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- All papers should be word processed. Double spaced on A4 size papers using new Times Roman font size 12.
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EDITORIAL

International Journal of Arts and Technology Education (IJATE) is a multidisciplinary journal which publishes peer reviewed articles which address contemporary topics in Education, the Humanities, and the Social Sciences. This volume of the journal contains 12 articles selected from the fields of Education, and the Humanities. Because of the multidisciplinary nature of the journal, the articles in vol. 12, no 2 of this journal are a mixed-grill of both quantitative/qualitative oriented research articles. The quantitative oriented articles dominate and the research design is predominantly the descriptive survey. Only one articles opts for a quasi-experimental design. The themes of the quantitative -driven articles may be categorized into two-technology and non-technology focused articles.

The 21st Century is technologically engineered. Consequently, there is a strong advocacy for all educated Nigerian to be technologically compliant to enable them to make maximum use of the developments in technology to make living pleasurable. In education, pedagogy is transitioning from the traditional method of teaching and learning to a virtual learning where the computer, its software, and the internet play a crucial role of either assisting the teacher or simulating the teacher. Proprietors of educational institutions in Nigeria are advised to make available to both the teachers and the students computers, their software, and the internet to facilitate the process of teaching and learning in all the subject areas taught in schools and tertiary institutions. To this end, Egbe and Asadu examined English language utilization of audio-visual aids in the teaching and learning of oral English in secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. As if to complement the study of Egbe and Asadu, Ossai, Eze, and Obayi directed their research interest to the use of computer-assisted language teaching to promote classroom interactivity in the learning of English grammar in Nigerian Federal Universities in the South-east geopolitical zone. However, a technologically-driven pedagogy cannot be possible unless the computers, software, and the internet are made available to both the teacher and the students. It is in this context that Ukoha, Uzoegwu and Ukwueze investigated the availability and utilization of computers by English language teachers in secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State. Nigerians have invented digital technology for pedagogical purposes. Typical of such digital technology invention is the cloud-based portal, *ttcloudportal* designed for technology teachers. Onwusuru and Ogwo described the portal and how it could be used to support technology teachers' professional development and its use for instructional skill delivery.

Okwuiyi, Emelogu and Nwafor represent non-technologically focused articles in the teaching and learning of English language. Okwuiyi et al investigated a neglected classroom problem. It is given that most English language teachers are not aware of the pedagogical importance of textual features which authors of English language textbook lavishly provide

in the textbooks. To many of them, these textual features are merely decorative in their intent. This article arouses the awareness of the teachers to the pedagogical import of all textual features found in English language textbook by describing each of them and their pedagogical significance. They help learners both to retain and recall facts as taught by the teacher. Similarly, Enwemmadu, Oluikpe and Uloh-Bethels directed their research interest to the effect of spatial contiguity principle (integration of printed text and visual aids in teaching) in the teaching of Literature-in-English which is traditionally taught by using printed text only. On their part, Ukwueze, Ogwu, and Ukoha tackled the causes and solution of English phonological problems among Edem-Igbo speakers in Nigeria. While this may seem like an over flogged topic, it is considered that this article is relevant because each dialect of Igbo has its peculiar shibboleth, A pragmatic study of oral English in a globalized world, where there is a strong advocacy for a paradigm shift in the teaching of oral English from ELT methodology to English as International Language (EIL) pedagogy, is to compile an inventory of all the shibboleths in the dialects of all the written languages spoken in Nigeria. This inventory serves as a launching pad for the teaching of Nigerian English phonology. Udeigwe focuses on English spelling, the foundation of English literacy. English spelling is complex because there is no phoneme/grapheme correspondence as in other spelling systems. In spite of this complexity, it has been observed that there are identifiable spelling rules in English even though such rules are characterized by exceptions. It is advocated that English spelling should constitute a school subject because of its importance in writing. Udeigwe examined the competence of JSS 1 students in Okigwe Education Zone, Imo State in rule-governed English spelling. The choice of JSS 1 students is well made. They represent the entry behaviour of JSS students in Okigwe Education Zone in rule-governed English spelling. With Ugbor and Ogbu, the research interest shifts from preoccupation with the English language to the Igbo language. Ugbor investigated the perceived roles of Igbo language teachers in developing in their students imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in Igbo language. In other words, the articles examined the strategies Igbo language teachers could use to help Igbo language learners to develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in the Igbo language. Two skills were involved in the study – writing and oratory skills. In her contribution to Igbo language research, Ogbu studied how Igbo traditional festivals could serve as a catalyst for social cohesion in an age torn apart by strife and conflict.

From the qualitative perspective, two articles are identified – one in Religion and another in History. Efoto explored how the social control instrument of African Traditional Religion (ATR) could be used to foster a sustainable nation building in Nigeria through the maintenance of peace and unity which are considered as the foundation of nation building; for without peace and unity, nation building cannot be sustained. Finally, Asuk and Ukegbu debunks the Eurocentric position that markets were absent in Nigeria before colonization by using the Ngwa-Igbo of Nigeria as an example. The study traced the history of local markets in Ngwa land from 1800-1960 and discussed the impacts of local markets in the developmental efforts in Ngwa land.

The foregoing summary of the articles in this volume of the journal makes an interesting revelation, in my view. Quantitative-driven research writing is fast overtaking its qualitative counterpart in popularity especially in the Humanities where qualitative research was popularly known to be domiciled.

I thank, most sincerely, our contributors for finding this journal worthy of their patronage. Your patronage has made it possible for us to complete the eleventh Volume, No. 2 of the journal. We have an editorial policy which enjoins two numbers to constitute a volume of the journal. We have gone a long way in keeping the journal afloat because of your patronage.

Professor Esther N. Oluikpe, MNAE
Editor-in-Chief

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Secondary School English Language Teachers' Awareness of Textual Features as Guides in Reading Comprehension in Enugu State

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Abstract

This study examines the extent of secondary school English language teachers' awareness of textual features as guides in reading comprehension. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. All the 128 English language teachers in Enugu East and North Local Government Areas formed the population from which a sample of 71 teachers was drawn through a proportionate stratified sampling technique. A 28-item structured instrument developed by the researchers was used for data collection. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions and t-test for the hypotheses. The result revealed that English language teachers had limited awareness of textual features. Teachers' years of experience was found to have significant influence on teachers' awareness of the types and functions of textual features in reading comprehension. It was recommended that curriculum planners should develop activities that will integrate the types and functions of textual features in reading comprehension.

Keywords: Textual features, reading comprehension, English language teachers

Introduction

Language is a means of communication that is specie specific and specie uniform. In other words, language is specific and uniform in all human beings. Human beings use it to establish social relationship as well as transmitting various kinds of information. The social interaction aspect of language makes it a vehicle for communication beyond one's immediate environment. Labo-Popoola (2010) states that man, being a social entity always have the need to transmit information or communicate ideas within and outside his immediate environment. It is only through language that this need can be met hence the introduction of the English language in Nigeria by the British Government for easy communication amongst the different ethnic groups. Consequently, English language has been occupying an enviable position as the official language of government, education, law, commerce, industry and administration. English language is one of the core subjects as stipulated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), (2013). English language is equally a medium of instruction at all levels of education in Nigeria and a prerequisite for entering into

tertiary institutions. In the words of Oribabor (2014):

English language is regarded as the backbone of all subjects taught in secondary schools. It is a compulsory course for all first year students in the tertiary institutions. It is a compulsory subject in external examination bodies such as the West African Examination Council (WAEC), the National Examination Council (NECO) and the Joint Matriculation Board (JAMB). (p.295).

These roles have indicated the great importance of English language in the Nigerian society.

The development of the four language skills in English language (speaking, listening, reading and writing) by every Nigerian child is of utmost importance. A Nigerian child will be ultimately cut off from the social world due to lack of these basic language skills. In support of this view, Abdullahi (2010) asserts that a learner will be academically challenged or disadvantaged to function in a literate society if the person cannot read and write. Reading and writing skills are viewed as higher order skills because they are the skills that indicate literacy. The reading skill is believed to be the foundation of all learning. NTI (2010) opines that some people believe that reading skill is the most important of the four language skills. Studies have also shown that reading skill creates a platform for the writing skill to emerge. According to Warren (2010), reading skill is the bases for the emergence of writing skill which gives people the opportunity to learn new information about their immediate environment and the world at large. Reading is a thinking process that requires understanding, interpreting and giving accurate meaning to orthographic symbols using sets of skills that involves eye movement, speech, comprehension and vocabulary. 'It is a means by which one can access world of ideas and feelings as well as the knowledge of ages and visions of the future', (Karami, 2008, p.2). It is very crucial for students to acquire this skill as this will enable them to access world of knowledge in their academic pursuit. The students' ability to read effectively is very important and critical to their success in any subject area. As writing is one of the skills that can be enhanced through formal education so also it is with reading. The teacher plays a central role in aiding the acquisition of reading skill.

Comprehension reading is one of the methods that the teacher uses to aid acquisition of reading skill. Comprehension is reading with complete understanding of a text. It involves the knowledge of vocabulary, understanding of sentence structures, contextual and literary meanings, evaluation of a text and interpretation of writer's intended meaning. Wilhelm (2011) states that reading comprehension is the ability to perceive, understand and interpret the meaning communicated in texts. Brummit (n.d) has a similar view as the author declares that reading comprehension involves vocabulary knowledge and text comprehension. Reading comprehension is considered to be a very demanding mental activity since it encompasses perception, memory, thinking and problem solving. In order to understand a text, the reader must be actively involved in decoding meaning rather than a passive receiver of knowledge.

There are certain interactions between the external and internal features of a text that aids understanding during reading. The students must be adequately exposed to these

features in order to be active readers. In support of this view, Pearson (2012) explains that comprehension takes place as result of complex interaction between different levels of information processing enhanced by internal and external conditioning. On one hand, comprehension activities are usually triggered by external information which provides the material, presenting certain verbal or pictorial information in an appropriate learning environment. On the other hand, comprehension is controlled by internal conditions especially prior knowledge, aims, interests and expectations. In order to aid comprehension, a student must, therefore, assimilate new information in a pre-existing cognitive structures to the information. The background knowledge must be activated through the help of the teacher. The teacher must be equipped with certain competencies in reading. According to Cameron (2015) and Rajabi (2009), the teacher must be knowledgeable in reading strategies such as reading between lines, skimming, scanning and the neglected knowledge of types and functions of textual features in English language textbooks which can be used in activating background knowledge.

The English language textbook is a manual or an instructional material that contains various graphic and visual features that aids learning the subject and other subjects as well. The textbook provides the segmentation of various topics in the language and it is always done in a manner that helps the teacher to organize and regulate lesson delivery. Anjaneyulu (2014) opines that English language textbook provides guidelines for the English language teacher on teaching methodologies, topics to be taught from the syllabus that is relevant to learners' needs and materials to use in lesson delivery. The sequential nature of English language textbooks helps the teacher in carrying on with their classroom work. The textbook has features that distinguish it from other textbooks. These features are referred to as textual features. Textual features are all the components of a text that are not the main body of the text. EduGain (n.d) opines that textual features are varieties of visual and graphic elements that are used by writers to organize information, highlight important ideas, illustrate key concepts and provide additional information. These features give clearer cues to the information in a text. They include features such as *titles, tables of content, indexes, glossaries, headings, subheadings, pictures and captions, textboxes, bold prints/italics, coloured and underlined words*. The title of a text summarizes the information that will be learnt. Headings and subheadings present materials in an organized manner for easy accessibility; showing relationship among concepts, main ideas and supporting details. Pictures and captions help readers visualize important objects, concepts or ideas. Bold prints, italics or underlined words help to draw the attention of readers to important key words or phrases. The textbox is located outside the text and normally provides additional information about a topic or highlights information which the author would like the reader to focus on. The table of contents shows different chapters or sections that information are located in the text. The index directs students where to locate specific information on a topic in a text while the glossary provides information on meaning of words and terms used in the text.

In the course of teaching reading comprehension, the teacher is supposed to activate students' prior knowledge by previewing the textual features together with them. It is a pre-reading strategy that should be taught explicitly through authentic reading tasks. Knowledge of the textual features arouses students' critical thinking which is a core problem solving

skill. It enables them to use their schemata and make predictions about content of the text and meanings of unfamiliar words. Textual features enable students to raise pre-reading questions that aid understanding complex information. According to EduGain (n.d) knowledge of textual features can help learners navigate subject-specific textbooks and locate information in different kinds of texts. Still on the importance of textual features, Payne (2010) states that people learn differently; some learners are audio learners while some are visual learners. In order to accommodate the needs of every learner, the use of visual aids in a text can help to clarify information and most importantly increase students' ability to retain information. It is possible that teachers' years of experience may be a factor that can improve students' comprehension reading and achievement in in English language through exposing them to preview activities in comprehension reading.

Years of experience of the teacher in the teaching profession is a factor that determines what the teacher does in the whole teaching and learning process. The number of years that one has put in doing a particular thing reflects on how the person handles the challenges and intricacies associated with the job. According to Ladd (2008), being engaged in the teaching profession affords the teacher the opportunity of knowing the problem areas of the students. Years of experience of a teacher also equips the teacher with various strategies to tackle individual and collective needs of the students. Years of experience in the teaching profession also affords the teacher the opportunity of undergoing in-service training, which updates the teacher's knowledge and exposes the teacher to various approaches, methods, strategies and techniques in lesson delivery. Ladd (2008) claims that research has shown that teachers with more than 20years of experience are more effective than teachers with lesser number of years of experience. Some studies on teachers' experience show that there are different findings as regards teachers' experience and students' achievement. Ewetan and Ewetan (2015) revealed that a teacher's years of experience is a measure of quality that becomes imperative in students' academic achievement. Ibe, Nworgu and Anyaegbunam (2016) refer to teachers' experience and teachers' qualifications as classroom characteristics that do have a positive or negative influence on instructional quality in schools which translates to either good or poor academic achievement of students. Kola and Sunday (2015) remark that a teacher's years of experience is one of the teacher's qualification indicators that significantly determine students' academic achievement. Akinsolu (2010) corroborates with this view by stating that teachers' quality in which experience is a major determining factor is a critical pre-requisite for students' attainment of educational goals and objectives. It is obvious that teachers' years of experience is a critical factor that determines what the teacher does in the whole teaching and learning process.

Authors take time to use textual features to guide readers in the understanding of reading comprehension passages. Unfortunately, most readers and even teachers lose sight of the importance of the textual features by authors as fundamental elements in understanding of reading comprehension passages. They probably regard them as decorative pieces for the textbooks. Thus, the purpose for which the authors place the features is ignored either in reading or teaching of reading comprehension passages by teachers. Theoretically, it is believed that concrete experiences increase ability to generalize and transfer knowledge to a new situation. Piaget in McLeod (2009) proposed a theory of cognitive development to

account for the steps and sequence of children's intellectual development. This cognitive development involves changes in the cognitive process and abilities at different stages of growth in life. Piaget believes that children are constructing new knowledge as they move through different characteristics of learning, that people make sense of the world and create their own image through direct experience with objects and ideas. This theory has instructional implication in that it suggests the use of concrete objects in a teaching and learning situation. In other words, trying to ascertain the English language teachers' awareness of types and functions of textual features as guides in reading comprehension is in line with Piaget's theory. The textual features are expected to play and serve as concrete experiences that increase learners' ability to comprehend in words, phrases, sentences and general message in a comprehension passage. The use of textual features helps in retention of information and it is still for the retention of information that the cognitive theory stipulates the use of concrete objects in teaching and learning situation. Another theory backing up this research is Bruner's theory of constructivism. Constructivism is a theory of knowledge that argues that humans generate knowledge and meaning from interaction between their experiences and their ideas. Bruner in Smith (2002) postulates that learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon existing knowledge. This theory stresses on the importance of using models and pictures in teaching and this has relationship with using the textual features in textbooks to facilitate students understanding of reading comprehension. This work, therefore, investigated the extent to which teachers are aware of the types and functions of textual features as guides to effective teaching of reading comprehension passages in the context of teachers' years of experience.

The main purpose of the study was to investigate teachers' awareness of the types and functions of textual features in reading comprehension. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out the influence of experience on teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English language textbook.
2. Determine the influence of experience on teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension.

Research Questions

The following research questions were designed to guide the study:

1. To what extent do years of experience influence teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English language textbooks?
2. To what extent do years of experience influence teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant influence of teachers' years of experience on teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English language textbooks.
2. There is no significant influence of teachers' years of experience on teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension.

Method

Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population of the study was 128 English language teachers in Enugu East and North Local Government Areas (58 English language teachers from Enugu East and 70 English language teachers from Enugu North). A sample of 71 English language teachers in Enugu East and North Local Government Areas was drawn using proportionate stratified sampling technique. This was done by sampling 55% of the entire population resulting in 32 English language teachers from Enugu East and 39 English language teachers from Enugu North. The choice of picking only teachers in the secondary school was because learners at this level need to understand the types and functions of textual features in order to enhance their reading skills for further studies. The instrument for data collection was the textual features awareness questionnaire (TFAG). The questionnaire was made up of 28 structured items. The questionnaire had two sections; section A and B. Section A contained questions on the bio-data of the respondents while section B had two clusters. Cluster A had 14 structured items on teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English language textbooks as guides in reading comprehension. Cluster B had 14 structured items on teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features as guides in reading comprehension. The questionnaire for cluster A and B were structured on four rating scales thus: Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Little Extent (LE) and Not At All (NAA). The research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Criterion mean of 2.49 was used for Little Extent (LE) whereas 2.50 and above were used for Great Extent. The hypotheses were tested at the alpha level of 0.05 using t-test. The analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20(SPSS) and in SPSS Z-test statistics is not provided instead t-test statistics. Even though t-test statistics is used when the sample size is below 30 and Z-test is used when the sample size is above 30, in practice, especially in SPSS, t-test statistics does the same function as Z-test statistics with the same precision and accuracy, hence the choice of t-test for the study.

Results

The results are presented according to the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question 1: To what extent do years of experience influence teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English language textbooks?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of respondents on the influence of years of experience on teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English Language textbooks

S/N	Items	5 Years and Above (N = 55)			Below 5 Years (N = 16)		
		\bar{x}	SD	Rmk	\bar{x}	SD	Rmk
1	The Titles	2.18	0.98	LE	1.87	0.61	LE
2	The Tables of Contents	2.40	0.89	LE	1.75	0.68	LE
3	The Indexes	1.87	0.94	LE	1.75	0.68	LE
4	The Glossaries	2.36	0.98	LE	1.87	0.50	LE
5	The Headings	2.76	0.92	GE	2.18	0.83	LE
6	The Subheadings	2.61	0.87	GE	1.68	0.60	LE
7	The Pictures	2.20	0.82	LE	1.87	0.61	LE
8	Text boxes	3.05	0.73	GE	2.00	0.73	LE
9	The Underlined/bold/italicized words	3.16	0.78	GE	1.81	0.65	LE
10	The Coloured types	2.81	0.77	GE	1.93	0.77	LE
11	The Captions	2.29	0.95	LE	1.93	0.44	LE
12	The Labels	2.25	0.90	LE	1.50	0.51	LE
13	The Maps/Diagrams	2.14	0.91	LE	1.68	0.70	LE
14	The notes in the margin	2.18	0.94	LE	1.75	0.68	LE
	Cluster Mean	2.45	0.36	LE	1.83	0.18	LE

Result in Table 1 showed the mean and standard deviations of respondents on the extent years of experience influence teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English language textbooks. The result showed that teachers with 5 years' experience and above are aware of some of the types of textual features in English Language textbooks, these include items 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10 with mean values of 2.76, 2.61, 3.05, 3.16 and 2.81 respectively. The cluster mean for teachers that have below 5 years' experience was 1.83 with a standard deviation of 0.18 and those with 5 years' experience and above was 2.45 with a standard deviation of 0.36. This result is indicative that teachers with below 5 years' experience are less aware of the types of textual features in English Language textbooks than those with 5 years' experience and above. However, the cluster mean for both teachers that have below 5 years' experience and those with 5 years' experience and above were below 2.50 set as criterion level. Since the mean values are below 2.50, this means that teachers' years of experience influence teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English Language textbooks to a low extent.

Research Question 2: To what extent do years of experience influence teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of respondents on the influence of years of experience on teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension

S/N	Items	5 Years and Above (N = 55)			Below 5 Years (N = 16)		
		\bar{x}	SD	Rmk	\bar{x}	SD	Rmk
15	Titles are the summaries of the information that will be learnt	1.92	0.79	LE	1.68	0.70	LE
16	Tables of content help the reader identify key topics in the book in the order of their presentation	3.00	0.96	GE	2.31	0.60	LE
17	The list of ideas in the books and pages they are found are given by the indexes	2.98	0.75	GE	1.93	0.68	LE
18	Glossaries help define words	2.41	1.01	LE	2.25	0.57	LE
19	Headings present the material in a way to show relationships among concepts and main ideas	2.54	0.89	GE	1.93	0.92	LE
20	Subheadings help the reader to know what the next section will be about	2.74	0.86	GE	2.18	0.75	LE
21	Pictures show the reader exactly what something looks like	2.80	0.93	GE	1.87	0.61	LE
22	Additional information about the topic is provided by text boxes	2.49	0.83	LE	2.12	0.71	LE
23	The reader is drawn to important words or phrases by underlined/bold/italicized words	2.01	0.91	LE	1.56	0.72	LE
24	The coloured types highlight important words or expressions	2.58	0.97	GE	1.93	0.68	LE
25	Captions help the reader better understand a picture or photograph	2.01	0.78	LE	1.87	0.61	LE
26	Labels help the reader understand the parts of a picture, diagram or maps	2.16	1.01	LE	1.93	0.77	LE
27	The readers are made to know where places are in the world by the use of maps	3.18	0.92	GE	2.25	0.77	LE
28	Notes in the margin give some additional information on the topic	2.14	1.02	LE	2.06	0.85	LE
	Cluster Mean	2.50	0.35	GE	1.99	0.31	LE

Result in Table 2 showed the mean and standard deviation of respondents on the influence of years of experience on teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension. Result showed that for respondents with 5 years' experience and above, items 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24 and 27 had mean values above the criterion level of 2.50. This means that to a great extent, respondents with 5 years' experience and above are aware of some of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension. On the other hand, all the

mean values for respondents with years of experience below 5 years are below the criterion level of 2.50. This means the respondents with years of experience below 5 years are aware of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension to a low extent. However, the cluster mean of 2.50 with a standard deviation of 0.35 for respondents with 5 years' experience and above is at par with the set criterion level of 2.50. This indicates that years of experience influence teachers' awareness of functions of textual features in comprehension reading to a great extent.

Hypotheses 1

There is no significant influence of teachers' years of experience on teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English language textbooks.

Table 3: t-test analysis of the influence of teachers' years of experience on teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English language textbooks.

S/N	Items	5 Years and Above (N = 55)		Below 5 Years (N = 16)		t-cal	df	Sig	Dec
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD				
1	The Titles	2.18	0.98	1.87	0.61	1.17	69	0.24	NS
2	The Tables of contents	2.40	0.89	1.75	0.68	2.68	69	0.01	S
3	The Indexes	1.87	0.94	1.75	0.68	0.48	69	0.63	NS
4	The Glossaries	2.36	0.98	1.87	0.50	1.90	69	0.06	NS
5	The Headings	2.76	0.92	2.18	0.83	2.24	69	0.03	S
6	The Subheadings	2.61	0.87	1.68	0.60	3.99	69	0.00	S
7	The Pictures	2.20	0.82	1.87	0.61	1.45	69	0.15	NS
8	Text boxes	3.05	0.73	2.00	0.73	5.08	69	0.00	S
9	The Underlined/bold/italicized words	3.16	0.78	1.81	0.65	6.25	69	0.00	S
10	The Coloured types	2.81	0.77	1.93	0.77	4.01	69	0.00	S
11	The Captions	2.29	0.95	1.93	0.44	1.42	69	0.16	NS
12	The Labels	2.25	0.90	1.50	0.51	3.17	69	0.00	S
13	The Maps/Diagrams	2.14	0.91	1.68	0.70	1.85	69	0.07	NS
14	The notes in the margin	2.18	0.94	1.75	0.68	1.70	69	0.09	NS
	Cluster t	2.45	0.36	1.83	0.18	6.47	69	0.00	S

Result in Table 3 showed the t-test analysis of the influence of years of experience on teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English language textbooks. Result showed that there was significant influence on items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 12. This is because the associated probability values were less than 0.05 level of significance. However, there was no significant difference on items 1, 3, 4, 7, 11, 13 and 14 because their associated probability values were greater than 0.05. The Cluster t-value of 6.47 with a degree of freedom of 69 and associated probability value of 0.00 was obtained. Since the associated probability value of 0.00 was less than 0.05 set as level of significance, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant influence of teachers' years of experience on teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English Language textbooks was rejected.

