT by ESL teachers working with young learners during the early COVID-19 pandemic in Poland. *Education and Information Technologies*, 26, 7107-7131.
- Opara, F. C. (2001). Ensuring gender equity in chemistry instruction through self-regulation. *INTEJ*, 3(1).
- Pun, M. (2014). The use of multimedia technology in English language teaching: A global perspective. *Crossing the Border: International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 1(1).
- Richards, J. C., & Rogers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Robinson, D. H., & Schraw, G. J. (2008). Recent innovations in educational technology that facilitate student learning. Information Age Pub.
- Sa'ad, T. U. (2007). The impact of domestic responsibilities on the academic achievement of married women in tertiary institutions of Bauchi State. Unpublished master's thesis, Bayero University, Kano.
- Serdyukov, P. (2017). Innovation in education: What works, what doesn't, and what to do about it? *Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching & Learning*.
- Tebabal, J., & Kahssay, E. (2011). The role of teacher's initiation in online pedagogy. *Education Training*, 54(6), 456-471.
- Ting, T. (2009). Learning to hypothesize with confidence through Sudoku game plays. *English Teaching Forum*, 1.
- Ya'u, M. Z. (1993). A study of the implementation of the national Islamic studies curriculum in senior secondary schools of Bauchi State. Unpublished master's thesis, Bayero University, Kano.
- Yuzuk, O. P., Vysochan, L. M., & Grytskyk, N. Y. (2019). Innovative teaching methods in higher education institutions of Poland and Ukraine. [Journal title], 2082-7016; e2450-5552.