Therefore, years of experience significantly influence teachers' awareness of the types of textual features in English Language textbooks.

Hypothesis 2

Table 4: t-test analysis of the influence of years of experience on teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension.

S/N	Items	5 Years and Above (N = 55)		Below 5 Years (N = 16)		t-cal	df	Sig	Dec
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD				
15	Titles are the summaries of the information that will be learnt	1.92	0.72	1.68	0.70	1.09	69	0.27	NS
16	Tables of content help the reader identify key topics in the book in the order of their presentation	3.00	0.96	2.31	0.60	2.70	69	0.00	S
17	The list of ideas in the books and the pages they are found are given by the indexes	2.98	0.75	1.93	0.68	1.49	69	0.14	NS
18	Glossaries help define words	2.41	1.01	2.25	0.57	0.63	69	0.53	NS
19	Headings present the material in a way to show relationships among concepts and main ideas	2.54	0.89	1.93	0.92	2.36	69	0.02	S
20	Subheadings help the reader to know what the next section will be about	2.74	0.86	2.18	0.75	2.33	69	0.02	S
21	Pictures show the reader exactly what something looks like	2.80	0.93	1.87	0.61	3.73	69	0.00	S
22	Additional information about the topic is provided by text boxes	2.49	0.83	2.12	0.71	1.58	69	0.11	NS
23	The reader is drawn to important words or phrases by underlined/bold/italicized words	2.01	0.91	1.56	0.72	1.83	69	0.07	NS
24	The coloured types highlight important words or expressions	2.58	0.97	1.93	0.68	2.46	69	0.02	S
25	Captions help the reader to better understand a picture or photograph	2.10	0.78	1.87	0.61	0.67	69	0.50	NS
26	Labels help the reader to understand the parts of a picture, diagram or maps	2.16	1.01	1.93	0.77	0.82	69	0.41	NS
27	The readers are made to know where places are in the world by the use of maps	3.18	0.92	2.25	0.77	3.66	69	0.00	S
28	Notes in the margin give some additional information on the topic	2.14	1.02	2.06	0.85	0.29	69	0.77	NS
	Cluster t	2.50	0.35	1.99	0.31	5.16	69	0.00	S

Result in Table 4 showed the t-test analysis of the influence of years of experience on teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension. The result showed that there was significant influence on items 16, 19, 20, 21, 24 and 27. This is because the associated probability values were less than 0.05 level of significance. However, there was no significant difference on items 15, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25, 26 and 28 because their associated probability values were greater than 0.05. The cluster t-value of 5.16 with a degree of freedom of 69 and associated probability value of 0.00 was obtained. Since the associated probability value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 set as level of significance, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant influence of years of experience on teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension was rejected. Therefore, years of experience significantly influence teachers' awareness of the functions of textual features in reading comprehension.

Discussion

The discussion is based on the result of the study. The result revealed that there is a low extent of teachers' awareness of textual features as guides in reading comprehension in secondary schools. This could be as a result of lack of inclusion of textual features activities in the English language curriculum. It could also be as a result of lack of knowledge of teachers on pre-reading strategies in reading comprehension. This result is in line with Anjaneyulu (2014) who revealed that English language teachers are not properly equipped with an up-to-date knowledge of English Language teaching. Oribabor (2014) also discovered that there is a need to reassess the existing English language curriculum in order to suit the needs of learners. The result of this study also revealed that years of experience significantly influence teachers' awareness of the types of textual features and functions of textual features in reading comprehension. This could be due to the fact that the longer a teacher stays in the profession, the more experience the teacher gains on the subject content. This result supports the earlier findings of Ewetan and Ewetan (2015) who discovered that teachers' teaching experience significantly influence students' academic performance in English language and Mathematics. In line with findings of this study, Akinsolu (2010) discovered that teachers' experience is significant in relation to students' academic performance. Also, the findings of Kola and Sunday (2015) revealed that years of experience is imperative and is positively correlated with students' academic achievement which is in line with the findings of this study. Ibe, Nworgu and Anyaegbunam (2016) also revealed that there is a strong relationship between teachers teaching experience and students' academic achievement.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is appropriate to conclude that the knowledge of subject content is garnered over the years of engaging in the teaching profession. This directly reflects on the quality of instruction that the teacher passes onto the students which mirrors greatly on the students' academic achievement. Years of experience has a significant influence on teachers' awareness of the types and functions of textual features in reading comprehension.

Recommendations

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

1. The Ministry of Education, in conjunction with the Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB) should organize seminars and workshops for English Language teachers to make them aware of the importance of the textual features in reading comprehension
2. Principals and heads of departments in secondary schools should constantly organize an interactive forum and mentoring programmes where the more experienced teachers will guide the less experienced teachers.
3. Curriculum planners should develop activities that will integrate the types and functions of textual features in reading comprehension if it does not already exist.
4. Textbook writers should review their textbooks ensuring that more textual features are added in textbooks as well as including some teaching packages that will help the teachers to be aware of all the necessary guides in reading comprehension.

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The Utilization of Audio-Visual Resources in the Teaching of Oral English in Secondary Schools in Nsukka Educational Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study sought to find out English language teachers' utilization of audio-visual resources in the teaching and learning of oral English in secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. A total of 140 English language teachers were sampled using stratified random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was the Audio-Visual Resources Utilization Questionnaire (AVRUQ). The questionnaire was face-validated by two specialists in English Language Education and one specialist in Educational Technology, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The results showed that few audio-visual resources are available in schools. The majority of the respondents neither utilize nor are competent in the use of the available audio-visual resources in the teaching of oral English. Based on the findings, it was recommended that government and school authorities should equip schools with relevant audio-visual resources, as well as train and re-train teachers to acquire resolute skills in the utilization of audio-visual resources in teaching oral English.

Keywords: Utilization, audio-visual resources, oral English teaching

Introduction

Language is one of the endowments of human beings that distinguish them from other animals. This is why many researchers have described language as species specific because it is unique to man. Language enables human beings to enter into communicative relationships with others. The need for communication is becoming more important in the increasingly integrated global business community where strong language skills are an asset that promotes lifelong communication. Globally, no one language is spoken by all human beings. The multiplicity of languages came into force with the demise of the Tower of Babel.

Ever since then, humans have used several languages either as indigenous, national, second or foreign languages. Many languages have remained only at the spoken level within patochial limits, while others have gained international status and are used by a cross section of the people spanning different nationalities.

One of such languages that have transcended national boundaries to gain international acclaim is the English language. English is a language first spoken by the Angles and the Jutes in the fifth century AD, but it is now a native language not just to Britain, but also to the United States of America, English speaking Canada, British South Africa and Australia. It is also spoken as either a second or foreign language in many nations including Nigeria. Crystal (2006) estimates that there are more than 1.5 billion speakers of English globally.

In Nigeria, English is the official language. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) states that English is a core subject from primary school to the tertiary level, but should be used as the medium of instruction from the upper grades of primary school (primary four) to the tertiary level. English also serves other roles of being the language of commerce, law, politics, legislature, conduct of government business and the window to the world. In fact, the language that indexes the spirit of national unity more than any other language in Nigeria is the English language.

As a language of national and international communication, English has developed in all its ramifications. All the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing (Akwanaya, 2007) have had a lot of improvements in their use and the body of research efforts in them, especially in the spoken skills. Crystal (2006) maintains that spoken English is the more widespread means of communication. It has been argued that language is essentially spoken because even in contemporary times not many indigenous languages are written. There are many indigenous people who speak their languages impeccably but have no inkling of their orthography. In the same vein, spoken language distinguishes users of the language as native and non-native users of the language. Any person learning a language from the second or foreign language milieu can always be singled out by native speakers from his/her foreign accent, but this may be difficult in the written medium. Not many native speakers understand foreign language users when they speak and vice versa. In fact, many second language speakers pronounce and stress words in a way that will not be understood by the native speakers of the language. The spoken skill has many nuances and complexities that defy effective teaching either through textbooks or by non-specialist and non-native English language teachers.

Based on this backdrop, many authors (Curtain and Dahlberg, 2004; Lenker and Rhodes, 2007) have asserted that the best way of learning the spoken aspect of a second or foreign language is by complete immersion in that language. This, especially among younger learners, has resulted in complete or near mastery of the segmental and suprasegmental features of the language. However, complete immersion of all the learners in Nigeria seems to be a utopian quest, because this will entail learners travelling to places where English is spoken as a native language for such immersion or importing native speakers to teach English at all levels where English is taught.

Seeing that this proposal may not be readily achieved, researchers have proposed a form of vicarious immersion with advancements in technology. This alternative arises from

the integration of audio-visual resources in teaching and learning. One particular place where such integration has yielded fruit is in the teaching and learning of oral English. Oral English, also known as spoken English, is the study of the speech sounds of the English language. When human beings communicate they do so through speech or writing. According to Egbe (2010) the aim of oral English teaching and learning in the global order is the teaching of received pronunciation as well as the exposure of students to other varieties of English so that they will not be at sea when they meet people who use such varieties. Roach (2004) also asserts that an important purpose of studying oral English is to explain how English is pronounced in the accent normally chosen as the standard for people learning the English spoken in England. Onuigbo (2003) avers that oral utterances are very important in communication such that an effective speaker triumphs in other communicative skills.

The spoken English segment of the Nigerian secondary school curriculum covers a wide range of areas such as vowels and consonants (segmental features) and stress and intonation (the suprasegmental features). The overall objective of teaching these contents is to ensure that students speak the language intelligibly and communicate effectively in the English language (FME, 2007). It is also aimed at equipping learners with the ability to produce speech that is intelligible to other users of the language and to be understood by other users of the language too.

However, inefficient communication in English language, as prevalent among students in the Nigerian society, is quite apparent. Egbe, Asogwa and Ossai (2017) indicate that the quality of students' output in oral and written English has declined over the years. Many secondary school leavers can hardly communicate effectively in oral English, a situation that expresses doubt on the effectiveness of oral English instruction in the secondary schools. Works like Onah and Ezugwu (2007), Nwovu and Innocent (2015), Onah and Ugwuanyi (2016) and Ugwuoke and Okolo (2016) indicate that there are problems associated with the teaching and learning of oral English in Nsukka Education Zone and in other zones where their researches were carried out. These include, but not limited to, incompetence of teachers, poor methods of instruction, large class size, insufficient time and, particularly, unavailability and poor utilization of instructional materials. Ugorji (2005) is of the view that the teaching of English in Nigeria and elsewhere, where it spoken as a second language, often has problems with how to effectively teach pronunciation.

The teaching of oral English requires a teacher who must be a good model of speech for students to emulate. But many English language teachers are far from having that modelling status. Kanu (2016) avers that the poor performance of students in public examinations at all levels of Nigeria's educational system is a reflection of the poor quality of teaching by teachers who themselves are incompetent. It has been argued that no teacher can effectively teach a foreign accent that he/she has not heard or thoroughly mastered. So, it becomes necessary that teachers of oral English at all levels should embrace audio-visual resources as a viable option for teaching and learning of oral English as they have the potential of mimicking oral English classrooms where learners vicariously learn English as it is taught and spoken by teachers who are native speakers or specialists in the language. Thus, audio-visual resources are a perfect medium for teaching difficult and complex areas like stress, rhythm and intonation where textbooks have failed.

Audio-visual resources are educational materials directed at both the senses of

hearing and sight. They use operations of technological equipment and combine both visual and sound projection. According to Dike (2002), audio-visual resources are those materials that do not depend upon reading to convey meaning. They may present information through the sense of hearing, as in audio-resources, or through the sense of sight as in visual resources, or through a combination of senses. Audio-visual resources for the teaching and learning of oral English include the following, among others: television sets, computers, video tapes, multimedia projectors, Video Compact Disc (VCD), Digital Versatile or Video Disc (DVD), power point presentation, YouTube video and smart phones. In other words, audio-visual resources can come in both software (or applications) and hardware (equipment) for the running of the software.

Audio-visual resources are great information carriers. According to Nwankwo (2005), audio-visual resources can be used to record, store, present, transmit or retrieve information for purposes of teaching. In effect, specific areas of interest in oral English can be taught extensively by expert native speakers and such can be recorded and played back using various audio-visual media for effective students' learning. Used by an experienced and creative oral English teacher, the students have maximum chances of learning first hand from experts, even where the teacher has deficiencies in the skills.

Audio-visual resources arouse and maintain students' interest in learning as they activate several senses. The traditional sensory stimulation theory, on which this study leans, has as its basic premise that effective learning occurs when the senses are stimulated (Laird, 1985). Laird quotes research that found that about 75% of knowledge held by adults is learned through seeing. Hearing accounts for about 13% while the other senses of touch, smell and taste account for 12% of what humans know. Thus, a combination of the visual and hearing senses could account for 88% of learning. Audio-visual resources exploit mainly the senses of sight and hearing, and could account for 88% of what is learnt. Therefore, with the effective use of audio-visual resources in teaching oral English, advances can be made in imparting oral skills to the learners.

Despite the importance of audio-visual resources and the benefits that could accrue from their use in the teaching and learning of oral English, some studies show that audio-visual resources are neither available nor utilized in schools in their various areas of study. For example, Okoh (2010) and Ugwoke and Okolo (2016) found that instructional materials are scarcely available and utilized in teaching and learning of oral English in secondary schools in Afikpo North Local Government Area of Ebonyi State and Obollo Afor Education Zone of Enugu State, respectively. Besides, Nwovu and Innocent (2015) and Onah and Ugwuanyi (2016) specifically found that audio-visual resources are neither available nor utilized in teaching and learning of oral English in secondary schools in Ezza South Local Government Area of Ebonyi State and Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State, respectively. Nwovu and Innocent (2015) also identified problems associated with the utilization of audio-visual materials in the teaching and learning of oral English to include lack of materials, lack of technical know how, large class size, poor electricity supply, cost of materials, among others.

Based on the foregoing findings, this study was aimed at finding out the utilization of audio-visual resources in the teaching of oral English in secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. It is the aim of this paper to ascertain whether there

is any nexus between what is happening in other local governments reported in this study and what is happening in Nsukka Education Zone. Thus, the result of the study will contribute to the body of knowledge on the status of oral English instruction and make recommendations that will help to improve oral English instruction in Nsukka Education Zone and at wider contexts.

This study was thus guided by three research questions:

1. Which audio-visual resources are available for the teaching of oral English in secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone?
2. To what extent are audio-visual resources utilized in the teaching of oral English in secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone?
3. What are the problems facing the utilization of audio-visual resources in the teaching of oral English in secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone?

Method

This study employed the descriptive survey research design. Survey research design is a type of design that seeks to describe an event, situation or action as it is. According to Nworgu (2002), this type of design is one where a group of people or items are studied through the collection and analysis of data from a few people or items which are taken as a representative of that entire group. According to Osuala in Igbokwe (2009), survey research focuses on description of facts, qualities or characteristics of a given population, events or area of possible interest as factually and accurately as possible in order to provide answers to research questions. This design was found appropriate and hence chosen for the study because questionnaire and checklist were used to collect data, the findings from which would be used to make generalizations about the population.

The study was carried out in senior secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone. Most inhabitants of this area are civil servants, traders, farmers and students. This area was chosen because of the apparent poor expressive abilities of many students in secondary schools in the area as preliminary survey by the researchers indicated. The population of the study comprised all the English language teachers in the sixty government-owned secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone. Out of this population 140 teachers were sampled using stratified random sampling technique. The sixty schools were stratified according to the three local governments that make up the zone. In each local government 80% of the schools were randomly sampled to give a total of 48 schools. In each school between one and four teachers were sampled, from JSS I to SS III English language teachers depending on the teachers' population strength. Finally, 140 English language teachers were sampled for the study.

The instruments for data collection were the Audio-Visual Resources Availability Checklist (AVRAC) and the Audio-Visual Resources Utilization Questionnaire (AVRUQ). The Audio-Visual Resources Availability Checklist (AVRAC) is an observation checklist that was used to collect information from schools on the audio-visual resources that they have. On the other hand, the Audio-Visual Resources Utilization Questionnaire (AVRUQ) has two sections. Section A sought information on the biodata of the respondents. Section B, on the other hand, has two parts. Part A deals with the extent English language teachers utilize audio-visual resources in the teaching and learning of oral English while Section B

deals with the problems facing the utilization of audio-visual resources in the teaching and learning of oral English. The instruments were face validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka: an expert each from English Language Education, Educational Technology and Measurement and Evaluation units. The suggestions of the experts were taken into consideration in producing the final version of the instrument that was used for data collection.

Copies of the Audio-Visual Resources Availability Checklist (AVRAC) were given to six research assistants who covered the 48 schools to observe and get first hand information on the audio-visual resources housed by each school. The same six research assistants, two covering each local government, assisted the researchers to administer the questionnaire to English language teachers in the 48 schools that were sampled for the study.

The data collected with checklist were analyzed using frequencies and percentages, that is, the number of schools where they are available and percentage of schools where they are available. For the questionnaire, mean and standard deviation were the statistical tools used in analyzing the data for the purpose of answering the related research questions. The response options for the questionnaire were: Strongly Agree/Very High Extent = 4 points; Agree/High Extent = 3 points; Disagree/Low Extent = 2 points; Strongly Disagree/Very Low Extent = 1 point. The criterion percent for the checklist was 50% while the criterion mean for the questionnaire was 2.50. This means that any item with percentage of 50% or mean of 2.50 and above was accepted as representing 'available', 'high extent' or 'agree' depending on the research question, while any item with percentage or mean score less than 50% or 2.50 was not accepted as they represented 'not available', 'low extent' or 'disagree.'

Results

The results are presented in tables according to the research questions that guided the study.

Table 1: Number of schools and percentage of audio-visual resources that are available for the teaching of oral English

S/N	Audio-Visual Resources	Available		Not Available	
		No of schools	% of schools	No of schools	% of schools
1.	Television	10	20.83	38	79.17
2.	Computer	30	62.50	18	37.50
3.	Video machine	5	10.42	43	89.58
4.	Multimedia projectors	3	6.25	45	93.75
5.	Smart phones	–	0	48	100
6.	Language Laboratory	–	0	48	100
7.	VCD	5	10.42	43	89.58
8.	DVD	5	10.42	43	89.58
9.	YouTube Video	–	0	48	100
10.	PowerPoint presentation software	8	16.67	40	83.33
	Cumulative Percentage		13.75		86.25

Table 1 shows the number of schools and the percentage of audio-visual resources that are available for the teaching of oral English. The results show that out of the ten audio-visual resources in the checklist, none was available in all the schools. Some of the resources like smart phones, language laboratory, YouTube video are not available at all in any of the schools, while other resources like television, video machine, multimedia projector, Video Compact Disc and Video Versatile Disc are scarcely available. It is only computers that are available in 30 out of the 48 schools visited.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of the responses of teachers on the extent of utilization of audio-visual resources in the teaching of Oral English

S/N	Audio-Visual Resources	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Television	1.20	.68	Low Extent
2.	Computer	2.22	.70	Low Extent
3.	Video machine	1.45	.71	Low Extent
4.	Multimedia projectors	2.20	.78	Low Extent
5.	Smart phones	1.08	.66	Low Extent
6.	Language Laboratory	1.32	.52	Low Extent
7.	VCD	1.45	.70	Low Extent
8.	DVD	1.45	.69	Low Extent
9.	YouTube Video	1.16	.67	Low Extent
10.	Power Point presentation software	2.20	.69	Low Extent
	Cumulative mean	1.57	.68	Low Extent

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of responses of teachers on the extent of utilization of audio-visual resources in the teaching of oral English. The result shows that all the items have mean scores between 1.08 and 2.20, meaning that they are either not utilized or utilized at a low extent. This is because all the items fall below the 2.50 benchmark level of acceptance as high extent. The cumulative mean of 1.57 and standard deviation of .68 indicate that teachers utilize at a low extent even the available resources for the teaching of oral English.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the responses of teachers on the problems facing the utilization of audio-visual resources in the teaching of oral English

S/N	Problems	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Non-availability of audio-visual materials in schools	3.65	.65	Agree
2.	Dearth of teachers who are competent in the use of audio-visual resources	22.56	.90	Agree
3.	Absence/epileptic electricity supply to power the audio-visual equipment	3.90	.66	Agree
4.	Cost of procurement of audio-visual resources	2.40	.86	Disagree
5.	Large class size	2.42	.65	Disagree
6.	Insufficient time in the timetable for practicals and demonstration in oral English	2.72	.70	Agree
7.	Fear of/actual insecurity of audio-visual resources	2.53	.86	Agree
8.	Lack of technical assistants	2.68	.68	Agree
9.	Attitude of students towards learning oral English	1.50	.98	Disagree
10.	Location of schools	1.82	.72	Disagree
11.	Inadequate funding of schools	3.44	.62	Agree
12.	Lack of incentives to teachers to buy their own audio-visual resources for use in teaching oral English	2.86	.69	Agree
13.	Poor maintenance/breakdown of available audio-visual resources	2.92	.70	Agree
14.	Inadequate in-service training for oral English teachers	3.05	.66	Agree
15.	Poor motivation by oral English teachers	3.00	.86	Agree
16.	Lack of accommodation for safekeeping of audio-visual resources	2.55	.92	Agree
17.	Fear of damaging the audio-visual resources	2.61	.90	Agree
18.	Lack of information on the benefits of audio-visual resources in teaching of oral English	2.70	.88	Agree
19.	Non-availability of standby generators	3.48	.67	Agree
20.	Absence of strict regulations on the use of audio-visual resources in teaching oral English	3.34	.68	Agree
	Cumulative mean	2.81	.76	Agree

Data on Table 3 show the descriptive analysis of the responses of teachers on the problems facing the utilization of audio-visual resources in the teaching of oral English. The analysis reveals that the respondents agree that all the items except items 4, 5, 9 and 10 are problems facing the utilization of audio-visual resources in the teaching of oral English. These items fall below the 2.50 benchmark. In other words, they disagree that cost of procurement of

audio-visual resources, large class size, attitude of students towards learning of oral English, and location of schools constitute impediments to the utilization of audio-visual resources.

Discussion

From the findings, it is evident that audio-visual resources are heavily in short supply in schools. Apart from computers which are relatively available, other audio-visual resources like television, video machines, multimedia projectors, VCD, DVD and power point presentation software are not available. The availability of computers could be explained from the perspective that government supplied schools in Enugu State with computers in recent time. So, some schools still have some supply of them. This finding is in line with the results of Nwovu and Innocent (2015) and Onah and Ugwuanyi (2016). These researchers found that audio-visual materials are not available for the teaching of oral English. This finding implies that technological instructional materials for oral English instruction are in short supply and teachers may be depending on the conventional materials like textbooks with their inadequate potentials to teach the nuances of speech effectively.

On the utilization of audio-visual materials this study found that English language teachers utilize to a low extent the audio-visual resources in question. Not minding the benefits that accrue from the effective deployment of current technological equipment in teaching oral English, teachers do not utilize them effectively. This finding, combining with the finding on availability of audio-visual resources, indicates that English language teachers still embrace old methods of language teaching using only conventional aids. This finding is in line with the earlier findings of Okoh (2010), Onah and Ezugwu (2007) and Onah and Ugwuanyi (2016) which indicated that teachers rarely utilize instructional materials and, specifically, audio-visual resources in oral English instruction.

The non-availability and poor utilization of audio-visual resources in the teaching of oral English could be explained from the point of view of many prevalent problems. This study identifies some of them to include dearth of competent teachers, poor electric power supply and non-availability of standby generators, insecurity of equipment, poor maintenance and funding, fear of damaging the equipment, lack of training and information on the benefits of utilizing audio-visual resources in teaching oral English. This finding is in tandem with the findings of Ugwuoke and Okolo (2016) that some of the above mentioned problems constitute impediments to the availability and utilization of resources in oral English instruction.

The findings of this study imply that something has to be done to improve the availability of audio-visual resources and teachers' competences in the utilization of audio-visual resources. The observation by Kanu (2016) that the poor performance of students in public examinations at all levels of Nigeria's educational system is a reflection of the poor quality of teaching by teachers, has been vindicated. It is worrisome how students in this period of globalization and of profuse use of technology in language instruction, can survive with instruction bereft of those technologies. The poor performance of students in oral English, based on the findings of the study, could be accountable from the perspective that they are not exposed to optimum learning using their combined senses of sight and hearing. It is worthy of note that since the sensory stimulation theory (Laird, 1985) states that 75% learning comes from sight and 13% from hearing, one can imagine what losses students at

secondary school incur if they are denied of learning through audio-visual resources that depend principally on sight and hearing for passing information across to learners.

Conclusion

This research has demonstrated that audio-visual resources are not available and are not utilized for the effective teaching of oral English in secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone. Some of the problems militating against the utilization of audio-visual resources have been identified and intervention strategies have been suggested. It is hoped that if all stakeholders implement the recommendations proffered in this study, students' performance in English language, and particularly in oral English, will change for the better.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and subsequent discussion, this study makes the following recommendations:

1. The state ministry of education should equip secondary schools with audio-visual resources as well as other equipment like generators for use in oral English instruction. They can also deploy their private audio-visual resources in schools for oral English instruction.
2. Technical support should be provided by government or school authorities to assist the teachers to set up and run the audio-visual equipment for use in teaching oral English.
3. Oral English teachers should be trained and retrained by the ministry of education on how to use audio-visual resources in teaching oral English.
4. Government and professional bodies in English language education should organize workshops, seminars and conferences to build the competences of teachers and expose them to the ways and manner of using audio-visual resources in oral English teaching.
5. Accommodation and security should be provided by schools for the available audio-visual resources by the joint efforts of the P.T.A, alumni and the community.
6. Teachers should be motivated and supervised by the government so that they will be able to utilize the available audio-visual resources.

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Effect of Spatial Contiguity Principle on Senior Secondary School Students' Achievement and Motivation in Literature-in-English in Abia State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of spatial contiguity principle on senior secondary school students' achievement and motivation in Literature-in-English in Umuahia Educational Zone, Abia. The study adopted quasi-experimental research design. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. A sample population of 315 SS II students was used for the study representing 10% of the population. The instruments used for the study were Literature Achievement Test (LAT) and Motivation for Literature-in-English learning questionnaire (MILLQ). The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that students taught with spatial contiguity principle had higher mean achievement and higher mean motivation scores than those taught with non-spatial contiguity principle.

Keywords: Spatial continuity principle, achievement, motivation, Literature in English

Introduction

Literature-in-English is a subject of great value in the education of the child, but the poor achievement of students in the subject in external examinations in recent times calls into question the effectiveness and motivational effect of method employed by teachers of literature-in-English in teaching the subject. The use of innovative methods in classroom instructions motivates students and helps them to learn better and to achieve more. This implies that Literature-in-English teachers can employ innovative methods like the spatial contiguity principle which is capable of motivating students to committed and active learning that can lead to a better learning outcome in Literature-in-English.

Literature-in-English is a key arts subject that is taught and learnt in the senior secondary schools in countries where students take Senior School Certificate Examination which includes Nigeria. According to Azikiwe (2007), Literature-in-English is an integral part of language education. It is imaginative and creative work of art, rendered in the English language by English writers as well as writers from other language backgrounds that include poetry, play or drama as well as prose fiction. These genres constitute the Literature-in-English curriculum taught in Nigerian senior secondary schools that are subject to both internal and external examinations, as affirmed by (Fakaye, 2012).

Literature is a subject of inestimable significance. Azikwe (2007) outlines the great values inherent in Literature-in-English to include: exposing learners to real, imagined, local and global experiences that will help nurture their emotional, social and moral judgment. In addition, it inculcates in learners the love for extensive reading for its own sake; develops critical thinking skill for adequate judgment; and aides in the learning of the language in which the literary work is composed through reading, acting and role playing. Others include helping learners to appreciate their own culture and those of others, developing learners' creative skills and passing examinations.

Also, Board of Regents (2012) adds that literary activities in the classroom help to develop in learners the four processes of reading, listening, speaking and writing. Literature-in-English, therefore, greatly helps in developing the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains of students' knowledge, as well as their emotional maturity and stability due to the cathartic effect of relieving the experiences of characters in literary works.

However, in spite of the great values of Literature-in-English, Literature instruction in Nigerian secondary schools follows the traditional text-based method a view upheld by studies carried out by Anyachebelu, Anyaneme, Obumneke, Okeke and Adebola (2011). This method seems to make Literature-in-English instruction uninspiring, de-motivating and abstract, since there is little interaction between the teacher and the learners; and this could be responsible for persistent reports of poor students' achievement in Literature-in-English in the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations as upheld by Eziamaka (2012) and Fakeye (2012).

Scholars perceive achievement in diverse ways. Kaplan (2009) sees *achievement* as fundamental human endeavour, while Keller (2011) sees it as the act of achieving or performing, obtaining by exertion, accomplishment and successful performance. For the researchers, *achievement* is the driving force behind every course of human pursuit. This can be explained by the fact that every human pursuit, including education, is tied up with the drive to be successful.

The achievement of students in Umuahia Education Zone in Literature-in-English has not been encouraging. The WAEC results of 2014 showed that 241 students registered for the subject, but 231 students had results which ranged as follows: Credits, 9; D7 Passes, 51; E8 Passes 75; and Failures, 96. This shows poor students achievement in the subject in the 2014 WAEC examinations. In the 2015 WAEC results, 233 students registered for the examinations, but 228 had results out of which 8 had credits, 43 had D7 Passes, 71 had E8 Passes and 105 failed, which shows yet another poor performance of students in the subject.

In 2016, a total number of 209 students registered for Literature-in-English in the 8 sampled schools with 197 students having results, consisting of 2 B2 Passes, 49 Credits, 73 D7 Passes, 43 E8 Passes and 30 Failures. The 2016 results were fair, being an improvement on the previous two years, but with 116 ordinary passes and 30 failures, much room is left for improvement on students' achievement in Literature-in-English in Umuahia Education Zone. This room that is left for improvement on students' achievement in Literature-in-English underscores the need to explore innovative approach such as *Spatial Contiguity Principle*.

Principle is an underlying fact and/or truth by which something either works or is explained. This view is upheld by Webster (2016), who views *principle* as basic truth or

theory, law or fact that forms the basis of something, explains how something works or why something happens. *Spatial Contiguity Principle* is of the fact or truth that multimedia elements such as words or pictures when closely integrated on a page or screen enables students to learn better. This means that it possesses the potential of being employed as an instructional approach to academic subjects as in the context of this study.

The principle of spatial contiguity requires that multimedia elements such as text or on-screen graphics should be positioned in such a way that related elements are close to each other than they are to less related elements. For example, in labeling parts of the human body, the text 'head' should be closely connected to the part it represents rather than the part represented by the text "stomach". For the researchers, spatial contiguity is the relative closeness or nearness of things to one another. It also refers to close integration of related elements such as text and pictures or graphics as used in instruction.

Spatial contiguity principle is one of the principles of the multimedia theory, and its value lies in its statement that students learn better when corresponding words and pictures are presented near rather than far from each other on the page or screen (Meyer, 2009). Integrated words and pictures enable learners to easily process information and avoid attention-splitting. This helps to address the concerns of the *Attention-splitting Principle* which seeks to avoid instructional formats that require learners to split their attention and mentally integrate multiple sources of information (Borda, 2010). An innovative approach such as the Spatial Contiguity Principle may stir interest in literature materials and motivate learners to read and study them, considering the view that using visuals in teaching results in a greater degree of learning.

Motivation, as a term, can be understood from various perspectives. Omrod (2013) considers it as the process that energizes, directs and sustains behaviour, getting students moving, pointing them in a particular direction and keeping them going. In the view of the researchers, *motivation* is inward personal object that activates and sustains goal oriented behaviour. It is a positive inward attitude that anchors the mind on the achievement of a goal, and in the context of this study, educational goal.

Motivation is a critical and indispensable element if students would effectively conduct significant learning activity, a view supported by Lin (2003). It has undeniable importance for learning outcomes as upheld by (Moskovsky, Alrabai, Paolini and Ratcheva, 2013) which is why Chang (2006) points out that the priority for teachers is to stimulate learners' motivation while teaching them in order to enhance achievement in their own learning.

It has been shown that the teaching of Literature-in-English in the secondary schools lack innovation like the use of spatial contiguity principle. This is because, teachers continue to teach literature-in-English using the conventional method which deprives learners sufficient opportunity to take active part in their own learning, removes motivation and makes literature abstract as reported by previous studies. The close integration of text and pictures of the Spatial Contiguity Principle may lead to active learning as students build connections between words and pictures, as reported in related studies. This may offer a more conducive learning environment and motivation, which, may boost learners' disposition for greater achievement in Literature-in-English; hence the need for the study.

The teaching and learning of Literature-in-English have received little attention over

the years. The lack of attention in Nigeria, particularly in secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State, has witnessed the continued teaching and learning of literature to the conventional method of literary instruction that excludes the use of multimedia approaches like the spatial contiguity principle. The results of student in the sample schools in the zone in Literature-in-English show a consistent decline in students' performance in the subject. The problem may largely be attributed to the continuous use of the conventional method of literary instruction.

There is, therefore, the need to improve the teaching of Literature-in-English by exploring more effective and more learner-centered approaches that enhance students' motivation in learning literature in secondary schools. In view of this, the researcher investigates the effects of Spatial Contiguity Principle in students' achievement and motivation in Literature-in-English in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the effect of spatial contiguity principle on senior secondary school students' achievement and motivation in Literature-in-English in Umuahia Education Zone. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the mean achievement scores of students taught Literature-in-English using Spatial Contiguity Principle and those taught using conventional method.
2. Determine the mean motivation scores of students taught Literature-in-English using Spatial Contiguity Principle and those taught using conventional method.

Research Questions

1. What are the mean achievement scores of students taught Literature-in-English using Spatial Contiguity Principle and those taught using conventional method?
2. What are the mean motivation scores of students taught Literature-in-English using Spatial Contiguity Principle and those taught using conventional method?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught Literature-in-English using Spatial Contiguity Principle and those taught using conventional method.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean motivation scores of students taught Literature-in-English using Spatial Contiguity Principle and those taught using conventional method.

Method

Quasi-experimental factorial design was adopted in the study. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003), quasi-experimental factorial design is a quasi-experimental design modified to permit the investigation of additional independent variables. The treatment variable is principle at two levels: spatial contiguity (x_1) and conventional method(x_2), while the moderator variable is gender at two levels: male (y_1) and female (y_2). Consequently, the design is a 2×2 pretest-posttest non equivalent control group factorial design.

E	o_1	x_1	y_1	o_2
C	o_1	x_2	y_1	o_2
E	o_1	x_1	y_2	o_2
C	o_1	x_2	y_2	o_2

Where o_1 and o_2 are pretest and posttest scores respectively.

E = Experimental Group

C = Control Group

The study was conducted in all the public secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State with its headquarters at Umuahia. Abia State is divided into three Education Zones: Aba Zone, Ohafia Zone and Umuahia Zone. The rationale for choosing this Zone is because students' achievement in Literature -in-English in external examination has been poor (Chief Examiners' Report, WAEC, 2015).

The population of the study comprised 3,149 senior secondary school students (SS II) in 57 coeducational public secondary schools in the area according to available records from SEMB Umuahia Zonal Office 2015/2016 academic session.

The sample used for the study was 315 SS II students representing 10% of the entire population from the 57 coeducational public schools in the area. Therefore, the researcher used proportional random sampling technique in sampling.

Two instruments were used for data collection. They include the Literature Achievement Test (LAT) developed by the researchers and a motivation scale adapted from Li (2006) English Learning Motivation Scale (ELMS). The LAT was used for pretest and post-test, although the items in the LAT used for pre-test were reshuffled for use as post-test. Each of the LAT is a five item instrument made up of essay questions/items.

ELMS was used to ascertain the motivational effect of the instruction with spatial contiguity principle. The questionnaire consisted of twenty items on a 4 point rating scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire was given to students after the experiment.

In order to ascertain the validity of the instruments, the researchers subjected them to face and content validation by three experts: one in Measurement and Evaluation and two in Arts Education, all from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The LAT was validated in terms of appropriateness and validity of content, clarity of the questions asked, proper wording of the items and appropriateness and adequacy of the questions/items to the students' level of understanding and experience. Their comments were used to modify the instruments.

Before the actual treatment, training classes were organized for the literature teachers of the sampled schools that were involved in the study. They were sensitized on the treatment specifications in relation to the instruments. A detailed outlay of the experimental procedure is outlined below.

Before the treatment, the research subjects were given a pre-test with both LAT and the ELMS. The test was administered by the researchers. The scripts were also marked by the researchers. The pre-test was used to:

- Determine the students' initial knowledge of the material they will learn later.
- Determine the comparability of the groups (experimental and control) with respect to

their achievement in the pre-test scores.

The main treatment of the study was the teachings of the poem *Piano and the Drums* by Gabriel Okara; the play: *A Raising in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry and the novel, *Lonely Days* by Bayo Adebowale schemed for instruction from SSII to SSIII students. The treatment focused of the features of the literary works: content, subject matter, themes, language, style, form and poetic devices, using the two teaching methods (spatial contiguity principle and conventional method). The experimental group was taught using the spatial contiguity principle while the control group was taught using conventional method.

The researchers used mean and standard deviation to provide answers to the research questions. This is because mean is the most reliable measure of the central tendency in a normal distribution which will be used to describe the mean achievement scores of students. While Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses formulated for the study at 0.05 level of significance. The pre-test scores were used as covariate for achievement.

Results

Research Question One: What are the mean achievement scores of students taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of achievement scores of students taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method

Group	Pretest			Posttest		
	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Gain Score
Experimental	75	4.64	3.12	13.49	7.95	8.85
Control	75	4.46	2.90	7.29	5.48	2.83

Table 1 shows that the students who were taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle had mean achievement score of 4.64 with a standard deviation of 3.12 at the pre-test and a post-test mean achievement score of 13.49 with standard deviation of 7.95 while those who were taught using non spatial contiguity principle had pre-test mean achievement score of 4.46 with standard deviation of 2.90 and post-test mean achievement score of 7.29 with standard deviation of 5.48. Mean gain scores of 8.85 and 2.83 for the two groups respectively imply that the students who were taught, using spatial contiguity principle had higher mean achievement score than those taught, using conventional method.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method.

Table 2: Analysis of covariance of the effect of methods on mean achievement scores of students in Literature-in-English

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	2832.229 ^a	4	708.057	18.621	.000
Intercept	1657.962	1	1657.962	43.602	.000
Pre-test	1207.133	1	1207.133	31.746	.000
Group	1366.408	1	1366.408	35.935	.000
Gender	125.758	1	125.758	3.307	.071
Group * Gender	3.549	1	3.549	.093	.760
Error	5513.564	145	38.025		
Total	24549.000	150			
Corrected Total	8345.793	149			

a. R Squared = .339 (Adjusted R Squared = .321)

Table 2 shows that the probability associated with the calculated value of F (35.935) for the effect of method on mean achievement scores of students in Literature-in-English is 0.000. Since the probability value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance ($p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis was rejected meaning that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method in favour of those taught, using spatial contiguity principle.

Research Question 2: What are the mean motivation scores of students taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of motivation scores of students taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method

Group	Pretest			Posttest		
	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Gain Score
Experimental	75	2.79	.65	3.38	.41	.59
Control	75	2.80	.73	2.96	.55	.16

Table 3 shows that the students who were taught Literature-in-English, using spatial contiguity principle had mean motivation score of 2.79 with a standard deviation of 0.65 at the pre-test and post-test mean motivation score of 3.38 with standard deviation of 0.41. On the other hand, those who were taught, using conventional method had pre-test mean motivation score of 2.80 with standard deviation of 0.73 and post-test mean motivation score of 2.96 with standard deviation of 0.55. Mean gain scores of 0.59 and 0.16 for the two groups respectively imply that the students who were taught using spatial contiguity principle had higher mean motivation score than those taught using conventional method.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean motivation scores of students taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method

Table 4: Analysis of covariance of the effect of methods on mean motivation scores of students in Literature-in-English

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	8.932 ^a	4	2.233	9.658	.000
Intercept	77.429	1	77.429	334.884	.000
Pre-motivation	.027	1	.027	.117	.733
Group	6.619	1	6.619	28.625	.000
Gender	1.776	1	1.776	7.681	.006
Group * Gender	.543	1	.543	2.349	.128
Error	33.526	145	.231		
Total	1556.775	150			
Corrected Total	42.458	149			

a. R Squared = .210 (Adjusted R Squared = .189)

Table 4 shows that the probability associated with the calculated value of F (28.625) for the effect of methods on mean motivation scores of students in Literature-in-English is 0.000. Since the probability value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance ($p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference in the mean motivation scores of students taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method in favour of those taught using conventional method.

Discussion

The result of the study as presented in Table 1 showed that the mean achievement scores of students who were taught Literature-in-English, using spatial contiguity principle were higher than those of the students taught the subject using conventional method. This finding is in conformity with Lee (2005) who found out that students performed better in a study

treatment with spatial contiguity principle. The findings of the study also agrees with Mayer in Benassi, Overson and Hakala (2014), who found that spatial contiguity principle enables students to learn better and deeper. However, the result from hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught Literature-in-English, using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method in favour of those taught using spatial contiguity principle. This led to the rejection of hypothesis one which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method.

The findings of the study, as shown in Table 2, revealed that students who were taught Literature-in-English, using spatial contiguity principle had higher mean motivation scores than those taught, using conventional method. This is in agreement with (Borda, 2010) who found out that the close integration of text and picture of the spatial contiguity principle is a motivating factor for students in reading and studying materials. The finding also agreed with Nata (2012), who found out that integration of related materials as in spatial contiguity principle reduces attention splitting, thereby increasing motivation and facilitating learning. Hypothesis two showed that there is a significant difference in the mean motivation scores of students taught Literature-in-English, using spatial contiguity principle and those taught conventional method in favour of those taught, using spatial contiguity principle. This led to the rejection of hypothesis two, which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean motivation scores of students taught Literature-in-English using spatial contiguity principle and those taught with conventional method.

Conclusion

The study has shown that students who were taught Literature in English, using spatial contiguity principle had higher mean achievement scores than those taught, using conventional method; and that students who were taught, using spatial contiguity principle had higher mean motivation scores than those taught using conventional method.

Implications

The findings of the study have educational implications for students, teachers of literature-in-English and literary authors.

The implication of the study to students is that when they are exposed to literary instruction with spatial contiguity principle, their achievement in the subject will be higher. Literary instruction with spatial contiguity principle will lead to students' greater motivation for deeper literary learning for improved achievement in the subject.

For teachers of Literature-in-English, the implication is that they need to adopt spatial contiguity principle as an alternative literary instructional approach which will no doubt contribute immensely as an innovative approach in improving students' achievement in Literature-in-English.

Finally, the findings of the study also have implications for Literature-in-English authors. The result of the study will enable the Literature-in-English authors to integrate spatial contiguity principle in their text books as differentiated instructional skill and method

for teachers and to make understanding of concept and content for learners for their better achievement in Literature-in-English.

Recommendations

On the bases of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. School authorities and Literature-in-English teachers should adopt literary instruction with spatial contiguity principle.
2. Literary authors should write literary works incorporating spatial contiguity principle as a motivational strategy for students in Literature-in-English.
3. Seminars and workshops can be organized in schools by principals to sensitize Literature-in-English teachers on the benefits and importance of the use of spatial contiguity principle in teaching Literature-in-English.

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Basic Education English Language Teachers' Perception of Causes and Solutions of Phonological Problems among Edem-Igbo English Bilingual Students

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Abstract

This study was carried out to find out the causes and solutions of phonological problems among Edem-Igbo speakers in Nigeria. The study was guided by three research questions. A descriptive survey design informed the study. Intact population comprising all the English language teachers from the nine basic-education level schools in Edem community was used. A self-constructed Likert 4-point scale questionnaire containing seventeen items on causes and solutions of phonological problems was the instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by three specialists - two in Language Education and one in Education Measurement and Evaluation. The instrument was further subjected to reliability, using Cronbach alpha for dependability of the instrument. It yielded reliability index of 0.75. Data was analysed, using percentages, mean and standard deviation. Findings revealed that although 96% of teachers are qualified, 58.66% do not have sufficient experience that will help in alleviating students' phonological problems. Major causes of phonological problem were attributed to lack of experience on the part of teachers and existence of some sounds in English that have no Edem-Igbo equivalent. Ways of alleviating phonological problems of Edem – Igbo students include: starting the teaching of oral English early in school; allocating more time to the teaching of oral English; and using only qualified and experienced teachers in the teaching of English.

Keywords: English phonological problems, learning English phonology, English bilinguals, English language teaching

Introduction

English language is a global language. It is the language of commerce, computer and internet. It is a language that is most sought after in the world. English is the second most spoken language in the world; about 300million of English speakers are native speakers; and about 300 million people use it as a foreign language. It is official language or co-official language of about 45 countries (Essays, UK (2013). Hence, there is need for effective

communication among the various users of the language, otherwise mutual intelligibility will be hampered, and global communication will not be possible (Laurle,2017) and when there is no global effective communication, there will not be global peace.

In Nigeria, English language is the official language. According to Onuigbo and Eyisi (2008), it is a compromise language for inter-ethnic communication in Nigeria where there are more than four hundred languages. English language is one of the greatest legacies which the colonial masters left in Nigeria. It is a legacy that survived after the Nigeria independence and may continue to thrive for a very long time. The language is so important in Nigeria, according to Onuigbo and Eyisi (2008). that it has become the official language of Nigeria serving as the language of government, commerce, education and international transaction. Lack of proficiency in English language limits one's interaction and communication within and without Nigeria. Most importantly, active communication and proficiency in English language cannot be achieved without fluency. Knowledge and proficiency of students in English language can be achieved when qualified teachers teach the language.

Qualification of teachers has to do with certificate got at the end of academic pursuit. It is the certificate obtained by teachers that determine their employment and placement. A qualified teacher has a wide educational background and has an adequate and professional knowledge in their field of teaching. In basic education, the least teacher qualification is National Certificate in Education (NPE,2013). It is very important that only qualified teachers teach in the basic education because it is the foundation of western education. Though FRN (2013) laments that 'there is lack of professionally – trained specialist teachers in Early Child Development Education, this most important and crucial period of development of the child is left in the hands of uninformed and unqualified personnel' (p.36). Aaronson, Barrow, and Sander (2007) believe that the teachers' qualification determines students' academic success, but teachers' experience contributes more to students' academic success.

Experience is the number of years put into service in order to acquire skills and knowledge for perfection. The years of experience in teaching field could significantly determine the skills possessed by the teacher for effective teaching and learning. Teachers experience, apart from the number of the years in service, could also be associated with their professional participations in workshops, conferences, seminars, re-training and a host of others. Teacher qualification and experience contribute immensely to students' performance; experienced teachers draw from their wealth of experience to enhance teaching and learning. Teaching skill of teachers and year of experience are directly proportional to each other in their contribution to students' learning outcome (Swando, 2016). As a teacher puts in more years in the teaching profession, they come across principles that work, principles they may not have learnt in school but due to much exposure, they have come to discover them. Glewwe, Hanushek, Humpage, and Ravina (2011), in Ukwueze and Otagburuagu (2017), discovered that teachers' experience influence students' scores in English language. English language teaching especially the spoken aspect of it ought to be left in the hands of experienced teachers. This is because most Nigerians find it difficult to communicate effectively in English language because of phonological interference of their native languages with the English language.

Phonological problems are interference of the mother tongue with the second language. Ogbuehi (2003) asserts that every normal child acquires a mother tongue in a normal way through imitation of sound from adult group. One of the most controversial issues in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) is the role played by mother tongue (MT) in learning different components of the target language. The learning involves some challenges because the learner has to learn the sound system and the prosodic features of the second language against the already firmly consolidated first language in the mind of the learner. This is because, according to Otagburagu and Okorji (2002), different languages have individual peculiar phonological features which must be mastered and used by the learner for mutual intelligibility with the native speakers and other users of the language. Many L2 users find it difficult to make this adjustment, they erroneously approximate the phonological features of the second and target language with those of their mother tongue.

Different second language learners of English from different speech communities across the globe have different phonological interference problems. Ogbuehi (2003) points out that there are speech sounds that can be used to identify different people from different speech environment, the signs she called *shibboleths*. For instance, Varol (2012) in Keshavarz and Abubakar (2017) discovered that Persian and Turkish English L2 learners face difficulties in pronouncing /θ/, /ð/, /ɪ/ /ʌ/ and /æ/ as these sounds are absent in their native language. The Yorubas, for instance, according Orike(2009), has no /z/ and /ts/ sounds in their language. So, a Yoruba speaker pronounces *zoo* as 'soo' and *champion* as 'shampion' the obligatory /h/ in words like *house* and *heaven* is removed thereby having erroneous pronunciation of 'ouse' for *house* and 'eaven' for *heaven*. The Hausas, on the other hand, according to Jamila and Abullahi (2015), have problem with such these fricatives as /θ/ /ð/, /f/, /v/, /ʒ/ that are not found in Hausa language. Keshavarz, and Abubakar (2017) investigated the phonological problems of Hausa speakers in the pronunciation of the English consonants /f/, /v/, /θ/ and /ð/. They discovered that /f/ is mispronounced as /p/, as in words such as *African*, which is pronounced as /æprikən/, *farm* as /pə:m/, *father* as /pə:zə/, *fan* /pæn/, *fond* /pond/, *funny* /poni/, *from* /prom/, *briefly* /bripli/. This is due to the fact that the phonetic features of Hausa /f/ differs drastically from English /f/. Schuh (2008), in Keshavarz and Abubakar (2017), asserts that English, /f/ is always labio-dental (i.e., it is produced by a contact between the lower lip and the upper front teeth), whereas in Hausa, /f/ is realized and pronounced as the voiceless bilabial stop /p/. English voiced labio-dental /v/ is mispronounced as /b/, as in *moving* /mubin/, *visitors* /biziters/, *evening* /ibenin/, *coverage* as /koberedʒ/, *lovely* as /lobli/ or /lobeli/, *TV* /ti: bi:/, and *very* as /beri/. The researchers add that the main reason for this mispronunciation is MT interference as /v/ does not exist in Hausa. Therefore, Hausa speakers replace it with /b/, which is the closest sound to /v/ in terms of place of articulation and voicing. Similarly, Hausa English bilingual mispronounce the English consonant /θ/ as /t/ in words such as *think* /tink/, *thin* /tin/, and *thirty* /te:rti/, some also substitute /z/ for /θ/, as in *Thursday* /zurzdei/, and *toothpaste* /tuzpest/. The voiced dental fricative /ð/ is mispronounced /z/. For instance, *father* /faðð/ is mispronounced as /pazə/, *further* as /pə:zə/, *there* and *their* as /zeər/. This is due to the fact that this consonant does not exist in Hausa. Consequently, Hausa speakers replace it with /z/, which serves as the closest sound to /ð/ in terms of manner of articulation and voicing, /ð/ is mispronounced as /d/, as in *the* /de/, *therefore* /derpor/, *that* /dæt/, and *this* /dIs/. The Igbo also have problem

with sounds like /θ/, /ð/. According to Nkamigbo (2010), they use /t/ for /θ/ and /d/ for /ð/ thereby having erroneous pronunciation as *thief* /tif/ for /θif/, *theory* /tiory/ for /θiori/. Onuigbo (2012) asserts that diphthongs are reduced to single vowels by the Igbo learners of English because Igbo phonemes are always single; that accounts for the wrong pronunciation like /babi/ for *baby* instead of /beibi/. Also, vowel harmony in Igbo, according to Ogbuehi (2001), are transferred to the pronunciation of English words thereby realizing final vowel pronounced in words with consonant ending. Thus, *ball* /bɔ:l/ is wrongly pronounced as /bɔ:lu/, *table* /teibl/ as /tebulu/, *head* /hed/ as /hedi/, and *leg* /leg/ as /legi/. According to Nkamigbo (2011), /θ/ and /ð/ sounds pose problems for Igbo-English bilingual learner. The dental fricative /θ/ and /ð/ are realized as /t/ and /d/ respectively. To him, *thin* /θin/ and *tin* /tin/ will be realized as /tin/. *Thought* and *taught* will be realized the same as /tɔt/, *then* and *den* will be realized as /den/. Supporting Nkamigbo, Ugorji (2007) posits that one of the phonological problems faced by Igbo L2 learners is that some English consonants are not present in the Igbo language. Examples are /θ/, /ð/, /ʒ/. Because of that, Igbo learners of English language substitute /t/ for /θ/, /d/ for /ð/ and /s/ for /ʒ/. Consequently, Igbos wrongly pronounce these words:

Word	Right	Wrong
thief	/θif/	/tif/
theory	/θiore/	/tiori/
them	/ðem/	/dem/
casual	/kæʒjuəl/	/kæsul/

Ukwueze and Otagburuagu (2017) discovered that just like other Igbos, Igbo English bilingual learners from Edem area have phonological problem of using /t/ sound for /θ/ sound, thereby having erroneous pronunciation like *think* /tink/ for /θink/, *thief* /tif/ for /θif/. Also /ð/ sound is wrongly pronounced as /d/, as in /di/ for /ði/, /dis/ for /ðis/. They also use /n/ sound for /l/ sound, realizing funny pronunciation such as /nagos/ for *Lagos*, /nondon/ for London, /nine/ for *line* and /nady/ for *lady*. They insert vowel in-between every consonant, hence *delightful* /delitfl/ is wrongly pronounced as /denitiful/, *head* /hed/ is wrongly pronounced as /hedi/. Phonological problem poses great problem to communication and handling that challenge is best done at the grassroots level of education which is the basic education.

Basic education is a nine-year academic programme with one-year kindergarten. It starts with one-year kindergarten through primary to junior secondary school education level. It is a programme that is made up of lower basic (primary 1-3), middle basic (primary 4-6) and upper basic (junior secondary 1-3). Universal Basic Education (UBE), according to Danu and Opara (2017), is the most current reform initiated in Nigeria educational system by the then Obasanjo regime. UBE is designed to ensure transition from primary to junior secondary level and to ensure that children remain long enough in school to acquire basic competences and life skills.(FRN, 2004). Obiyo and Okigbo (2017) believe that UBE was established to serve as the foundation in the formal process of ensuring changes in the behaviour of the growing members of the society. UBE programme is universal, free and compulsory.

Against the above background, the purpose of this study is to find out how phonological problems of Edem secondary school students in English language could be ameliorated. Specifically, this study intends to find out:

1. the qualification of English language teachers teaching at basic education level in Edem
2. the causes of phonological problems of Edem students in English language;
3. the various ways of ameliorating the phonological problems of Edem students in English language.

Research Questions

1. What is the qualification and teaching experience of English language teachers teaching at basic education level in Edem?
2. What are the teachers' perception of the causes of the phonological problems of Edem secondary school students in English language?
3. What are the teachers' perception of the various ways of alleviating the phonological problems of Edem secondary school students in English language?

Method

Descriptive survey design was used for the study because the study is aimed at collecting data about features and facts about a given population and describing it in a systematic way. The population of the study comprises the entire 75 English language teachers in the basic education in Edem community. Edem is an Igbo speaking community in Enugu state of Nigeria. It has four secondary schools and five primary schools.

Teachers' questionnaire on phonological problems (TQPP) was used for data collection. This instrument was made up of two sections (A&B). Section A consists of the demographic information of teachers such as gender, level of qualifications and experience. Section B is made up of two clusters (1&2). Cluster one contains nine items on probable causes of phonological problems, while cluster 2 is made up of eight items on suggested solution to phonological problems. The items were measured using a four-point rating scale of strongly agree =4; agree =3; disagree = 2 and strongly disagree = 1. A criterion value of 2.50 was taken as a bench mark for taking decision.

Instrument was face validated by two experts from Linguistics and one expert from Measurement and Evaluation. Items were validated to determine the validity of the instrument. Some items were restructured while some were discarded. Based on this, a reliability test was conducted. The items were tested for reliability in order to determine the dependability of the instrument, using Cronbach alpha. Cluster one was tested using 8 items which gave an index of .588; and cluster two was also tested using 8 items which gave an index of .766. The total 16 items, however gave an index of .737. This indicates that the instrument was moderately reliable to be used for the study. The instrument was administered personally by the researchers and collected directly from the respondents after they had completed the questionnaire.

Percentages were used to answer research questions dealing with teachers' qualification and experience while mean and standard deviation were used to answer other research question.

A criterion value of 2.50 was chosen as the bench mark for taking decision.

Results

Research question 1: What is the qualification and teaching experience of English language teachers teaching at basic education level in Edem?

The table below provides the answer to the research question

Table 1: Percentage Scores of Teachers' Qualification and Experience

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentages	% Total
1.	Qualification			
	TC2	0.5	7.00	
	NCE	15	20.00	
	B.Ed	50	66.00	
	MEd	05	7.00	100
2.	Experience (years)			
	0.5	44	58.00	
	6-15	20	26.00	
	over 15	11	16.00	100

Table 1 shows that 7% of the respondents possess TC 2 certificate, 20% NCE, 66% B.Ed, and 7% M.Ed. These percentages constitute 100% of the respondents. On the other hand, 58% of the respondents have acquired 5 years teaching experience; 26% have experience range between 6-15 years and 16% represents those with teaching experience above 15 years. These percentages represent 100% of the respondents. This result indicates that many of the teachers are qualified to teach English at the basic education levels as stipulated in the National Policy of Education, but most of them are not experienced in the field of teaching as the Table reveals that the highest percentage of 44% fall with the experience range of 0-5 years.

Research Question 2: What are the teachers' perception of the causes of the phonological problems of Edem secondary school students in the English language?

The table below provides the answer to research question 2

Table 2: Mean Score on Teachers' Perception of Causes of Phonological Problems among Edem Students (n=75)

S/N	Causes of phonological problems	Mean	SD	Remark
1	/l/ sound in English is not found in Edem dialect of Igbo language.	4.00	0.00	SA
2	/oə/ sound in English is not found in Edem dialect of Igbo language.	3.63	0.61	SA
3	/θ/ sound in English is not found in Edem dialect of Igbo language.	3.65	0.52	SA
4	/ð / sound in English is not found in Edem dialect of Igbo language.	3.65	0.52	SA
5	/ʌ/ sound in English is not found in Edem dialect of Igbo language .	3.51	0.83	SA
6.	Edem dialect of Igbo has single vowel unlike English that have diphthong and triphthong	3.18	1.02	Agree
7.	Edem words do not have constant clusters	2.72	1.03	Agree
8	All Edem Igbo words end with vowel sound	2.64	1.05	Agree
9.	Distinction cannot be made between long vowel sound and short vowel sound	2.60	1.04	Agree
	Grand Mean	2.57	.94	Agree

Results in Table 2 show teachers' perceptions on the causes of phonological problem among Edem- Igbo students in Oral English. All items (1-9) have mean scores above the criterion value of 2.50 chosen for taking decision. This means that all the teachers agree that all the items listed in the cluster are the causes of phonological problems of Edem- English bilinguals. The result makes interesting revelation of the teachers perception of phonological problems of their students. The mean scores of items which deal with knowledge of segmental phonemes (items 1-6) have mean score range of 3.51-4.00 and a standard deviation range of 00.00-0.83. This means that the response range is very close. Such closeness implies that the teachers' perception of problems relating to the segmental phonemes is uniform because they have good knowledge of the segmental phonemes of the English language. However, responses which deal with canonical structure (items 7-9) have mean range score of 2.60-2.72 and standard deviation of range of 1.02-1.05. These scores reflect, in the view of the researcher, a uniform low, but acceptable mean scores because the mean scores are above the criterion value of 2.50. This means that the teachers' perception in this category of English phonology is low because of their limited knowledge of the canonical patterns of English phonology. The mean scores are, in the opinion of the researcher, proportionate to the teachers' knowledge of English phonology.

Research Question 3: What are the teachers' perception of the various ways of alleviating the phonological problems of Edem secondary school students in the English language?

Table 3: Mean Score of Teachers' Perception of Solutions to the Phonological Problems of Edem Secondary School Students in the English language (n=75)

S/N	Ways of alleviating Phonological Problems	Mean	SD	Remark
10.	Special time should be allocated in the timetable for teaching oral English.	3.63	.61	SA
11.	Teachers should pick words and sounds that pose problems to students and drill them on it.	3.60	.68	SA
12.	Teaching oral English should start in primary schools	3.51	.83	SA
13.	Phonological reading texts that contain problematic sounds should be formulated by text book writers.	3.32	.89	Agree
14.	Experienced teachers should teach oral English in Edem secondary schools.	3.23	1.03	Agree
15.	Students should be made to listen to native speakers on televisions, and VCDs.	3.19	1.02	Agree
16.	Teachers should record students interactions once in a while and use it to demonstrate students' errors.	3.16	.90	Agree
17.	Qualified teachers of English language should only teach oral English	2.60	1.04	Agree
	Grand Total	3.31	.84	A

Results in Table 3 show teachers' perceptions of solution to phonological problems among Edem - Igbo students in oral English. The teachers strongly agreed that more time should be allocated to the teaching of oral English, much drilling should be done on sounds that pose problems to student in oral English, and teaching of oral English to commence from primary school as reflected in the mean score in items 10 to 12 which have mean scores of 3.63, 3.60 and 3.51 with standard deviation of 0.61, 0.68, and 0.83 respectively. The standard deviation range of 0.61-0.83 shows that the teachers' perception of solutions to the problems are almost uniform. The result also shows that the respondents agreed to items 13 to 17 that reading texts which contain words having problematic sounds should be used as drills; experience teachers should teach oral English in Edem; students should be made to listen to native speakers on VCDs; students' interaction should be recorded once in a while and used to demonstrate students errors; and qualified teachers only should teach oral English. These responses have mean scores of 3.32, 3.23, 3.19, 3.16, and 2.60 with standard deviation of 0.89, 1.03, 1.02, 0.90, and 1.04 respectively. These scores which are above the criterion value of 2.50 indicate that teachers unanimously agreed to all suggestions made in order to alleviate phonological problems in English among Edem - Igbo students as confirmed by the close range of the standard deviation (0.89-1.04).

Discussion

Findings from the causes of phonological problems among Edem-Igbo English bilingual students reveal that the causes of phonological problems are: some English sounds are not found in Eden-Igbo language, sounds like /l/, as in *Lagos*; /eu/ as in *go*; /θ/ as in *think*; /ð/ as in

them, and /[^]/ as in *love*. Consequently, Edem–Igbo students pronounce *Lagos* /nagos/; and *labour* /neib/. This means that *labour* and *neighbour* could pass as homophones. They pronounce *go* as /go/, *hole* as /hol/, *think* as /tink/ *them* as /dem/ *cut* as /kɔ t/. The words *cut* and *caught* could also serve as homophones. The vowel sounds in *gone*, *love* and *cut* are pronounced as /ɔ/. These findings affirm the view of Nkamigbo and Ugorji (2007) who posited that one of the phonological problems faced by Igbo L2 learners is that some English consonants like /θ/, /ð/, /ʒ/ are not present in the Igbo language. Varol (2012) in Keshavarz and Abubakar (2017) confirms this finding for Persian and Turkish languages which do not have /θ/, /ɪ/, /ʃ/ and /æ/ /ɔ/ sounds in their language and so they find it difficult to pronounce these sounds in English language. Other causes of phonological problems in Edem–Igbo English bilingual from the finding include: Edem–Igbo vowels are single unlike the English vowels which can be a diphthong or triphthong. Similarly, Edem Igbo do not have consonant cluster. All Edem-Igbo words end with vowel sound unlike English words that end with both vowel and consonant. Distinction cannot be made between long vowels and short vowels. Onuigbo (2012) supports these findings when he asserts that diphthongs are reduced to single vowels by the Igbo learners of English because Igbo phonemes are always single. By stating that vowel harmony in Igbo are transferred to the pronunciation of English words, Ogbuehi (2011) provides a support base to the findings of this study.

To alleviate phonological problem among Edem–Igbo learners of English more time should be allocated in the time table for teaching Oral English. Teachers should pick words and sounds that pose problem to the learners and drill them because it is believed that practice makes perfect. Reading materials containing words that are problematic for Edem-English bilinguals should be used for drilling the students. Teaching Oral English should be started in primary schools in Edem. Experienced teachers should teach Oral English in Edem. Students should be made to listen to native speakers on VCD and the television. Teachers should record students' interactions once in a while and play them in their hearing to demonstrate their errors in pronunciation. All the respondents are agreed on the above remedial measures based on their personal experience as non-native speakers of English and at the same time sharing the same mother tongue with the students. They appreciate the students' problems because they are part of them.

The respondents are all agreed that only qualified teachers of English should teach Oral English. Humpage and Ravina (2012) in Ukwueze and Otagburuagu (2017) support this response when they recommend that English language teaching especially the spoken part should be taught by qualified and experienced teachers.

Conclusion

There are mother- tongue- induced linguistic problems which Edem-Igbo bilinguals face. These problems are not unique to Edem-Igbo bilinguals. They are universal to all Igbo-English bilinguals. This study, however, affirms that some of these problems may serve as *shibboleths* of some Igbo dialectal groups for identifying their dialect of origin (Ogbuehi, 2003). This is the case with Edem-Igbo bilinguals as this study reveals. Since the teachers are second language users of English, the recommendations from the responding teachers may lead to approximations and not ultimate attainment of native-like performance.

Recommendations

1. Teachers should drill the students on these problematic sounds.
2. More time should be allocated to teaching and learning of oral English.
3. Oral English teaching should be started in primary school.

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Developing Imaginative and Creative Abilities in Writing and Oratory in Igbo Language: Igbo Language Teachers' Perceived Roles in Teaching

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Abstract

This study examined the perceived roles of Igbo language teacher in developing imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in Igbo language. Two research questions guided the study. The sample of the study was 60 Igbo language head teachers in public secondary schools in southeast Nigeria drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A self constructed Likert 4-point scale questionnaire containing two clusters with a total of 30 items was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument was face validated by senior lecturers in language education Igbo and one in Measurement and Evaluation all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The instrument yielded a co-efficient of 0.92. The results were analysed using the mean scores. The results showed that the perceived ways Igbo language teachers help students to develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in the Igbo language are through Igbo folktales/storytelling, acquisition of artistic expression, exposure to Igbo play/drama, Igbo music, Igbo dance, Igbo conversation among others. In addition, the findings revealed that the perceived basic knowledge Igbo language teachers inculcate in students to guide them in creative writing and oratory in Igbo language include letting them know that the writers thought pattern must be rooted in Igbo culture, the work must have a specific function and a target audience, the work must be original, among others.

Keywords: Igbo creativity, Igbo cultural practices, Igbo creative writing, oratory in Igbo language

Introduction

Humans are born with a natural capacity to be inquisitive and curious about their world. Our ability to imagine a different world and to create new possibilities sets us apart from other creatures. In a social system like Igbo land, Igbo language is the mode of communication and thus should be a language of instruction. Therefore, Igbo youths are supposed to speak the Igbo language fluently as it enables them to be creative in the language since it is believed that people reason better in their language. Development of imagination and creative abilities in writing and oratory in Igbo language is very essential for Igbo youths especially in

this 21st century as it is believed that the use of one's language hasten the very skills that nurture creativity (Nneji, 2017). Creativity itself is the hallmark of imagination. Creativity and imagination are essential capacities which have a vital role to play in the development of any child at all levels. Having good ideas, putting the imagination to work, planning and making things happen are all capabilities that are essential in a world where the pace of change demands adaptability, resilience and risk-taking as knowledge alone is not enough (Babatunde, 2015).

Creativity and imagination are essential capacities which have a vital role to play across the whole curriculum and at every age. Thus, the need to help children develop them. Ursula (2016) opines that imaginative ability is capability of finding ways in which one might adapt what they have to help create spaces that excite curiosity and stimulate deep thinking while creative ability is the capability of an individual to adapt to a challenging task making it more interesting by engaging in deep thinking, researching, working out and presenting a novel idea or object. Eddy (2016) adds that imaginative ability of a child determines the child creative ability, and, therefore, is better encouraged and supported in children using imaginative play. According to Williams (2017), imaginative and creative play is one of the many areas of play that are critical to child development. Infants, toddlers and young children acquire developmental skills like fine and gross motor abilities and hand-eye coordination through contact with the real world, when they move and interact with their environment. Most skills can easily be learnt through play, which is a natural way of development and growth. Abel (2017) asserts that aside from motor skills (skills that relate to movement), children also need to develop their imagination, their logical thinking, and in other words, mental skills. This means that imaginative and creative play help children in physical, emotional, intellectual and social developments.

Imaginative play involves children in role playing and acting out various experiences that they may have had or something that is of some interest to them (Babatunde, 2015). In imaginative play, children are experimenting with decision making on how to behave and are also practising their social skills. Babatunde further states that children learn from experience: from what happens around them, from what they see, hear, smell, taste and touch. To absorb those experiences and make sense of the world, they need to be engaged in imaginary play. Play is a child's way of engaging and making sense of the world. In the opinion of Mbachii, (2017), role play may appear to be a very simple activity, yet within it, young children learn practical life skills such as dressing themselves, cooperating and sharing with others, and developing creative ability in so many areas. In support of the idea, Enejo (2017) opines that developing imaginative ability depends on learning environment and resources available, thus the need to channel child's imaginative play to their culture and belief system. Language is the vehicle for such transmission. To this effect, Abel (2017) asserts that this imaginative play can be encouraged by providing a place to play, providing props and materials, being the child's playmate and providing them with experiences to role play. Igbo teacher should be able to identify the type of environment and resources that will help students to unfold this imaginative and creative ability from them especially as it concerns writing and oratory in Igbo language.

According to Udoh (2017), there are various types of imaginative and creative play. Udoh opines that children play imaginatively and creatively in various different ways based on many factors such as age, play environment, toys provided among others. Children can engage in imaginative and creative play by themselves or with others. Imaginary play happens when children use their imaginations to create and make-believe scenarios. Children can engage in this type of play using small toy, figures, puppets, dolls, or stuffed animals for example. Or children can act out a particular role themselves and become a part of a play drama. Often, dressing up and using props will be part of this kind of imaginary play. Ukeje (2017) observes that active play happens when children use their large muscles and move around rather than staying in one place. This type of play releases energy and develops coordination. Arts and crafts and construction/building play are ways for children to express their creativity, encourages focus and concentration, and develops fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination. It also allows children to be proud of themselves and gain a sense of mastery after they have created something. Udoh (2017) adds that the type of play known as *games with rules* includes board games, card games, and structured sports activities. This type of play becomes important for children as they grow older. With this type of play, the focus is playing by the rules and often involves a winner or loser. There is much less room for a child using imagination and creativity with this type of play because it is structured and rule-governed. Although games with rules play are important for children to learn to deal with competition, rules, and the real world, creative and imaginative play is also very important for children's healthy development and should not be ignored. However, Williams (2017) states that it is important to note that there are five essential things to help a child develop general creative ability. These are:

- questioning and challenging
- making connections and seeing relationships
- envisaging what might be
- exploring ideas and keeping options open
- reflecting critically on ideas, actions and outcomes.

Developing the above skills whether in arts, craft, music, dance, writing, oratory among others in a language like Igbo makes use of Igbo language as a medium (Igbokwe, 2017). However, this work is concerned with developing creativity in both writing and oratory (public speech) in Igbo language, thus the need to look into developing creativity skill in oratory before writing, as speaking skill comes before writing skill both in language acquisition and learning.

Oratory (Public speaking) is the process or act of performing a speech to a live audience. This type of speech is deliberately structured with three general purposes: to inform, to persuade and to entertain (Egbe, 2016). Oratory is commonly understood as formal, face-to-face speaking of a single person to a group of listeners. Creativity in oratory in Igbo language is the art of using Igbo language in producing Igbo speech in original and unique way for influencing the audience in public Igbo gathering while the one who has that ability is an orator in Igbo language. Oratory exists above the ordinary speech as it is prepared with passion, infused with creativity, and masterfully crafted to offer a sublime experience. According to Willy (2016), oratory has been called the highest art for it

encompasses all other disciplines. Oratory in Igbo language, therefore, requires knowledge of Igbo literature, the ability to construct Igbo prose, and an ear for rhythm, harmony and musicality. Oratory in Igbo language is not mere speaking Igbo language, but Igbo speech that appeals to our noblest sentiments, animates our souls, stirs passions and emotions, and inspires virtuous action all in accordance with Igbo culture (Nneji, 2017). It is often at its finest when fostered during times of tragedy, pain, crisis, fear, and turmoil. In these situations, it serves as a light, a guide to those who cannot themselves make sense of the chaos and look to a leader to point the way. A creative orator in Igbo language upholds virtue and goodness and thereby speak as masterfully to save Igbo values and principles (Igbokwe, 2017).

Creative writing goes outside the bounds of normal professional, journalistic, academic, or technical forms of literature, typically identified by an emphasis on narrative craft, character development, and the use of literary tropes or with various traditions of poetry and poetics (Thomson, 2017). Due to the looseness of the definition, it is possible for writing such as feature stories to be considered creative writing, even though they fall under journalism, because the content of features is specifically focused on narrative and character development. Eweta (2017) adds that both fictional and non-fictional works fall into this category, including such forms as novels, biographies, short stories, and poems. In the academic setting, creative writing is typically separated into fiction and poetry genres, with a focus on writing in an original style, as opposed to imitating pre-existing genres such as crime or horror. Writing for the screen and stage probably referred to as screenwriting and playwriting are often taught separately, but fit.

Creative writing in Igbo language therefore, is the ability of a writer to use Igbo language in presenting their thought in an imaginative way that appeals to the reader (Ofodile, 2017). It is the ability of a writer to produce writing of original composition using Igbo language. Therefore, this involves critical thinking about Igbo people, their culture and other aspect of their lives and writing about it which is aimed at reshaping something known into something that is different and original. It can also be seen as a form of Igbo artistic expression, which draws on the imagination to convey meaning through the use of imagery, narrative, and drama with special reference to choice of appropriate Igbo proverbs/idioms/adage, figurative use of language and style. Thus creativity in writing in Igbo language, according to Enejo, (2017), is the ability of one to produce creative writing in Igbo language which is a more contemporary and process-oriented name for what has been traditionally called Igbo literature, including the variety of its genres. Igbo creative writing include, Igbo poetry, Igbo plays/drama, Igbo movie and television scripts, Igbo fiction (novels and short stories), Igbo songs, Igbo speeches, Igbo memoirs among others, of which its purpose is for free individual expression of feelings, thoughts, or emotions which contribute to mental and physical health, for promoting Igbo language in general, for entertaining Igbo people and lovers of Igbo language, for educating Igbo people, for sharing human experience with an interested group or for keeping records of significant experience in Igboland and beyond (Udoh, 2017). The students are supposed to be equipped of these skills to avoid Igbo language from going into extinction. Therefore, this work is to find out the role of Igbo language teachers in helping students develops the creative skills in writing and oratory in Igbo language.

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) informs this study. Social learning theory claims that both cognitive and behavioural frameworks in learning are essential provisions of social learning. Social learning integrates motivation and imitation (behaviourist framework) with attention and memory (cognitive framework) as essential to account for social learning. The theory, therefore, postulates that people learn within a social context, and that learning is facilitated through concepts like modelling, observational learning and imitation. The theory holds that children learn from observing others as well as from “model” behaviour, which are processes involving attention, retention, reproduction and motivation. This theory is related to this work as the way parents and Igbo language teachers transmit Igbo culture to children, and as the way these cultures are taught in school role.

There are several empirical evidence to support the development of creativity. Typical are: Igbokwe (2017), Ukeje (2017), Ofodile (2017), and Eweta (2017). In Igbokwe (2017), it is noted that the teaching of nonverbal communication and public speech is grounded in English culture which most second language teachers lack the knowledge and skill to motivate the students to engage in such writing. Igbokwe recommended that, in order to motivate students to engage in such writing, students should be made to watch English drama by English actors/actresses to enable them to grasp the rudiments of the English language which foster creativity in the English language. Similarly Ukeje (2017) undertook a study on creativity and mans developmental potentials. The study showed that the students are not equipped with adequate materials that will help them manipulate their motor skill and mental ability. Ukeje recommended the engagement of students in fieldtrips where adequate materials are available to enhance their imaginative ability. Ofodile (2017) studied the perceived role of Igbo language and culture in the development of Igbo child. The study revealed that the use of Igbo language in Igbo child upbringing helps the child to imbibe their culture. The study recommended the adequate support of parents and teachers in training their children by speaking to them in Igbo language both in school and at home. Eweta (2017) examined the culture and literature of the Igbos. The study showed that knowledge of Igbo culture facilitated the Igbos in harnessing their skills and talents in building a stable nation. These studies revealed the importance of the knowledge of culture and their implied roles in creative writing in given languages. From these studies, it is inferred that the development of creative writing and oratory in Igbo language is influenced by ones knowledge in Igbo culture.

Against the above background, the purpose of this study in broad terms is to explore the role of Igbo teachers in helping students develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in Igbo language. Specifically, the objective of the study is:

1. To identify the perceived ways by which Igbo language teachers help students develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in Igbo language.
2. To find out the perceived basic knowledge Igbo language teachers inculcate to students in order to guide them in creative writing and oratory in Igbo language.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceived roles of Igbo language teachers in helping students develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in Igbo language?

2. What are the perceived basic knowledge Igbo language teachers inculcate to students in order to guide them in creative writing and oratory in Igbo language?

Method

The design adopted for this study was descriptive survey. According to Nworgu (2006), descriptive research design studies are mainly concerned on collecting data on the peculiar features or characteristics of a given population in a systematic manner such that the findings are expected to be generalized to the entire population. The design was chosen because the study is centered on describing some variables in relation of a given population. The area of the study was all the public secondary schools in southeast Nigeria. The population of the study was all the Igbo language teachers in all the public secondary schools in southeast Nigeria numbering 690 (Source: Federal Ministry of Education, Basic and Secondary Education Unit Abuja 2020). The sample of the study was 60 Igbo language head teachers in public secondary schools in southeast Nigeria drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A self constructed 4-point scale Likert questionnaire served as instrument for data collection. The instrument consisted of two parts. Part A elicited information on the bio-data of the respondents. Part B consists of two clusters. The first cluster contained items 1-11 which elicited responses on the teachers' perceived roles in developing the students' abilities in creative writing and oratory in Igbo. The second cluster with items 12-30 was devoted to the perceived basic knowledge which teachers inculcate in students to enable them develop creative ability and oratory in Igbo. The items in the questionnaire were weighted as follows: Strongly agree (SA) -4 points, agree (A) - 3 points, disagree (D) -2 points and strongly disagree (SD) -1 point. The criterion mean was 2.50.

The instrument was face validated by two lecturers in Igbo language Education and one in measurement and evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Cronbach Alpha, Co-efficient method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded a co-efficient of 0.92. A total of 58 copies of the instrument was administered and retrieved. The data was analyzed using mean scores.

Results

The results of the data collected from the study are presented in tables according to the research questions that guided the study.

Research Question 1: What are the perceived roles of Igbo teachers in helping students develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in Igbo language.

Table 1: Mean Responses of Respondents' Perceived Roles of Igbo Teachers in Helping Students Develop Imaginative and Creative Abilities in Writing and Oratory in Igbo Language.

S/N	Teachers develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in Igbo language through:	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean D	St n	Decisio
1	Igbo folktales/storytelling	9	40	8	3	60	2.51	.75	Agree
2	Acquiring artistic expression like Igbo proverbs/idioms/adage	11	43	4	2	60	2.63	.63	Agree
3	Igbo play/drama	15	36	9	-	60	2.55	.71	Agree
4	Igbo music	8	41	6	5	60	2.60	.55	Agree
5	Igbo dance	4	46	9	1	60	2.74	.47	Agree
6	Igbo conversation	11	33	11	5	60	2.81	.70	Agree
7	Reading Igbo literature book	13	39	6	2	60	2.94	.54	Agree
8	Through exploration/ attending Igbo cultural events.	7	45	8	-	60	2.77	.80	Agree
9	Through mentoring for teachers that are Igbo writers	10	40	6	4	60	2.52	.66	Agree
10	Igbo arts	5	51	3	1	60	2.62	.51	Agree
11	Igbo crafts	9	40	11	-	60	3.01	.72	Agree

Grand Mean = 2.64

Table 1 indicates that items 1-11 had mean scores of 2.51, 2.63, 2.55, 2.60, 2.74, 2.81, 2.94, 2.77, 2.52, 2.62, and 3.01 with standard deviation of .75, .63, .71, .55, .47, .70, .54, .80, .66, .51, and .72 respectively with a grand mean of 2.64. The grand mean is above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that the items listed are roles Igbo teachers use in helping students develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in Igbo language.

Research Question 2: What are the perceived basic knowledge Igbo teachers inculcate to students in order to guide them in creative writing and oratory in Igbo language?

Table 2: Mean Responses of the Respondents on Perceived Basic knowledge Igbo Teachers Inculcate in Students in order to Guide Them in Creative Writing and Oratory in Igbo Language.

S/N	Perceived knowledge Igbo teachers inculcate in students	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	St.	Decision
12	Their thought pattern must be rooted in Igbo culture.	9	40	8	3	60	3.00	.76	Agree
13	Their literary work must contain Igbo artistic expression.	11	43	4	2	60	3.04	.48	Agree
14	Such literary work has a specific function.	15	36	9	-	60	2.56	.72	Agree
15	Each piece of Igbo creative writing has target audience.	8	41	6	5	60	2.81	.65	Agree
16	Such literary work must be original and self-expressive.	4	46	9	1	60	2.66	.81	Agree
17	Oratory in Igbo language requires sound reasoning in Igbo language, smooth and eloquent transmission.	11	33	11	5	60	3.01	.73	Agree
18	The speech must have power to move Igbo people to act.	13	39	6	2	60	2.91	.66	Agree
19	The speaker must be able to motivate Igbo people to uphold virtue of Igbo culture	7	45	8	-	60	2.76	.59	Agree
20	The speaker must be able to hook the audience's attention.	10	40	6	4	60	2.91	.90	Agree
21	Body language/ use of gestures is applied in oratory.	5	51	3	1	60	2.59	.62	Agree
22	Sense of humor is of paramount important.	9	40	11	-	60	2.82	.81	Agree
23	There is need for developing a relationship with the audience.	15	36	9	-	60	3.00	.77	Agree
24	Fluency and accuracy on use of Igbo grammar is important in oratory	8	41	6	5	60	3.10	.59	Agree
25	Words are pronounced or written using central Igbo	4	46	9	1	60	2.65	.60	Agree
26	Communicative competence in Igbo language is needed.	11	33	11	5	60	2.73	.32	Agree
27	Achieving appropriateness in Igbo language is essential.	13	39	6	2	60	2.55	.62	Agree
28	Attaining comprehension in Igbo language is a major tool.	7	45	8	-	60	2.56	.61	Agree
29	Diverting when appropriate is a special skill,	10	40	6	4	60	2.81	.55	Agree
30	Being in control of their voice is essential in oratory	5	51	3	1	60	3.00	.73	Agree

Grand Mean = 2.71

Table 2 indicates that items 12-30 had mean scores of 3.00, 3.04, 2.56, 2.81, 2.66, 3.01, 2.91, 2.76, 2.91, 2.59, 2.82, 3.00, 3.10, 2.65, 2.73, 2.55, 2.56, 2.81 and 3.00 with standard deviation of .76, .48, .72, .65, .81, .73, .66, .59, .90, .62, .81, .77, .59, .60, .32, .62, .61, .55 and .73 respectively with a grand mean of 2.71. The grand mean is above the criterion mean of 2.50. This signifies that the items listed are the perceived basic knowledge Igbo language teachers inculcate in students in order to guide them in creative writing and oratory in Igbo language in secondary schools in southeast Nigeria.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that ways Igbo teachers help students develop imagination and creative abilities in writing and oratory in Igbo language are through Igbo folktales/storytelling, acquiring artistic expression like Igbo proverbs/idioms/adage, exposing students to Igbo play/drama, Igbo music, Igbo dance, Igbo conversation, reading Igbo literature book, attending Igbo cultural events like festivals, title taking/coronation, Ofala, wrestling, traditional, marriage, naming ceremonies, through mentoring and engaging in Igbo arts and craft. The findings are affirmed by Igbokwe (2017) and Ukeje (2017) who observed in different occasions that children's development of creative skills in speaking and writing are always rooted from the person's culture and extent the child is exposed to it.

The study further revealed that perceived strategies which Igbo teachers use in guiding students in achieving quality creative writing and oratory in Igbo language are many and varied. This is done by letting them know that the writers thought pattern must be rooted in Igbo culture, the use of Igbo artistic expression, ensuring the work has a specific function and a target audience, ensuring the work is original and self-expressive and that oratory in Igbo language requires sound reasoning in Igbo language, smooth transition, and eloquent transmission, along with an aesthetic language, **the speech must have power to** move Igbo people and motivate Igbo people to uphold virtue of Igbo culture. Ofodile (2017) and Eweta (2017) upport these finding by asserting that obtaining quality creative writing and oratory in Igbo language is about acquiring the essential rudiment of the language.

Conclusion

The following conclusion is drawn from this study. Creative writing and oratory in Igbo language are achieved by the Igbo language through exposing the students to Igbo culture and inculcating in them the rudiments of the Igbo language through implicit learning.

Recommendation

The following recommendations derive from this study:

1. The instructional materials used in schools should be based on the culture of the people
2. The teachers of Igbo language should be trained and retrained to keep them abreast of their cultural heritage.
3. Igbo teachers and students should go on excursion to observe different types of Igbo cultural festivals in different parts of Igboland,
4. Parents and teachers should speak Igbo to their children and students at home and school respectively.

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African Religious Social Control as Instrument for Sustainable Nation Building

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Abstract

This article examines African traditional religion's social control as an instrument for sustainable nation building. To this end, the article is divided into three parts. The first part defines such concepts as nation building, religion, African traditional religion (ATR). The second part discuss how ATR social control instruments such as taboos, traditional oath swearing, customs and traditions, and oracle could be effectively used as instruments for ensuring peace and unity in Nigeria to enable the country enjoy sustainable nation building. Finally, the article concludes by advocating for Nigeria to explore the option of experimenting with the use of ATR social control measures as a viable means of ensuring peace and unity in a violence-driven country.

Keywords: Nation building, African traditional religion, social control

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how the instrument of social control espoused by African Traditional Religion (ATR) could be used to foster national peace and unity as a means of attaining sustainable nation building. To achieve this goal, this paper is organized in three parts as follows:

- Conceptual Framework comprising:
 - nation building
 - religion
 - African traditional religion (ATR).
- ATR and sustainable nation building
- Conclusion.

Conceptual Framework

Nation Building

To understand the concept of *nation building*, one needs to have some definition of a nation. *Nation* could be defined as a community of people within a definite territory sharing economic life, distinctive culture and a language in common. Gambari (2008) sees *nation* as the development of behaviors, values, language, institutions, and physical structures that elucidate history and culture, concretize and protect the present, and ensure the future

identity and independence of the nation. In this work, a *nation* could be defined as a group or race of people who shared history, traditions, culture, languages, and sometimes religion. In other words, the people of a nation generally share a common identity. On its own part, *nation building* is constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the states. Simply put, *nation building* is the conscious efforts and broad process through which nations comes into being. It is important to note that nation building aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically and religiously stable and viable in the long run. For this to occur, there must be peace and unity in the nation. According to Oluwole (2010) *nation building* is the conscious and focused application of people's collective resources, energies, and knowledge to the task of liberating and developing the psychic and physical space that is identified as theirs. It involves the development of behaviours, values, languages, institutions, and physical structures that elucidate history and culture, concretize and protect the present, and insure the future identity and independence of the nation. According to Gambari (2008), *nation building* has to do with deliberate efforts by people living in a geographical area like in Nigeria, to identify values that promote commonness and unity. Such values could be normative principles or cross cultural and religious matters that promote and enhance an ordered or organized society where good life is the objective for the members concerned. In this way, nation building can be compared with issues of development towards enhancement of better living condition for the citizenry. Implied in Gambari's conceptualization of nation building is that unity fosters nation building. The twin sister of *unity* is *peace*. Both are foundational in the attainment of nation building Okpe (2014), in his own contribution, opines that *nation building* is always a work-in progress; a dynamic process in constant need of nurturing and re-invention. *Nation building*, in this article, is made up of people of diverse backgrounds, religious believes, and cultural practices, resulting from language and sharing common values, coming together to promote togetherness foster peace and unity. From the above views on *nation building*, it could be inferred that it is the deliberate, keenly directed, focused, and energetic protection of national culture, religions, values and the collective identity of a nation through the maintenance of peace and unity.

Religion

Religion is a difficult subject to conceptualize because of its complexity. Consequently, there is no consensus in its definition. Although there is no consensus-driven definition, there are certain considerations in conceptualizing religion. Okafor-Udah, (2006) has brought to the fore such considerations which are:

- Subject which implies that a definition of religion must indicate the subject involved
- Object which also implies the identification of the recipient of the subject's act of worship
- Reasons which implies a statement of why the subject engages the object in worship
- Worship which implies that the definition of religion must recognize or described action directly or indirectly.

Therefore, *religion* is a social institution concerned with beliefs, actions of a society through which the values, norms, ethics and traditions are defined, embedded and expressed within the cosmology of the people. According to Okpe (2014), *religion* is a collection of

cultural systems, belief systems and world view that establishes symbols that relate humanity to spirituality and sometimes to moral values. Many religions have narrative symbols, traditions and sacred histories to give meaning to life or to explain the origin of life or the universe. Ugwulebo (2003) sees *religion* as the process of reaching the superior being with faith as its most crucial variable. This process involves ritual and belief in a governing doctrine. More so, *Religion* is a stabilizing force in the society which bound the community as a social force in the social glue. It is a major force for social and moral changes. From these, religion is viewed as human recognition of super human controlling power and especially of a personal God entitled to create powerful and long lasting meaning by establishing symbols that relate humanity to truths and norms. Hence, in this work, *religion* is simply put as man's belief in the existence of a supernatural and Supreme Being who is believed to be creator and controller of the universe; worshiped through intermediary for the well being of the family and the community at large. In a nutshell, religion is the relationship between man and anything considered sacred such as God (Supreme Being), tree, river, or sun, moon, even animals and stone.

There are many types of religion such as Christianity, Islam, African traditional religion (ATR), Hinduism, Totemism, Shinto and so on. These religions share some basic beliefs such as: beliefs in the existence of God the creator. However, religions differ in their concepts of God. For instance, Christianity believes in the Trinity (God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Spirit). Islam believes in one God, Allah. Other religions like Hinduism, Totemism, Shinto have their peculiar concepts of God as will be mentioned below. All religions believe in the basic core values such: as love, peace, unity, honesty, justice, and kindness. However, they differ in their beliefs and practices of their religions. For instance, the Christian believe in the Holy Trinity (God, the Father, God, the Son- Jesus, and God, the Holy Spirit). Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who left His glory in Heaven, born by the Virgin Mary, to live on earth in order to die on the Cross of Calvary to redeem mankind from the bondage of sin. After His death and resurrection, He ascended to heaven and promised all Christians that He will come again to take the saints to heaven. Christians worship the Trinity as three distinct Gods, but each playing a distinct role in the salvation of man epitomized in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Trinity is worship by worshippers through songs, hymns of praises to God, prayers, and thanks giving in the form of tithes and offering. The acts of worship is epitomized by living a Christ-like life as revealed in the name that those who profess Christ bear. On the other hand, Islam teaches the existence of one God, Allah and Muhammad, His prophet. They worship God by praying five times a day, giving alms to the poor, fasting and praying during the periods of Ramadan, and other holy periods. A pilgrimage to Mecca is a symbol of devotion to the Almighty. Other religions like Hinduism, African Traditional Religion (ATR) believe in a Supreme God and intermediary gods, through whom the Supreme God can be reached. Their act of worship consists mainly in the offering of sacrifices to their gods vested with different responsibilities in the care of mankind. For instance, some gods are responsible for the rain; others are for the harvest; some others are for our protection, etc. Worthy of mention is that some Japanese practice *Shinto*, which follows *animism*, which is a religion that believes in the divinity of nonhuman beings, like animals, plants, and objects of the natural world, while

people who practice *totemism* believe in a divine connection between humans and other natural beings. It is also important to note that every society also has nonbelievers, such as *atheists*, who do not believe in a divine being or entity, and agnostics, who hold that ultimate reality (such as God) is unknowable. From the above, one could deduce that being a believer or nonbeliever and belonging to any religious group or not in a divine entity, does not mean that individuals subscribes to no morality. Above all, all religion teaches good human relationship which promotes sustainable nation building.

Of all these religions, this articles picks interest in ATR because it espouses social control which might play crucial roles in nation building by fostering peace and unity considered foundational in nation building.

African Traditional Religion (ATR)

According to Anti (2001), *traditional religion* is the beliefs and practices associated with the supernatural which embrace creed, a code and a cult. The creed deals with the philosophy, beliefs, or faith of the people, the code with the ethical dimension, while the cult focuses on the ritual ceremonies of the religion. In his view, Ushe (2010) posits that *traditional religion* simply refers to institutionalized pattern of beliefs and worship practised by various societies from the time immemorial in response to the supernatural as manifested in their environment and experience. The *traditional religion* believes in the Supreme Being as the creator, the preserver, the source of society and human community. Therefore, African traditional religion (ATR) is the belief system that has been handed down from one generation to another in different cultures in Africa. It originated from the soil of Africa. Consequently, ATR has eluded precise definition. Unfortunately, many writers have misunderstood it by trying to define it under misleading terminologies such as *animism*, *fetishism*, *magic*, *superstitions*, *primitive religion*, *ancestor worship* and *paganism*. To a layman, ATR is the religion indigenous to Africa and practised by Africans who do not share the religious beliefs of either Christians or Moslems-- two major religions in Africa. It is a tolerant, accommodative and peace religion. Onyeidu (1999) supports the notion of the peace religion of ATR when he observes that ATR is a tolerant and non missionary religion; its adherents were not converted (proselytes), but members of the society born into the religion of their ancestors. The ATR has no room for religious propaganda, or bigotry. It is a moderate religion which only rejects those who do not agree with its belief systems and oppose those who provoke it to anger. More so, the African traditional religion shares many characteristic features with other living religions of the world. Such common features include:

- belief in God or gods (theism)
- a system of worship (cult)
- prayer or sacrifices
- the clear-cut distinction between the holy (sacred) and unholy (profane)

The above similarity could help us to determine the belief system of ATR. As Okeke (2012) points out, ATR believes in the hierarchy of spiritual beings. Thus, the religion believes in the existence of the Supreme Being who is the creator of the universe and everything in it. Oborji (2005) maintains that many translations of the African's names for God suggest that God is the creator, and almighty in heaven.

ATR is a religion that has no known founder and scripture unlike Christianity and Islam. The tenets of the religion are written in songs, myths, dances of the people among others. The religion has instruments of social control include:

- taboos
- swearing of an oath
- making of blood pact
- trial by ordeal
- oracles
- vows
- the meticulous observation of customs and traditions which builds human relationship.

The concern of this work, therefore, is to explore how some of these instruments of social control as espoused by ATR could be used to forge national peace and unity- the bedrock of sustainable nation building; for a nation without peace and unity is a nation without firm foundation.

ATR and Sustainable Nation Building in Nigeria

Prior to the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorate in 1914, Nigeria was a heterogeneous and pluralistic society with many autonomous states within the nation existing independently, hence the multi-cultural and multi-religious nature of the country. That is to say that polarization of religion as an instrument for administrative convenience in Nigeria began with the Colonial Administrations. Regrettably the seed planted 106 years (1914-2020) ago has gradually grown into a monster that is becoming impossible to subdue. The historical root of this tragic development is traceable to constitutional regionalism and the divide and rule policy of the Colonial Administration. The policy rather than unite the heterogeneous nation like Nigeria, promoted political and religious ideologies that encouraged ethnicity and regional biases. Political parties, political participation, appointments, employments and culprits of coup d'état were viewed and handled with ethnic, religious or political biases (Akpanika 2017). Nigeria as multi-cultural and multi-religious country has two major religions: Christianity and Islam each competing and claiming superiority and dominance over each other in number and in might. This claim of superiority as well as dominance has served as the foundation for religious intolerance and several socio-political crises that have bedeviled the nation since Independence in 1960. There had been series of violent conflicts, religious tensions and skirmishes which have constantly plagued the socio-political history of Nigeria. One of these crises was witnessed in May 1980 in Zaria during which properties belonging to Christians were destroyed by some Muslims; few people could have imagined that the differences in religion could lead to wanton destruction of lives and properties as was witnessed in December 1980. From then on, the increasing rate of violence, killing, bombing and insecurity in Nigeria seems unstoppable, hence disunity and lack of peace in Nigeria. In agreement to disunity and lack of peace, Boer (2004) observes that from 1980 to 2010, Nigeria has witnessed about 40 major religious crises that have claimed well over a million life and properties worth over a billion naira. Hence, Johannes (2008) notes that these crises have tremendously fractured the

Christian-Muslim relationship, it has erupted several times since 2000 for various reasons, often causing riots with thousands of victims on both sides. In addition, since 2009, the Islamist movement Boko Haram has fought an armed rebellion against the Nigerian military, sacking villages and towns and taking thousands of lives in battles and massacres against Christians, students and others deemed enemies of Islam.

From the above, it is obvious that the religious disparity in the country, the continuous display of superiority and dominance of the north based on the colonial agenda, socio-political injustice, inequitable distribution of wealth, tribalism and ethnicity, evil manipulation of religion and intolerance, bad and corrupt leadership constitutes some of the growing instability and violence in Nigeria. Even the constitutions that are operative today in Nigeria were drafted during the Military regime and since most Military Heads of States were from the North, it favoured the Northern Muslims.

The responsibility of the government is to protect and guarantee the rights of her citizens as entrenched in the Constitution. When the Government fails to protect and guarantee the rights of her citizens, the natural tendency is for human beings to feel threatened. In reaction, they tend to be aggressive and sometimes resort to violence in order to defend their right, heritage or belief. Such scenarios have hindered genuine national integration over sixty years after Nigeria's Independence thus raising serious concerns on the unity of the nation and sustainable nation building. In addition, several National Conferences have been held in order to find solutions to many of the lingering political and social problems plaguing Nigerian quest for national unity and peace. It appears that our leaders have not mustered up enough political courage to implement the recommendations of the National Conferences which engulfed a lot of money to convene. This means that the money spent on the National Conferences is money thrown into the drain. This means that our leaders have failed Nigerians by not having the political will to implement those policies which might ensure peace and unity in Nigeria. Similarly, the two major religions in Nigeria have equally failed Nigerians by not ensuring inter-religious peace and unity among their members. Rather than inter-religious peace and unity in Nigeria, inter-religious conflicts abound as cited above. Consequently, Christianity and Islam have become the major cause of social and political unrest in Nigeria. Since all religions preach peace and unity, this article attempts to explore how ATR, a minor religion in Nigeria, could foster peace and unity in Nigeria, if given the opportunity to do so, by applying its instruments of social control which is the principal instrument used by it to foster peace and unity among its adherents.

The instrument of social control examined in this article include:

- taboos
- swearing of an oath
- oracles
- meticulous observation of customs and traditions

Each of these is discussed in turn as instruments for the maintenance of peace and unity in Nigeria.

Taboos

The concept of taboos, indeed, is difficult to define for it is a vast and constantly changing. The word is borrowed from a Polynesian language. According to Essel (2018), a *taboo* has something to do with sacredness, something that may be forbidden; it may apply to a person or to a thing and may describe things that are elements or devoted. In agreement to the above, Osei (2006) states that a *taboo* means “an *akyiwade*; that which is forbidden or prohibited. Omobola (2013) views *taboo* as a sacred term for a set of cultic or religious prohibitions instituted by traditional religious authorities as instruments for moral motivation, guidance and objectivity in order to protect the sanctity of shrines and the well-being of their worshipping communities. Taboos have played an important role in traditional African societies and still have their influence felt in the modern societies. Thus, according to Essel (2018), taboos help regulate life and property. One particular area where this is very much evident is among the Igbo's in the south-east, Yoruba's in the south-west, Nigeria and Akan of Ghana, as taboos play a distinguished role in their governance. For example, during the inauguration of an Akan chief, as part of his authority to govern, he goes through the process of taking an oath and this oath includes accepting to do or not do certain things (taboos). And in order to demonstrate and reinforce the bond between the chief and the community, the latter also pledges to stand by him and adhere to all the norms of their community to make him succeed as a ruler. The hallmark of success in governance is the maintenance of law and order, which ensures peace and unity.

Taboos, according to Brempong (2006) are leadership icons for all those in charge of governance, thus at the beginning of office they ought to swear an oath which is a seal of approval and assurance to the state that as a leader all taboos in the community would be observed. He further goes on to say that taboos become the traditional commandments through which those in charge of governance are protected from social and spiritual ambivalences. Thus, upon the installment of a leader, one can agree with Brempong that the leader becomes sacred due to the various taboos he observes. Busia (1968) asserts that the leader may not be struck by any one, lest the ancestors bring misfortune upon the tribe. This means that the leader is responsible to his ancestral gods who visits the leader if he defaults in the observance of the taboos he had sworn to observe. By observing the taboos which he had sworn to uphold, the leader lives a life of example. The immediate result of the leader's life of example is that the governed follow their leader's example. One of the problems of Nigeria today is that the leaders both political and religious do not live a life of example because they believe that they are accountable neither to God nor the people. They behave with impunity. In ATR, taboos are restraining forces because the ancestral gods is believed to punish anyone who does not observe the taboos of the land. Consequently, taboos are to believers in ATR what the Ten Commandments are to the Christians. The major difference is that infraction of taboos incurs the immediate wrath of the gods of ATR whereas infraction of the Ten Commandments is pardoned by a merciful God of the Christians, provided the sinner confesses their sins.

Traditional rulers are expected to live a life of example by adhering to the norms, regulations, and laws of the community. The governed, in return, observe the societal norms and values. Peace and unity are ensured in the communities. With the Western system of

governance, which we have embraced and have thrown away our traditional system of governance that ensures peace and unity because the leaders live by example, the indicators of good governance which, may be regarded as equivalents to the traditional social norms and values that ensure peace and unity, are:

- adherence to the rule of law
- transparency
- responsiveness
- consensus building
- equity and inclusiveness
- effectiveness and efficiency
- accountability
- transparency (Olowu–Sako, 2002).

It is believed that when these indicators of good governance are upheld in modern governance, peace and unity in the nation will emerge. Unfortunately, our leaders and their followership neglect to observe these indicators in their lives. Consequently, law and order break. Violence takes over the land. Nation building, as a consequence, is jeopardized. If the ATR's practice of observing taboos, as a restraining force by all and sundry, by regarding the indicators of good governance as taboos to be observed with the belief that the ancestral gods will punish those who infringe the taboos, a change will be observed in the lives of both the leaders and the lead for fear of displeasing the ancestral god, who might reign vengeance on those who disobey them. We live a life of reckless abandon because of the Christian and Islamic beliefs that we serve a merciful God, the Creator who forgives all kinds of sin if we confess the sins to Him. Consequently, the fear of the power of the ancestral gods as espoused by ATR is not entertained in Christian and Islamic faiths. This is the area where ATR has an edge over the two major religions in Nigeria. Thus, it is imagined that governance will improve in Nigeria if the practice of observing taboos by all and sundry as espoused by ATR is given a chance as principle of governance. The peace and unity which have eluded the nation will become history.

Traditional Oath Swearing

An *oath* is a solemn promise about one's behavior or actions. Oath-taking is a recognized and accepted form of proof. Often, when one takes an oath, the promise invokes a divine being. One might swear to God or deities that something is true. According to Onunwa (2010), *oath-taking* is a religious and judicial system of swearing in the name of a deity either before or at the shrine of a dreaded deity, usually in cases where the intricacies of a matter are difficult to resolve. To Okorie (2009), *oath-taking* is a situation where absolute loyalty or adherence to certain agreement and conditionality is prescribed and administered to the beneficiaries of the agreement, and the exercise is usually fetish. In ATR, *oath-taking* is frequently performed before the shrines of various deities. Some of these deities known in Nigeria include 'Efe', 'Arusi' and 'Ayelala', all of whom possess different powers and operate in different ways.

It is important to note that many African deities are associated with bringing justice and peace to the communities that believe and serve them. Hence, oath taking is

used to settle disputes. In settling disputes, for example, parties to the oath-taking directly submit to the supernatural tribunal to settle disputes brought before the deity. It is used to bring justice and truth to light. Thus Ikenga-Metuh (1981) claims that, in spite of Western influences, oath-taking has survived as a legitimate judicial method which the Igbo believe to be one of the assured ways of obtaining absolute justice. Several arbitration cases have acknowledged the legal validity of oath-taking. This is so because the tribunal's verdict is final. The oaths are worded in such a way that oath-takers invoke conditional curse upon themselves which may include death or illness. It is often the belief of the oath-takers that should they default, the misfortune they agreed to will befall them through the powers of the 'gods'. The solemnity of the choice of an oath by the disputants and imminent evil visitation to the oath breaker if he swore falsely, are the deterrent sanctions of oath taking. Therefore, the decision to swear an oath is not illegal although it may be unacceptable to Christian ethics (Oraegbunam, 2009). The fear of a curse which befalls one who takes a false oath or one who does not fulfill the obligations of an oath is what makes oath taking work. The fear factor is important in ATR because the secret of ATR is to instill the fear of the deities among its believers. Therefore, oath of office for the political leaders and judicial officers if traditionally carried out will instill fear in them because they would not like to suffer the curse of not living up to the expectations of the oath they have taken. Similarly, if judicial oaths are taken in the traditional manner, witnesses in the law courts would always speak the truth they have sworn to uphold. Thus, ATR, through its instrument of oath taking, offers a sure means of facilitating the dispensation of justice, truth and peace for sustainable nation building.

Customs and Traditions

Some long established practices, considered as unwritten laws in African traditional religion are prominent in communal living. Let's examine the following:

Women involvement

Violence against women in politics can be physical, sexual or psychological in nature. Both men and women can be affected by violence in politics, but violence against women in politics is gender-based. The act of violence is gendered in various forms, such as sexist remarks or sexual harassment and violence. Note that violence against women in politics is a violation of human rights, and by hindering women's political participation, it is also a violation of women's political rights. To combat violence in politics and in all public domains, robust and comprehensive approach needs to be employed by looking at women's participation and glaring roles from ATR's social, religious, political, and economic perspective. In ATR, there are many female goddesses along with their male counterparts. There are female priestesses, diviners, and other figures, and many feminist scholars have drawn from these traditions to advocate for women's rights and the place of the feminine in governance. In agreement to women involvement and participation in religious and political affairs, Daniel (2020) reports in C.J. Obasi's film, *Mami Wata*, the role of women in ATR. In the film, Obasi explores the story of mythological water goddess. *Mami Wata* is more than just folklore. In the film *she* is a water goddess who brings health, prosperity, and goodwill.

She is the symbol of the strength and power of the black woman. This means that ATR encourages women to play active roles in nation building. Christian and Islamic religions do not accord such roles to women.

ATR teaches that social harmony is promoted when equal opportunity is given to male and female to play their different roles in promoting social harmony through equal participation in all social, religious, and political activities. By implications, ATR shows no bound in its practice and belief system based on gender. Therefore, to ensure sustainable nation building, gender disparity in the political and religious spheres has to be discarded. The roles of women should be recognized and promoted. Political office gives women wide range of opportunities to impact decision making process and to positively contribute to the course of political development. Women also play a key role in conflict resolution and peace building, and when they take part in peace talks, the likelihood of that agreement lasting is increased (United Nation Press Release, 2019)

Traditional social disorder management

ATR tries to remove social disorder in the nation. It is through the traditional leaders who are the experienced custodians of the religion and culture that this feat is achieved (Ibenwa 2014). For instance, in ATR communities, the paramount rulers play the dual role of socio-political heads as well as priests of their traditional religions thereby maintaining social order. Among the Yoruba of South-west Nigeria, the traditional heads appears to be the custodians of the religious system. The Oba enormous power within his kingdom ensures an enabling environment for stability by checks and balances through which the tendency towards excesses among the subjects could be adequately curbed. Additionally, the institution of Oyo-mesi, the king making body, acts as a check against the abuse of power by the Alaafin (the Oba) or the King of Oyo. The Alaafin is constrained to rule with caution and respect for his subjects. When he is proven to have engaged in acts that undermine the interests of his subjects, such as gross miscarriage of justice for personal gains, the Oyo-mesi would present him with an empty calabash or parrot's eggs as a sign that he must commit suicide since he could not be deposed, according to tradition (ChikaforAfrica, 2012). In addition, Pre-colonial Rwanda had a highly organised and centralised system of administration. Although described as autocratic, there were systems of checks and balances among those who ruled at the clan level (ChikaforAfrica, 2012). Therefore, local checks and balances should be accepted and promoted in local governance in Nigeria so as to sustain nation building.

Oracle

An *oracle* is considered to provide wise and insightful counsel or prophetic predictions or precognition of the future, inspired by the gods. As such it is a form of divination. Oracular shrines were numerous in antiquity, and at each, the god is consulted by a fixed means of divination. Oracle in ATR is believed to fight corruption (biased judgment). This is achieved by consulting the oracle through performing of necessary ritual by the priest who performs the ritual following due process (Amadi & Ekekwe, 2014). The gods fight corruption by making offenders suffer any of the following:

- public disgrace
- public ridicule
- banishment from the community
- stoning to death
- swollen tummy
- being struck by thunder storm
- sudden death (Habib, 2010).

Hence in ATR, justice is served for mutual communal human existence. Unlike in the society that makes it possible for the rich to evade justice through litigation, in ATR it is not possible for offenders to evade justice if they are truly involved in the crime. Even if they run away from the community, the gods will still punish the culprit wherever he has run to. This is because of the powerful and supernatural powers invested on the oracle (Odejobi, 2013). This method of fighting corruption, in my view, is more effective than the Western-based approach of using the law courts, where justice is not served.

Conclusion

Taboos, oath taking, oracle, customs and traditions such as women involvement and traditional social disorder management are the social control instruments which ATR has bequeathed to Nigeria for the maintenance of social harmony which is foundational to sustainable nation building because a better life is ensured when there is social harmony. This article advocates that Nigeria should change its mindset on her belief that the Western model of governance is the best option Nigeria has for sustainable nation building. The social disharmony in this country should make Nigeria explore other options of governance. In my view, that option is the exploitation of the social control instruments offered freely by ATR.

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Traditional Festival as a Catalyst for Social Cohesion: The Igbo Perspective

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Abstract

This study examined Igbo traditional festival as a catalyst for social cohesion. One research question guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The sample of the study was 58 senior Igbo language lecturers from the three federal universities in South east geopolitical zone of Nigeria, selected using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A self-constructed 4-point scale Likert questionnaire consisting of a cluster of 15 statements was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument was validated by two experts in Igbo language and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The instrument yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.82 using Cronbach Alpha method. The results were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation. The result shows that Igbo cultural festivals play a major role in achieving social cohesion in Nigeria as it creates room for cultural exchange, fosters innovation and creativity, reinforces solidarity, brings about social and moral control, among others. It was recommended, among others, that government should incorporate the celebration of traditional festivals into the development policies of Nigeria, curriculum planners should include traditional festivals at various levels of the curriculum as this will not only help in preserving the traditions, history and culture of Nigeria but also seen as a period for enlightenment and advocacy for social cohesion since the country is multi-cultural and multi-religious.

Keywords: Traditional festival, Igbo festivals, social cohesion, cultural aesthetics.

Introduction

Globally, there is evidence that human beings have natural social tendencies and have, throughout history, striven to develop cohesion and integration in the society (Hassan, 2017). Formation of this common bond leads to evolution of a socially cohesive group with reciprocated influences and interdependence. Nigeria, as a nation, is multi-cultural with diverse tribes and tongues and multi-religions and is currently going through various types of conflicts ranging from youth restiveness, ethnic, political, cultural and religious violence which lead to destruction of life and property. Social cohesion is, therefore, crucial to different cultural and religious groups. Social cohesion implies social equality in which various groups can interact within the bigger group in an inclusive manner. According to

Ilechi (2017), *social cohesion* refers to social relationship and a sense of togetherness and connectedness between groups or individuals, usually in a defined geographical area, such as region or country. Nigeria, as a nation, has a set of values and norms that govern the behaviour of its people. Similarly, every society has a system of social control or mechanism of ensuring that its people behave in consonance with its normative values in order to ensure social cohesion and integration. This is a way of keeping them together as one indivisible entity, with a common identity and destiny.

Social cohesion refers to strong social relationships and networks, sense of togetherness, sense of belonging and identity, cooperation and trust among individuals and wider society. Social cohesion is aimed in its perceived capability of wholesomeness and it has been regarded as a solution to problems of increasing fragmentation, conflict, and inequality between different social and ethnic groups (Eyuche, 2017). Therefore, it is important to promote activities intended to unify people. Festivals could serve this purpose.

Festivals are the manifestation of culture in any traditional society (Johnson, 2012). They are entertaining events which offer opportunities for celebrating and learning age - long traditions. Adegbola (1998) observes that it makes a people a homogeneous community and provides an avenue by which the people can be identified. Attah (2013) adds that they represent an invaluable and priceless heritage by which the image of the people can be reflected. Knowing the place of culture in the life of man, one wonders at the pace by which most of the cherished African cultural values like reverence for traditional institutions to which festival belongs is fast diminishing. Festivals, therefore, are one measure which, if considered, will bring people together to promote cultural exchange in order to increase understanding among people of different regions.

Festivals are communal celebrations involving carefully planned programmes, outpourings of respect, rejoicing or high revelry established by customs (Adegbola, 1998). The word *festival* is derived from the Latin word *festum*, meaning feast, of which collective, participatory celebration is central to its meaning. Festivals are the manifestation of culture in any traditional society (Egongdu, 2016). Culture, as a way of life, is a distinctive body of beliefs and traditional institutions which distinguishes a society. African life is hedged with customs which invariably makes festival, a manifestation of these customs an essential part of the African world view. Within a community's tradition lies its beliefs, norms, values and their general ways of life all of which reflect their cultural existence. A manifestation of this is reflected in many festivals that are part and parcel of the African people. Irete (2016) opines that festivals are an integral part of the cycle of life of a traditional African man or woman. They are entertaining events which offer opportunities for celebrating and learning age long traditions. Festivals are premised on social interaction. They provide resources both material and non-material that constitute tourism attractions. These tourist resources are interwoven with a community's tradition giving it a glowing presence and a promising future.

Festival celebration focuses upon a theme, and may run for hours to weeks. The theme of a festival might be an area of interest such as art or food, or an aspect of the community in which the festival is being held, such as the community's history or culture. Festivals are often held annually. In modern times, festivals may be attended by tourists, who

are attracted to some of the more eccentric or historical ones. There are many types of festivals which include:

- art festivals
- religious festivals
- agricultural festivals
- occasional/secular festivals

Art festivals are festivals that showcase intellectual or creative achievements such as:

- comedy festivals
- film festivals
- folk festivals which celebrate traditional folk crafts and folk music
- literary festival
- music festivals
- storytelling festivals
- language festivals (Eyuche, 2017).

Religious festivals are celebrated to honour the Supreme Being and the different deities in the community or to mark a special event in a particular religion. It is headed either by a religious priest, the head of the family or the king where necessary.

Agricultural festivals are festivals celebrated to appreciate the earth goddess, the deities and the ancestors for a fruitful harvest which equally symbolizes the conclusion of a work cycle and the beginning of another.

Occasional/secular festivals are used to mark the achievement of one special feast or another. Enuma (2018) observes that the pre-modern time festivals were held either to remember conquest in battles, eradication of an epidemic that has ravaged a community or the killing of a terrible animal that once threatened the community and the likes, which differs from the modern festivals that is centre on promoting peace and development. This type of occasional events occurred for memorial purpose. As these occasions are held, the elders use the opportunity to tell the younger generation of what happened in the past. This also aided the transmission of the stories of cultural heritage from generation to generation. However, in these modern times such, occasional festivals are held to celebrate a man or woman of achievement. This type of celebration encourages hard work among the people as they see it as a mark of honour.

Cultural/traditional festivals are festivals done in honour of culture and tradition of a people. Eyuche (2017) asserts that most festivals in Nigeria are cultural festivals and some of these include:

- Eyo festival of the Yoruba, which is characterized by white costumed
- Argungu fishing festival of the North which presents an opportunity for different tribes in the north to unite and compete in fishing.
- Ojude Oba festival of Ijebu which is a cultural heritage that centres around diversity, history, legend, and conquest

- Osun festival of the Yoruba's which is the most regarded traditional festivals in Nigerian and is celebrated to honour and reverence the river goodness.

It is important to note that all these festivals are activities driven. The activities of a festival may be either participatory or non-participatory observation or combination of the two. Other forms of activities are:

- ceremonies
- concerts/drama
- music
- drumming
- competitions
- masquerade display
- costumes
- initiation
- political titles/coronation
- contests
- dancing
- games
- fairs
- skill displays
- lectures
- eating and drinking
- parades
- parties
- rituals
- wrestling
- sports

All these activities that are involved in different festivals bring people together and create a platform for peaceful co-existence. However, this article focuses on cultural festivals in Nigeria with special interest in Igbo festivals and its role in social cohesion.

Igbo traditional festivals are cultural entertainment through which Igbo people showcase their diverse cultural endowment, celebrate tradition and display history to the younger ones and visitors. Festivals in Igbo society are periods set apart by communities or groups of individuals for commemorating important events which may be connected with homage to God, gods, ancestors and spirit or they may be connected with the transition from one season to the other. The festivals are supposedly celebrated to preserve and maintain tradition through songs, drumming, dancing, wrestling, and art. It is a period of rest from strenuous daily activities affording the people quality leisure time to either observe or participate in all the entertaining cultural event. During these festivals, Igbo cultural activities are showcased and, thereby, portray indigenous way of life which represent Igbo identity. Igbo people are known for two traditional festivals namely:

- the New Yam Festival

- the Ofala Festivals.

New Yam Festival is an annual cultural festival of the Igbo people, otherwise known as *iri ji*, *iwa ji* or *ike ji* which is held at the end of the rainy season in early August to express gratitude to the gods of the community for abundant harvest. According to Eyuche (2017), it is for marking the farm cycles of planting and harvesting and the veneration of local deities, personal *chi* (gods as personal spirit) and the community ancestors. New yam festivals are celebration of Igbo agricultural skill. Its basic features are:

- cultural displays
- masquerades
- dancers in beautiful attires
- acrobatic displays
- wrestling
- rituals.

Ofala Festivals is mostly held in Anambra (Onitsha) and is celebrated towards the end of every conventional year as an event that marks the end of the 13th month in Igbo calendar and beginning of another Igbo year (Igu Aro). The festival is celebrated to mark the authority and legitimacy of the traditional ruler to guide the people on the path of truth and wisdom-hence it is titled *ofo* (authority), *ala* (land). Ilogu (1964) asserts that the council of elders are the custodians of *ofor* (symbol of authority). It is observed that, in traditional societies, the past is honored and symbols are valued because they contain and perpetuate the experience of generations (Ilechi, 2017). The basic feature of Ofala festival is that the Obi of Onitsha, Alfred Achebe and other traditional rulers are adorned in their red caps, royal regalia with traditional staff and then parade and display their affluence and power. All these festivals are meant to bring social cohesion to regions or countries as the case may be.

Research interest has been generated in the concern of this article. Danre (2017) took interest in community effort in promoting unity by implication social cohesion in higher institutions in Lagos State. The study revealed that community has a vital role to play in achieving unity through the promotion of tradition and culture. For there to be social cohesion in higher institutions, students should be exposed to different traditional and cultural activities to obtain knowledge in different cultures for peaceful co-existence. Ahmed (2018) directed his own research interest on teachers' perception of ways of promoting social cohesion in public secondary schools in Adamawa State. The study showed that learning of different skills and engaging in acculturation programmes are major ways of promoting social cohesion among students. The study recommended the need for field trips to various communities and states as it is a vital tool that fosters social cohesion among students. Enuma (2018) examined on social impacts of festivals. His study revealed that modern festivals have a greater impact on national development than the pre-modern time. The study recommended the need to organize festivals in this modern time as it promotes peace and national development. In his study, Uwalaka (2018) examined cohesion policy as a guide to unity and development. The study demonstrated that festivals is a major tool in uniting communities together thereby promoting culture and development at all levels. The

study recommended the need to sponsor festivals as it fosters a forum for exchange of experiences and knowledge.

The greatest challenge facing Nigeria, as a country, is the threat to its national unity as it is a multi-ethnic nation with diverse cultures, traditions and religions. The resultant effect is fragmentation, inequality and conflict which is rising every day ranging from cultural diversity, youth restiveness; ethnic variance, political, and religious violence which has made destruction of life and property the order of the day. This lack of peaceful atmosphere hinders enabling environment which will attract investors, and in turn, boost the economy of the locality, as peace and unity are very essential for national development. To this end, harnessing different strategies which will bring about restoration of durable peace in the nation is very vital for the prosperity and progress of the country. Although there have been advocacy by government and different interest group on approaches to achieve social cohesion, festivals have not been identified as a bridge for peaceful co-existence. Against the above background, the purpose of this study in broad terms is to explore the role of Igbo cultural festivals in fostering social cohesion in Nigeria. Specifically, the objective of the study is:

1. To identify the roles of Igbo cultural festivals in achieving social cohesion in Nigeria.

Research Question

What are the roles of Igbo cultural festivals in achieving social cohesion in Nigeria?

Method

The research design employed for the study was descriptive survey. According to Nworgu (2006), descriptive research design studies are mainly concerned with describing events the way they are at the point of carrying out research without adding or subtracting anything. When a survey centres on describing some variables in relation of a given population, the descriptive survey research design is the most appropriate. The area of the study was all the federal universities in Southeast Nigeria. The population of the study was all the senior Igbo language lecturers in all the federal universities in Southeast Nigeria numbering 580 (Source, National Universities Commission, 2018). The sample of the study consisted of 58 senior Igbo language lecturers, which is 10% drawn through simple random sampling technique and proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Simple random sampling was used to select 3 States from 5 States in the South-east. From the 3 States chosen, proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select 19, 19 and 20 lecturers making it a total of 58 senior Igbo language lecturers (both linguistic and education Igbo lecturers) from the 3 federal universities involved. A 15-items questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument was structured on a 4-points Likert type scale on which the respondents reacted to. The items in the questionnaire were weighted as follows: Strongly Agree (SA)-4 points, Agree (A)- 3 points, Disagree (D) -2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) -1point. The criterion mean was 2.50. The instrument was face validated by two lecturers in Igbo Language Education and one in Measurement and

Evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Cronbach Alpha, Co-efficient method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded a co-efficient of 0.82. A total of 58 copies of the instrument were administered and retrieved. The data was analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation. Any item with a mean rating of 2.50 and above was accepted value while item with a mean rating below 2.50 was rejected.

Results

The results of the data collected from the study are presented in Table 1.

Research Question

What are the roles of Igbo cultural festivals in achieving social cohesion in Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Responses of Igbo Language Lecturers on the Roles of Igbo Cultural Festivals in Achieving Social Cohesion in Nigeria.

S/N	Roles of Igbo cultural festivals in achieving social cohesion in Nigeria:	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	St.D	Decision
1	Igbo festivals celebration creates room for exchange, through its cultural value and belief.	8	39	8	3	58	2.88	.70	Agree
2	It fosters innovation and creativity to Igbo people and beyond.	10	42	4	2	58	2.4	.69	Agree
3	It is an avenue that reinforces solidarity as well as strengthens ties among members of the community and beyond.	15	35	8	-	58	2.63	.72	Agree
4	It brings about social and moral control as well as entertainment.	7	41	5	5	58	2.71	.82	Agree
5	It promotes economy, conserve culture and rejuvenate traditions.	3	45	9		58	2.5	.71	Agree
6	It helps to develop the pride and identity of Igbo people as ethnic group and Nigeria as a country.	10	33	10		58	2.61	.66	Agree
7	It creates room for intercultural communication.	12	38	6		58	2.77	.69	Agree
8	It helps people to enjoy and meet their leisure needs	6	44	8		58	2.69	.55	Agree
9	It reduces violence in multi-cultural, multi-religious with divers' tribes and tongues country like Nigeria.	9	39	6		58	2.50	.65	Agree
10	It is a crucial tool for development of a country.	4	50	3	1	58	3.00	.83	Agree
11	It unites and foster peace in a country regardless of their interests, religion, race, sex, and class.	8	40	10	-	58	2.89	.74	Agree

12	The integrated dress culture helps to rekindle interest and pride in the indigenous dress patterns.	7	42	5	4	58	2.64	.69	Agree
13	It strengthens cultural bonds.	5	4	1	7	58	2.82	.77	Agree
14	It encourages shared moral principles, sets of rules and codes of behaviour.	6	41	3	8	58	2.90	.71	Agree
15	It aids in shaping people's culture and identity.	10	36	9	3	58	2.70	.80	Agree

Grand Mean = 2.61

Table 1 identified mean response of Igbo language lecturers on the roles of Igbo cultural festivals in achieving social cohesion in Nigeria. Table 1 indicates that items 1-15 had mean scores of 2.88, 2.54, 2.63, 2.71, 2.55, 2.61, 2.77, 2.69, 2.50, 3.00, 2.89, 2.64, 2.82, 2.90 and 2.70, with standard deviation of .70, .69, .72, .82, .71, .66, .69, .55, .65, .83, .74, .69, .77, .71 and .80 respectively with a grand mean of 2.61. The grand mean is above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that the items listed are the roles of Igbo cultural festivals in achieving social cohesion in Nigeria.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that Igbo cultural festivals play a major role in achieving social cohesion in Nigeria as it creates room for cultural exchange, fosters innovation and creativity, reinforces solidarity as well as strengthens ties among members of the community and beyond, brings about social and moral control, promotes economy, conserve culture and rejuvenate traditions, develop the pride and identity of Igbo people as ethnic group and Nigeria as a country, creates room for intercultural communication, helps people to enjoy and meet their leisure needs, reduces violence in multi-cultural, multi-religious with divers' tribes and tongues country like Nigeria, crucial tool for development of a country and aids in shaping people's culture and identity. The above findings are support the observation made by Enuma (2018) who observed that Igbo festivals provide a potent platform to guarantee peace if properly organized and contribute in creating an enabling peaceful atmosphere for all to dwell in and development. The findings equally corroborate the view of Uwalaka (2018), who observed that Igbo festivals provide an opportunity for the local communities to develop and share their culture, values and beliefs and provide opportunity for members of the local community to exchange experiences and information.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Igbo cultural festivals foster social cohesion in Nigeria by playing the roles demonstrated in this study. Consequently, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government should create an enabling environment for local communities and cultural groups in the country to regularly organize festivals.
2. Government should help to revive Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC).
3. Government should encourage competitive festivals among the youths.
4. Cultural related institutions like the various ministries of Arts and Culture and Tourism should package and market Nigeria's traditional festivals across the country.

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Promoting Classroom Interactivity through CALL in the Teaching and Learning of English Grammar in Nigerian Federal Universities

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Abstract

This study investigated the possible ways of promoting classroom interactivity through the use of computer assisted language teaching to help students avert the difficulties they encounter in learning of English grammar. The design for this study was descriptive survey. The population of the study consisted of 33,000 second year students of all the federal universities in South East geopolitical zone, and 53 Use of English lecturers. Simple random sampling procedure was used to select 5% of the population of the students to serve as the target population. The lecturers were used intact because of the small size. The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed 4-point Likert scale questionnaire titled Questionnaire on Promotion of Classroom Interactivity through CALL (QPCICALL). The instrument was validated and trial tested, and Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. An overall reliability index of 0.78 was obtained and this is high enough to guarantee the use of the instrument for the study. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings reveal that the use of online exploration, social networking sites and multimedia computer among others are ways of promoting classroom interactivity through CALL to help the learners avert the challenges they encounter in learning of grammar. The study concludes that classroom interactivity which is enhanced by the use of computer assisted language teaching provides solutions to difficulties encountered by students in learning of grammar, for it helps learners practice and experience the use of grammar in context.

Keywords: Interactivity, CALL, English grammar, grammar learning and teaching

Introduction

Language is a vital tool used by human beings to communicate their thoughts, and ideas, building and maintaining friendships, economic relationships and cultural ties. Language distinguishes humans from animals and also portrays the uniqueness of cultures in the society. Language wields immense power over humanity. Writing on the relevance of language, Rahman, Pandian and Kaur (2018) state that one's knowledge of languages is an

index of one's personality, and a key to one's success in life. English is a commonly used language across the globe. It is a language used for daily communication and interaction among people from different linguistic background (Pennycook, 2017). The relevance of English in all walks of life is glaring due to advancement in science and technology, internet and its facilities, which have made people life in a global village. English is the language of the internet, science and technology. In support of this, Singh, Singh and Razak (2017) explain that English is a language used for communication across the globe. It is, therefore, important for one to acquire a good knowledge of the language of the globe for one to properly adapt in a global society. Again, adequate knowledge of English language is needed for training of young people to make them keep pace with world-class researchers, engineers, doctors among others. The relevance of English language necessitates that it becomes a vital aspect of schools' curriculum. Just like every other language, English has four language skills. The skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and reading are classified as passive language skills while speaking and writing are the active language skills. Ugwu (2016) explains that grammar is central to all the language skills, and a good knowledge of grammar makes one an efficient user of all the language skills. Olukpe (2019) lent credence to this view by stating that learners should be taught English grammar for them to produce good English.

Grammar has to do with the various classes of words and their combinations to produce correct sentences. Grammar is defined by Bakuuro (2017) as an arrangement of words to produce correct sentences, utterances, and speeches for the purpose of communication. Grammar has both word and sentence levels. The word level of grammar refers to the various parts of speech. That is, the categories to which words are assigned according to their functions. Orji (2011) explains that English words fall into different classes and they include nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions. The sentence level of grammar deals with the various kinds of sentences and agreement that exists among the words that make up a sentence. A sentence is a group of words that has a complete meaning explained Anieke (2014). For a sentence to be correct, there has to be a harmonious relationship between the words of the sentence. This relationship is referred to as agreement. Nujaree, Sathaporn and Pennee (2014) note that a sentence is said to be in agreement if its elements have similar features. In order words, the units of a sentence have to agree in number, tense and in gender for it to be grammatically correct.

English grammar is a vital aspect of English language and it is taught from primary to the university level of education. University is an institution of higher learning which provides professional training to learners. Richard and Richard (2012) define it as an institution where intellectuals conduct research to find solutions to problems that confront societies. In universities in Nigeria, English is used as a medium of instruction, and it is also taught as a course to students. Due to the relevance of English in Nigeria, it is taught to all first year students in the form of GSP 101 and GSP 102. Grammar is one of the contents of the course - GSP 102, which is a second semester course for all the first year students in Nigerian universities. In this course, the parts of speech and their functions, nominalization, phrases, clauses, sentences, agreement as well as error typology and their identification and correction are taught to learners to ensure that they attain the level of competence needed for

both oral and written communication (Nzewi & Asogwa, 2019).

This notwithstanding, it has been observed by the researchers that a good number of university students, and some university graduates fumble when they speak English. Some cannot communicate in English due to poor knowledge of grammar. This situation is worrisome considering the statement of Rahman, Pandian and Kaur (2018) that the primary purpose of teaching any aspect of language is to make learners develop communicative competence in the language. This problem is aggravated by the fact that no graduate can fit in properly in the field of work without being able to communicate in English in a multilingual nation like Nigeria.

In an interview with some of the lecturers, the researchers found out that students have difficulties learning the English grammar. In support of the fact that students encounter difficulties in grammar, Nujaree, Sathaporn, and Pennee (2014) carried out a study on the grammatical errors made by English students of the Matthayom Suksa four students in KhonKaen and found out that students make very many errors in English grammar. In a similar study, Muh, Umi, Uhti, Aulia and Dati (2017) examined the teaching of on grammar at an English Education Department in an EFL context in Asia. The study found out that due to the difficulties the learners encounter in learning of grammar, they have not mastered the English grammar. Moreover, Bakuuro (2017) investigated the difficulties senior high school two students of Islamic and Wa senior High Schools encounter in the use of English grammatical concord. The researcher found out that most of the students have serious problems with subject-verb agreement. The difficulties which learners encounter in the use of grammar were attributed to inconsistencies in the rules of grammar, and to lack of interactive activities which enable the learners apply the rules of grammar in actual communication during instruction. These loopholes lead to acquisition of the theoretical knowledge of grammar without an opportunity to practice it in context. In line with this, Hijazi (2012) explains that poor approach to teaching inhibits learning. The researchers, therefore, decide to embark on this study to validate the observations made by lecturers with respect to the difficulties students have in English grammar, and to explore the use of computer assisted language learning (CALL) to promote interactivity in classrooms for improved learning.

Interactivity is a process that involves the working together of people to influence one another and to produce a new effect. Interactivity in language teaching and learning requires regular teacher-learner interaction, learner-learner interaction, use of audio-visuals, and active participation of learners in the learning process. Interaction facilitates language learning because it increases learners' communication opportunity (Rahman, 2014). Moreover, proficient users of target language adjust their speech to accommodate acquirers during interaction (Oluikpe & Oluikpe, 2014). Without doubt, interaction plays significant role in language learning. Dehaan, Reed and Katsuko (2010) investigated the effect of interactivity with a music video game on second language vocabulary recall. The findings of the study show that the use of video game to make learners participate actively in classroom improves their learning of vocabulary. In a related study, Martin (2010) studied the impact of the interactive whiteboard on reading comprehension and found out that interactive

whiteboard promotes classroom interaction and communicative activities. In the year 2017, Kamba investigated the internet as a tool for interactive learning, teaching and research. The findings of the study revealed that the Internet is a tool that promotes interactive teaching and learning.

In classroom setting, interactivity could be authoritative, dialectic or dialogic. Authoritative interactivity is teacher-centered where the teacher prepares what to be taught and presents it to the learners in such a way that the learners assimilate whatever is presented to them (Dombey, 2010). It involves the use of predetermined and fixed question and answers in the learning process. In dialectic interactivity, knowledge is arrived at through logical arguments. It is learner-centered and promotes active participation of learners in the learning process. Dialogic interactivity refers to a situation where dialogue dominates the entire learning process. Here, teachers ask questions that draw the attention of learners to relevant issues, while the learners work together to arrive at the relevant knowledge which they are expected to acquire. Making classroom interaction dialogic, according to Kennewell and Beauchamp (2010), brings about improvement in the learning process, and makes interactivity produce a good effect. Both dialogic and dialectic interactivity encourage class-wide, group and learner-teacher interaction which invariably improve the learning of grammar. In a study carried out by Kuiken and Vedder (2002) on the effect of interaction in acquiring the grammar of a second language, it was discovered that interaction leads to the noticing of grammatical forms. Similarly, Rahman (2014) investigated the learning of English through interaction in an EFL classroom and discovered that during classroom interaction, learners acquire the knowledge of English language through repetition and recast. A good knowledge of organization and arrangement of words in sentences can be obtained through the various forms of interactivity. Computer has the potential to promote interactivity during classroom instruction.

Computer is an electronic device that performs different functions. Computers are of different kinds: desktop, laptop, palmtop and handheld computers or cell phones. All these kinds of computer can be used in education to great effect. Explaining the importance of computer in education, Dina and Ciornei (2013) explain that the use of computer in classrooms tailors instruction to learners with different abilities. Edgar (2017) supports the relevance of computer in education by asserting that computer enhances students' achievement, encourages interaction between teachers and learners and among learners. In fact, computer is an instructional material that promotes effective teaching and learning.

Many universities in Nigeria have computers but an observation of what happens in the universities with regards to teaching and learning of grammar reveals that many lecturers do not make use of computers during classroom instruction while some others use it sparingly with projector. Learners are not given the opportunity to make interactive use of computers during classroom instruction. This has negative effect in the learning of grammar, for language, according to Baxa and Reeder (2017), is better learned through interaction. For learners to learn and master the English grammar, there is need for classroom interaction where learners will have to practice grammar in context. Computers can be used to promote interactivity in classrooms especially in language teaching (Okonkwo, 2011). It is the use of

computer in language teaching and learning that brought about the term Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL).

CALL is a term used to refer to the use of computer to present instructions, reinforce learning and test language course. Resources used in CALL include computers, pictures, diagrams, projector, internet connection, CDs, headphones and white board. Edgar (2017) points out that the use of CALL is essential in learning process for it encourages self-directed and autonomous learning. According to Okonkwo (2011), inclusion of CALL in language classrooms is essential for it provides avenue for individualized instruction in large class. It also gives room for practice and feedback, pair and small-group work, and makes learning fun. Alian, Khodabandeh and Soleimani (2018) investigated the effect of CALL-based tasks on EFL learners' grammar learning and found out that motivating tasks have positive effects on language learning. The use of computer introduces and sustains varieties in language classroom to stimulate learning (Ogundele & Oladimeji, 2018).

CALL has three types. According to Barson and Debski (2013), they are behaviourist, communicative and integrative CALL. Behavioral CALL is characterized by explicit explanation of grammatical rules, judgmental feedback and translation. According to Dina and Ciornei (2013), it adopts computer in the role of a teacher and uses linguistic drill in the teaching process. Communicative CALL is a type of CALL that uses computer for implicit teaching of grammar, and for stimulation of discussion and critical thinking. It adopts communicative approach to language teaching. During language learning, interactive activities and tools such as interactive whiteboard promote communicative activities (Martin, 2010). Computer plays the roles of learning tool, tutor and stimulus in this type of CALL. Integrative CALL, the third type of CALL, emphasizes the use of language in social context. It connects the learners with the outer world and promotes autonomous learning. In integrated CALL, texts, graphics, sounds and videos are integrated in language teaching to enhance learning. Communicative and the integrative CALL provide opportunity for learners to construct knowledge through interaction and learning experiences.

The use of CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar is anchored on Long's interactionist theory of second language learning. This theory was propounded in the year 1980 and its basic tenet is that learning takes place through social interaction. This implies that learning takes place as a result of interaction between teachers and learners, learners and peers as well as between learners and learning materials. CALL facilitates these kinds of interaction.

This study is necessitated by the idea that the knowledge of difficulties encountered by learners in learning of grammar and ways of promoting interactivity for improved teaching and learning of grammar will be significant to learners, lecturers and all the stakeholders in education. The knowledge will enable them address such difficulties and improve grammar pedagogy.

Against the above background, the purpose of this article, in broad terms, is to explore the use of CALL to promote classroom interactivity in the teaching of English grammar in Nigerian federal universities. Specifically, the study seeks to determine:

1. the aspects of grammar in which students encounter difficulties in learning of English grammar,
2. the possible ways of using CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar
3. how interactivity helps learners overcome the difficulties encountered in learning of grammar.

Research Question

The following research questions guided the study:

1. In what aspects of grammar do students encounter difficulties in learning of English grammar?
2. What are the possible ways of using CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar?
3. How does interactivity help learners overcome the difficulties encountered in learning of grammar?

Hypotheses

This study was guided by the following hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

HO₁ There is no statistically significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on the aspects of grammar in which students encounter difficulties.

HO₂ There is no statistically significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on the possible ways of using CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar.

HO₃ There is no statistically significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on how interactivity can help learners overcome the difficulties encountered in learning of grammar.

Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The reason for the choice of this design is that descriptive survey design aims at collecting data from a particular population through the use of questionnaire, and analyzing the data collected for the purpose of generalizing the findings to entire population (Onah, Osinem & Onu, 2013). The study was carried out in South East, Nigeria and the population of the study comprised all the 33,000 second year students and 53 use of English lecturers in all the federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The lecturers are not many and all of them were used for the study, while 5% (1,650) of the second year students were randomly sampled for the study. The sample was selected in line with the specification of Nwana (1981) who states that 5 percent of the population should constitute a sample if the number of the population is in many thousands.

The instrument used for data collection is a self constructed 4-point Likert questionnaire titled Questionnaire on Promotion of Classroom Interactivity through CALL (QPCICALL). It is composed of two parts – A and B. Part A elicits information on the bio-data of the respondents. Section B consists of three clusters containing 10 items, each designed to answer the three research questions posed for the study. The items are rated on 4-point Likert scale of the type: strongly agree (4points), agree (3points), disagree (2points) and strongly disagree (1point). Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The reliability indices of clusters A, B and C of the QPCICALL were 0.73, 0.79 and 0.81 respectively. An overall reliability index of 0.78 was obtained and this is high enough to guarantee the use of the instrument for the study. The data which were collected through the help of three research assistants were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions with 2.5 as criterion mean, while t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The choice of t-test statistics is made in line with the view of Rhiel and Wilkie (2017) that t-test can be used when the sample is greater than 30 because using t-test, in most cases, provides a more robust test than the z-test. Rhiel and Wilkie also point out that t-test is used for comparing the means of two groups regardless of the sample size while using computer to conduct the test.

Results

Research Question 1: In what aspects of grammar do students encounter difficulties in learning of English grammar?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviations of Responses of Lecturers and Students on the Aspects of Grammar in which Students Encounter Difficulties

S/N	Item Statement	X1	SD1	Decision	X2	SD2	Decision
The aspects of grammar in which learners encounter difficulties		Lecturers N = 53			Students N = 1,650		Agree
1.	Parts of speech and their functions.	2.25	0.93	Disagree	2.24	1.20	Disagree
2.	Nominalization	2.40	1.09	Disagree	2.53	0.97	Agree
3.	Types of phrase and their functions	2.42	1.00	Disagree	2.25	0.98	Disagree
4.	Types of sentences	2.33	0.98	Disagree	2.41	0.88	Disagree
5.	Agreement in sentences	2.64	1.10	Agree	2.63	1.03	Agree
6.	Error identification	2.56	1.05	Agree	2.53	1.10	Agree
7.	Types of clause and their functions	2.22	1.04	Disagree	2.39	0.97	Disagree
8.	Elements of sentence	2.16	1.24	Disagree	2.13	1.06	Disagree
9.	Sentence patterns	2.43	1.05	Disagree	2.31	0.88	Disagree
10.	Correction of errors	2.62	1.12	Agree	2.60	1.12	Agree
Grand Mean		2.40	1.06	Disagree	2.40	1.01	Disagree

Table 1 shows that the mean and standard deviations of the responses of lecturers and students on the aspects of grammar in which students encounter difficulties have grand mean scores of 2.40 for both the lecturers and students. However, items 5, 6 and 10 have mean scores that are above the criterion mean-2.5. This indicates that the lecturers and students agree that items 5, 6 and 10 are the aspects of grammar in which students encounter difficulties. In addition to these items, the students also identified item 2 as another aspect in which they encounter difficulties.

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on the aspect of grammar in which students encounter difficulties

Table 2: t-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Lecturers and Students on the Aspect of Grammar in which Students Encounter Difficulties

Group	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig
Lecturers	53	2.40	1.06	1,701	0.01	0.99
Students	1,650	2.40	1.01			

Results in Table 2 reveal that the t-cal (0.01) for the difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on the aspect of grammar in which students encounter difficulties has an associated probability value of 0.99. Since the probability value of 0.99 is greater than the apriori level (0.05), the null hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there is no statistically significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on the aspects of grammar in which students encounter difficulties.

Research Question 2: What are the possible ways of using CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviations of the Responses of Lecturers and Students on the Possible Ways of Using CALL to Promote Interactivity in Teaching and Learning of Grammar

S/N	Item Statement	X1	SD1	Decision	X2	SD2	Decision
	Possible ways of using CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar	Lecturers			Students		Agree
		N = 53			N = 1,650		
1.	Using multi-media computers for classroom instruction	3.24	.75	Agree	3.28	.76	Agree
2.	Providing link to online information	3.30	.76	Agree	3.12	.80	Agree
3.	Engaging language learners in online group exploration	3.34	.84	Agree	2.74	.88	Agree
4.	Using orchestration graph to define individual/group activities and roles	3.16	.85	Agree	2.78	.86	Agree
5.	Teachers' provision of cues to guide online exploration of learners	2.89	.78	Agree	2.83	.61	Agree
6.	Use of social networking sites for teaching and learning	2.92	1.03	Agree	2.90	1.0	Agree
7.	Use of interactive whiteboard to form and share ideas	2.79	.62	Agree	2.91	.71	Agree
8.	Presentation of instruction in multi -media form	2.57	.57	Agree	3.21	.62	Agree
9.	Provision of opportunities for online group and whole class discussion	2.72	.63	Agree	3.40	.65	Agree
10.	Use of hypertext	2.90	.74	Agree	3.37	.78	Agree
	Grand Mean	2.98	.76	Agree	3.03	.77	Agree

Table 3 shows that the mean and standard deviations of the responses of lecturers and students on the possible ways of using CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar are within the mean range of 2.98 and 3.03. This indicates that both the lecturers and students agree that all the listed items are ways of using CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar.

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on the possible ways of using CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Lecturers and Students on the Possible Ways of using CALL to Promote Interactivity in Teaching and Learning of Grammar

Group	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig
Lecturers	53	2.98	.76	1,701	-1.92	.056
Students	1,650	3.03	.77			

Results in Table 4 reveal that the t-cal (-1.92) for the difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on the possible ways of using CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar have an associated probability value of 0.56. Since the probability value of 0.56 is greater than the apriori level (0.05), the null hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there is no statistically significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on the possible ways of using CALL to promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar.

Research Question 3: How does interactivity help learners overcome the difficulties encountered in learning of grammar?

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviations of the Responses of Lecturers and Students on How Interactivity Can Help Students Overcome Difficulties Encountered in Learning of Grammar

S/N	Item Statement	X1	SD1	Decision	X2	SD2	Decision
	How interactivity helps students overcome difficulties encountered in learning of grammar	Lecturers			Students		Agree
		N = 53			N = 1,650		
1.	It helps learners participate actively during grammar instruction.	3.50	.71	Agree	3.07	.64	Agree
2.	It promotes reciprocal teaching of grammar	2.98	.79	Agree	2.94	.73	Agree
3.	Interactivity helps learners experience the use of grammar in context.	3.18	.63	Agree	3.03	.66	Agree
4.	It helps learners acquire the knowledge of grammar through observation and imitation of both peers and lecturers.	2.94	.84	Agree	2.71	.86	Agree
5.	It motivates the learners to give attention to learning of grammar.	2.88	.83	Agree	2.82	.81	Agree
6.	Interactivity also helps learners notice the various forms of grammar.	2.58	.85	Agree	2.90	.80	Agree

7.	It helps learners retain whatever they learn.	2.68	.82	Agree	2.94	.82	Agree
8.	Interactivity helps learners develop critical thinking skill which invariably leads to improved learning of grammar.	2.82	.87	Agree	2.62	.90	Agree
9.	It also provides avenue for successful use of grammar.	2.96	.85	Agree	2.78	.84	Agree
10.	Learners' knowledge of grammar improves as they communicate in the target language.	2.88	.84	Agree	2.68	.83	Agree
Grand Mean		2.94	.80	Agree	2.85	.79	Agree

Results in Table 5 show that the grand mean rating scores of lecturers and students on how interactivity can help students overcome difficulties encountered in learning of grammar are 2.94 and 2.85 respectively. This shows that both the lecturers and the students agree that all the listed items constitute the different ways by which interactivity can help students overcome difficulties encountered in learning of grammar.

Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on how interactivity can help learners overcome the difficulties encountered in learning of grammar.

Table 6: t-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Lecturers and Students on Ho Table 6: t-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Lecturers and Students on How Interactivity Can Help Learners Overcome the Difficulties Encountered in Learning of Grammar

Group	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig
Lecturers	53	2.94	.80	1.701	-2.13	0.03
Students	1,650	2.85	.79			

Results in Table 6 reveal that the t-cal (-2.13) for the difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on how interactivity can help learners overcome the difficulties encountered in learning of grammar have an associated probability value of 0.03. Since the probability value of 0.03 is less than the apriori level (0.05), the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there is statistically significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on how interactivity can help learners overcome the difficulties encountered in learning of grammar.

Discussion

The findings of this study with respect to the first research question show that the respondents agree that the students have difficulties in the following aspects of grammar: nominalization, agreement, error identification and correction of errors. A look at the aspects of grammar in which the students have difficulties shows that the students have problems with construction of good sentences, identification and correction of errors in sentences. Any language user who lacks sound knowledge of agreement fumbles in sentence construction, and may not be able to identify which sentence is wrong or right talk more of correcting it. The finding of Muh, Umi, Uchti, Aulia and Dati (2017) that students do not have good mastery of the English due to poor knowledge of grammar lent credence to this finding. Again, the finding of this study which shows that students have difficulties with agreement is supported by the findings of Nujaree, Sathaporn, and Pennee (2014). The researchers found out that students make many errors in English grammar which are predominantly violation of rules of agreement in sentences. The findings of Bakuuro (2017) that most students cannot apply the rules of agreement correctly, and that they have serious problems with subject-verb agreement also lend credence to the findings of this study. It is, therefore, necessary to improve the teaching and learning of grammar so as to help the learners become proficient users of the English language. With respect to the first hypothesis, the findings show that there is no statistically significant difference in the responses of lecturers and students on the aspects of grammar in which the students encounter difficulties.

Findings made on research question two reveal that the respondents agree with the items raised on the ways of promoting interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar through CALL. The use of multi-media computers, hypertext, social networking sites, interactive white board, group discussion, and online exploration provide avenue for both the lecturers and students to interact with one another. Access to social networking sites, online exploration and hypertext for promotion of classroom interactivity can only be made possible through the use of the internet. These findings are supported by that of Kamba (2017) that internet is a tool that promotes interactive teaching and learning. With CALL activities and tools, learners are able to brainstorm, share ideas and work together on a particular topic. These are capable of helping the learners overcome the difficulties they encounter in learning of grammar.

The findings on the second research question also show that the use of electronic dictionaries, encyclopedia, concordances and interactive whiteboard promote interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar. The lecturers and students interact with these resources to obtain meanings of concepts related to any topic on grammar in order to promote free flow of ideas while learning. These findings corroborate that of Martin (2010). Martin found out that the use of interactive whiteboard brings about improvement in the level of interaction during language teaching and learning. The results based on the second hypothesis show that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on the possible ways of promoting interactivity in teaching and learning of grammar through CALL.

With respect to the third research question, the findings reveal that the respondents agree with all the items raised on how interactivity can help students overcome the difficulties they encounter in learning of grammar. This implies that interactivity which

makes learners active participants in learning process; helps them develop critical thinking; and provides motivation and opportunity for them to practice grammar; generally improves the teaching and learning of grammar. As learners imitate and repeat the speech and utterances of teachers and peers during classroom interaction, their knowledge of grammar improves. This finding is supported by that of Rahman (2014) who discovered that repetition is a good means of learning a language. The findings are also in line with that of Kuiken and Vedder (2002) who found out that interaction helps learners notice the grammatical forms for improved learning of grammar. Also in line with the findings of this study is that of Alian, Khodabandeh and Soleimani (2018). The researchers found out that CALL motivates the learners and positively affects language learning.

The findings based on the third hypothesis show that the probability value of 0.03 is less than the apriori level (0.05). The null hypothesis was therefore accepted. This implies that despite the fact that the mean rating of lecturers (2.94) and that of students (2.85) are above the mean benchmark (2.50), there is statistically significant difference in their responses on how interactivity can help students overcome the difficulties they encounter in learning of grammar.

Conclusion

This study reveals that agreement, error identification and correction, and nominalization are the aspects of grammar in which learners encounter difficulties while learning the English grammar. The study also shows that the use of social networking sites and multimedia computer among other CALL tools and activities promote classroom interactivity for improved teaching and learning of grammar.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study:

1. It is recommended that school authority in secondary schools should acquire computers and such facilities as internet and steady supply of electricity so that CALL can be easily used for teaching of grammar.
2. The universities' administrators should help lecturers realize the ways of promoting classroom interactivity through CALL by organizing regular in-service training programmes for the lecturers.
3. Lecturers should make use of CALL for grammar instruction to help learners avert the difficulties they encounter in learning of grammar.

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Availability and Utilization of Computers by English Language Teachers in Secondary Schools in Nsukka Education Zone

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Abstract

This study examined the availability and utilization of computers by English language teachers in secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone. A descriptive survey research design was used. A 4-point Likert scale questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. The study was guided by two research questions and one hypothesis. Descriptive statistics and t-test were used to analyze the data. Result obtained revealed lack of computers in schools in Nsukka Education Zone. It also revealed the extent teachers use computers in teaching of English language. Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommended that government should make effort to provide computers in schools for use in the teaching and learning of English language to enhance students' performance in English language. In addition, teachers of the English language should be engaged in seminars on the use of computers.

Keywords: Computers, utilization of computers, availability of computers, English language teacher

Introduction

English language has become one of the most important languages in the world. It is widely used in all areas of human endeavour, nationally and internationally. The global use of English language is found in television programmes and in the internet. English language helps to facilitate contact between Nigerians of diverse language groups. The English language is the first language on the school curriculum; hence it is regarded as a core subject. A credit pass in the English language is considered compulsory for the award of many of the country's certificates.

However, the teaching of English language is associated with a lot of problems. It takes a long time to learn a new grammar system and thousands of new words. It also takes a lot of practice to develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in a new language. English language is taught everyday in schools timetable and students' performance in it is still not satisfactory. Based on the importance of the English language, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) states that teaching and learning in Nigeria should lead to students' acquisition of skills and competencies geared towards solving their problems as well as

societal problems. The situation of general poor performance in English language spreads through all levels of Nigeria's educational ladder including primary, secondary and post-primary institutions. The West African Examinations Council Chief Examiners (2005) report that students' poor performance in English language is a long standing one. Annual reports from the West African Examination Councils (WAEC, 2010) reveal woeful performance of candidates for the English language examination as a yearly ritual. It is worrisome to note that the performance of candidates have continued to deteriorate year after year in English language. The West African Examination Councils (WAEC) reports reveal that most candidates who take the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) lack good foundation in English grammar and usage. This implies that they are not well taught by their teachers.

The situation is pathetic as a lot of factors may be responsible for the poor performance in English language examinations. One of these factors is the traditional content/ knowledge oriented curriculum, which is still very much practised today. Teachers seem to have clung fast to the old fashioned ways and have refused to embrace the new trend of the total curriculum experience of the modern teacher. A modern teacher is a teacher who has seen the need to incorporate computer resources in the teaching and learning process. Computer is used as a tool for presentation, assisting students, evaluating learning material, and for interaction. Computers have emerged as a technological aid for assessment of authentic language materials to be used for teaching and learning (Harmer, 2007). They help students to engage in independent research. Teachers share lesson plans, digital resources, assessment data, and drills to individual students to help them to practise certain skills at their own pace. Computer is used to evaluate students' performance (Bada, 2009). The success of the integration of computer into the teaching and learning of English language depends mostly on the level of awareness by the teachers and the actual utilization of computer in the classroom. The use of computer in teaching and learning is important. Therefore, the utilization of computer by teachers of English language right from secondary become necessary (Fakeye, 2010).

Evidence from literature indicates that there are no computers in secondary schools. Adeyemi and Olayele (2010) note that in many public secondary schools in Nigeria, computers are not available. Also Ajayi and Ekundayo in Ezegbe et al (2017) reported that there are no functional computers in most of the secondary schools. These seem to frustrate the extent of teachers' utilization of computer in teaching. Yusuf, Bashir and Dare (2013) found that teachers in secondary schools do not use computers in teaching English language. Eze and Aja (2014) also observed that teachers in secondary schools do not utilize computers in teaching their lessons. English language as a core subject will need adequate number of computers made available to all teachers and students, hence, the provision of computer to teachers and its availability is very important. There is need to examine teachers' extent of utilization of computers in instructional delivery.

In modernized world, almost every aspect of people's life is affected in some ways by computer. Computer presents a stimulus to which learners must respond by presenting, reinforcing and assessing material to be learned. The learner responds by typing at the keyboard, pointing and clicking with the mouse, or speaking into a microphone. The computer offers a feedback, indicating whether the learner's response is right or wrong, and

in the more sophisticated programme, attempting to analyze the learner's response and pinpoint errors.

Gender also plays a significant role that could affect teachers' use of computer in teaching in secondary schools. Gender is socially constructed characteristics of male and female. It is determined by the conception of tasks, functions and roles attributed to male and female in society and in public and private life. Researchers have investigated the effect of gender and utilization of computers by teachers in teaching the English language. These researchers reported mixed findings on gender and computer utilization in teaching. For instance Tezci (2009) reported that gender played a role in teachers use of computer in teaching, while Rahimi and Yadollahi (2010) reported no relationship between computer use and gender. Volman and Van Eck (2001), in their research, revealed that female teachers' have low level of computer use while Wozney, Venkatesh and Abrami in Ezegbe et al (2017) revealed that male teachers use computer more in their teaching and learning process. These mixed findings on the effect of gender on teachers' utilization of computer in teaching makes the study relevant. This is because it is uncertain whether the situation of being male or female influence teachers utilization of computer in teaching English language.

This study is anchored on social learning theory by Bandura (1977) and behaviourist theory by Skinner (1976). The social learning theory of Bandura states that learning takes place through imitation, identification, modelling and social interaction. This theory relates to the present study because teachers can use computer in teaching by imitating other teachers that use it within or outside their environment. Behaviourist theory believes that repeated exposure to the same material is beneficial to learning. A computer is ideal for carrying out repeated drills and practice. The advantage of this theory can be seen only when computers are available for use in teaching.

However, there are teachers who are still using the traditional method of teaching which is basically teacher- centred. Students are passive listeners while teachers actively do the talking alone in the traditional method. The advent of the internet and the widespread of technology around the globe create new opportunities for language learning. Since most of the internet content is in English, the teachers of English gain access to varieties of authentic materials in all spheres of life. Improving educational opportunities for all youths is essential to the growth of human potential worldwide.

Against the above background, the purpose of this study is to find out the extent of availability and utilization of computer by English language teachers in Nsukka Education Zone. Specifically, the objective of the study is to:

- examine the extent of availability of computers in schools in Nsukka education zone
- investigate the extent of utilization of computers in schools in Nsukka education zone
- find out the influence of gender in the utilization of computers in Nsukka education zone

Research Questions

The following research questions directed this study

1. What is the extent of availability of computer in teaching English as a second language?
2. To what extent are teachers using computer in teaching the English language?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated to guide the research study.

H₀, There no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers who use computers in teaching the English Language.

Method

This study used a descriptive survey research design. According to Nworgu (2002), a descriptive survey is a study which aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner the characteristic features or facts about a given population. The researcher adopted this design because the study involves studying and describing certain variables in relation to the population to ascertain the extent of availability and utilization of computers by English language teachers in teaching and learning of the English language.

The instrument for the collection of data was a self constructed 4-point scale Likert questionnaire tagged *English language teachers use of computer questionnaire* (ETUCOQ). It consisted of two parts. The first part elicited information on the bio-data of respondents. The second part contained two clusters, A-B. Cluster A elicited information on the availability of computers in the teaching of the English language. Cluster B focused on teachers' utilization of available computers in the teaching of the English language. The four 4-point scale was rated as follows: very great extent (VGE) 4 points; great extent (GE) 3 points; little extent (LE) 2 points; very low extent (VLE) 1 point. A criterion value of 2.5 was chosen for making decision. The instrument was face validated by experts in Language Education and Cronbach's Alpha reliability index was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability co-efficient of 0.84 which was considered reliable.

The respondents were all the 150 English language teachers in the Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State. Intact sample was chosen for the study because the number of the population is deemed very small to be subjected to random sampling.

Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions and t-test at 0.05 level of significance for the hypothesis.

Result

Research Question 1 What is the extent of availability of computer in teaching English as a second language?

The data providing the answers to the above research questions are presented on Table 1 below:

Table 1: Mean Rating on the Extent of Availability of Computer in Teaching English in Secondary Schools in Nsukka Education Zone.

S/No	Item Statement	N	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Remarks
1	To what extent are internet facilities available for teaching the English language	103	1.70	0.70	Low extent
2	To what extent are digital video disc(DVD) available for teaching the English language	103	1.43	0.54	Low extent
3	To what extent are multimedia projector available in schools for teaching the English language	103	1.84	0.67	Low extent
4	To what extent are CD-ROM available for teaching of the English language	103	1.50	0.52	Low extent
5	To what extent are television available in the school laboratory for teaching the English language	103	1.50	0.52	Low extent

Table 1 reveals that item 1 has a mean score of 1.70 with 0.70 as standard deviation. Items 2, 3, 4, and 5 have mean score of 1.43 with a standard deviation of 0.54, 1.84 with 0.67 as standard deviation, 1.50 with standard deviation of 0.52 and 1.50 with standard deviation of 0.52 respectively. It is noted that all the items have mean score below the criterion value of 2.50. Consequently, the extent of availability is low.

Research Questions 2: To what extent do teachers use computers in teaching of the English language?

Table 2: Mean Rating on the Extent Teachers Use Computers in Teaching the English Language.

S/No	Item Statement	N	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Remark
1	Teachers use computer in teaching grammar	103	1.01	0.10	Low extent
2	Teachers use computer in teaching vocabulary	103	1.03	0.24	Low extent
3	Teachers use computer in teaching spelling	103	1.05	0.34	Low extent
4	Teachers use computer in teaching pronunciation	103	1.02	0.23	Low extent
5	Teachers use computer in teaching the language skills	103	1.04	0.22	Low extent

Table 2 reveals that items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 has mean scores of 1.01 with 0.10 as standard deviation, 1.03 with standard deviation of 0.24, 1.05 with standard deviation of 0.34, 1.02 with standard deviation of 0.23 and 1.04 with standard deviation of 0.22 respectively. All the items have a mean score below the criterion value of 2.5. Therefore, the extent of utilization of computers in the teaching of the English language by teachers in Nsukka Educational Zone of Enugu State is low.

H₀, Mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent of computer utilization in teaching the English language.

Table 3: t-test Analysis of Mean Responses of Male and Female Teachers on the Extent of Computer Utilization in Teaching the English Language

Item	Male mean \bar{x}	SD	Female means \bar{x}	SD	T-value	df	Significance value	Remark
1	2.70	0.65	2.70	0.71	-0.21	103	0.84	Not significant
2	1.34	1.48	1.46	0.57	-1.06	103	0.29	Not significant
3	2.80	0.70	2.90	0.65	-0.86	103	0.39	Not significant
4	1.44	0.50	1.52	0.53	-0.75	103	0.45	Not significant
5	1.41	0.50	1.54	0.75	-0.88	103	0.38	Not significant

Table 3 shows that the significant value for items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are 0.84, 0.29, 0.39, 0.45 and 0.38 respectively. These significant values are greater than 0.05 at which the hypothesis was tested. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significance difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers who use computers in the teaching of the English language.

Discussion

From the findings it is evident that computers are not available in schools for teaching. These findings are in line with the results of Eze and Aja (2014) and Adeyemi and Olayele (2010). These researchers found that in many public secondary schools computers are not available. These findings imply that ICT facilities especially computers are not available for teaching the English language and teachers may be faced with the challenges of holding onto the traditional teaching method which is criticized as irrelevant in a technological age.

On the utilization of computers in teaching of English language by teachers, this study found that English language teachers utilize to a low extent the computers in teaching. The finding is in line with that of Yusuf, Bashir and Dare (2013) and Eze and Aja (2014) which indicated that teachers do not utilize computers in teaching their lessons.

The non availability and poor utilization of computers in the teaching of English language could be explained by the fact that Government, the proprietor of the schools, does not provide computers for use in schools and teachers not properly educated toward computer utilization for teaching and learning process. The findings of this study imply that, if computer is important in the teaching and learning of English language, efforts should be made to provide computers in schools and their utilization in teaching and learning of the

English language.

The findings of the study also showed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of female and male teachers on extent of utilization of computers in teaching the English language in Nsukka Education Zone. This findings implies that gender does not play any role in teachers' utilization of computers in teaching. This finding is corroborated by Tezci (2009). However, Rahimi, et al (2010) disagrees in their own study. Similarly, while Volman and Van Eck (2001) showed that female teachers have low level use of computers in the teaching, Wozney et al in Ezegbe (2017) revealed that male teachers make more use of computers in their teaching than the female. From the studies of Rahimi, et al (2010) and Wozney in Ezegbe (2017), it could be deduced that gender influences the use of computers by teachers. This means that the role of gender in teachers' use of the computer in teaching is, at the moment, in a state of flux.

Conclusion

From the results obtained in this study on the extent of availability and utilization of computer by English language teachers in secondary schools, it is concluded that computers are unavailable in secondary schools in Nsukka education zone. Similarly, because of their unavailability, teachers' use of computers in the schools in Nsukka education zone in teaching the English language is low. This low use is not influenced by gender.

Recommendations

1. Proprietors of the schools in Nsukka education zone should provide adequate number of computers for the teaching of the English language.
2. Teachers should be trained to be computer literate in order to use the computers provided.

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The Competence of JSS1 Students in Rule-Governed English Spelling: Example from Okigwe Education Zone Imo State

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Abstract

A descriptive survey design, this study examined the competence of JSS 1 students of Okigwe Education Zone, Imo State in rule-governed English spelling. The sample was 120 students drawn from 482 JSS 1 students from four co-educational secondary schools selected by simple random sampling. The sample which consisted of 25% of the population was selected through stratified random sampling and stratified along gender lines. A self-constructed, competence-based close battery questionnaire tagged Rule-Governed English Spelling Test (RUGEST), which represented nine spelling rules used for the study, generated the data for analysis involving two research questions and two hypothesis. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research question and t-test for the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Criterion mean of 5.0 was chosen as bench mark for decision for the research questions. The findings revealed a competence mean below the criterion value and consistency in rules which either manifests acceptable level of competence or low level of competence across gender. Gender did not have a significant influence on students' competence in rule-governed English spelling. The study concluded that JSS 1 students' competence in rule-governed English spelling is low and that gender has no significant influence in this outcome.

Keywords: Spelling, English spelling, rule-governed English spelling, spelling errors

Introduction

Spelling is an act of writing the letters of a word correctly. McNeill and Kirk (2013) define it as a conventional way of writing the words, using alphabetic writing system. The emphasis of this definition is on the word *alphabet*. This is because there are some languages which are not written at all – those without a writing system, while others are, like Japanese and Chinese, written in non-alphabetic writing system. Apart from countries with non-alphabetic writing system, the rest of the world languages use the alphabetic writing system. However, the spelling conventions in these world languages vary. Some languages use the ideal spelling system termed *phonemic spelling* characterized by phoneme-letter correspondence. The English spelling system, which is the focus of this study, does not belongs to this category.

The importance of English spelling to literacy has motivated this study. According to Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton and Johnston (2012), learning to spell does not only provide the tool for writing but also contributes to children's learning competence. The importance of spelling to writing is that without correct spelling, writing becomes unintelligible. English language has a complicated orthographic processing (Lingwang, 2013). The orthographic processing has to do with the representation of all the letters which constitute a word in their proper order. It is this type of representation in English spelling with non-phoneme/grapheme correspondence that has attracted interest in the teaching and research in English spelling. This is because English spelling has been described as “messy and irregular” (Trask & Stockwell, 2007:271). Trask and Stockwell point out five reasons for the irregularities of English spelling. First, a standardized spelling cannot be changed even when the pronunciation changes. Typical examples are – *knee, night, write, steak, iron, sugar, lamb*. In their original pronunciation, the above spelling represented their original pronunciation, but their pronunciations have changed over the years leaving behind their original spelling. Second, similar spellings are used for related words even when such similar words may invoke different pronunciation, as in *photography* and *photograph*. If these words were spelt as pronounced, their relationship may be blurred. Third, foreign words retain their foreign spelling even when such words are a mismatch to English pronunciation. Examples are: *machine, zeitgeist, concerto, lasagna, chic, photograph, xylophone, and psychology*. Fourth, some spellings are *contamination of other words*. For instance, *isle* which was formally spelled *iland* has acquired its “s” by contamination and so has *aisle* (p. 271). Finally, words are pronounced differently by different people. For instance, *caught/court/cot; horse/hoarse; poor/pour* among others. A common spelling for these words with variant spelling pattern is adopted in order not to privilege a particular accent.

The foregoing reasons have, in the view of this study, over-ridden all various attempts at spelling reform in English spelling to make the spelling a phoneme/grapheme compliant – the ideal spelling system. The difference between American English (AE) and British English (BrE) spelling is the result of the American attempt not only to make their English different from BrE but also to reform the spelling of AE. In their spelling reform, two features emerge. First, when BrE spelling is retained, spelling pronunciation is invoked, as in *schedule* which is pronounced as /*skedjul*/. Second, words are spelt phonemically as in *program, center, and labor* among others.

These examples provide an attempt to reform English spelling to make it approximate as much as possible phonemic spelling – the ideal alphabet spelling system. However, in spite of attempts at reforms, BrE spelling remains conservative and irregular (Treiman & Boland, 2018). In the midst of apparent irregularities in phoneme/grapheme and grapheme/phoneme correspondence, there are underlying regularities in English spelling (Lingwang, 2013). These regularities are characterized not only by phonological rules but also by orthographic and positional constraints observed in English spelling. The rules are either phonologically or morphologically induced while the constraints are noted in the idiosyncrasies of the patterning of the letters in the orthography explained (Okoye, 2008).

Useful information on English spelling rules that have been used for this study were provided by Thomas, Manchester and Scott (1964), and Waldhorn, Zieger, South and South (1967). Waldhorn, et al (1967) identify eight spelling rules while Thomas et al (1964) described nine rules. This study collapsed the rules into seven and categorized them into phonologically and morphologically induced rules. Due to the fact that these rules are replete with exceptions, it is not possible, in the view of this study, to formulate a generalized rule either phonologically or morphologically. *The rules are as follows:*

- PhonR-<ie/ei> Interchange Rule
- PhonR-<c>+<k> Occurrence rule
- PhonR/MorR-N_[+pl] Pluralization rule
- PhonR/MorR -<y> Replacement Rule
- PhonR/MorR- <e> Deletion Rule
- MorR - <C²> Rule
- Mor X [+∅] Rule.

PhonR-<ie/ei> Interchange Rule involves two interchanges <ie> and <ei> which occur in observable phonological environment even though there are exceptions to the rule. According to PhonR-<ie/ei> Interchange Rule, <ie> occurs in the environment of a /i:/ sound without a preceding <c> grapheme as in the following words: *achieve, cashier, grief, shriek, siege, etc.* However, the following exceptions occur: *either, neither, seizure, sheik, weird, leisure* among others. On the other hand, for the interchange <ei>, two environments are specified. According to Thomas, et al (1964) <ei> interchange occurs only in the environment of the diphthong /ei/ and provide the following examples: *eight, weight, neighbor.* On the other hand, Waldhorn, et al (1967) agree with Thomas et al (1964) that <ei> occur in the environment of the diphthong /ei/, but include the following environments: /i:/ sound preceding <c> as in *ceiling, deceive, receive, conceit, receipt, conceive, perceive and deceit.*

PhonR-<c>+<k> occurrence rule is a phonologically conditioned rule which specifies the condition by which a final <c> grapheme may co-occur with <k> grapheme before suffixation. The rule, therefore, states as follows: in order to maintain the hard sound of <c>, add <k> grapheme to final <c> before adding suffixes beginning with <e>, <i>, <y>. Examples include *frolic, frolicked, mimicked, picnicked, traffic etc.*

PhonR/MorR-N_[+pl] Pluralisation Rule specifies condition for the various spelling of the plural of English nouns N_[+pl]. The general rule is to add the <s> grapheme to English nouns to form plural forms. Examples include *book-books; girl-girls; ruler-rulers* among others. However, other spelling forms may be either phonologically or morphologically informed. For instance, phonologically, the general rule changes if the nouns end in “s”-like sound or vowel. In such situations, the digraph <es> is added instead of <s>. Examples include *rose-roses, and hero-heroes.* However, there are exceptions to be noted such as *albino-albinos, zero-zeros* etc. Phonologically, the grapheme <f> in word ending position in converted to <v> to enable the digraph <es> to be added to form plural noun. This is seen in the following words: *thief-thieves; wife-wives* among others. However, there are exceptions such as *brief-briefs, and chief-chiefs.*

PhonR/MorR-⟨y⟩ Replacement Rule involves two processes – phonological and morphological. Phonologically, a final grapheme ⟨y⟩ preceded by a consonant is replaced by the grapheme ⟨i⟩. Morphologically, suffixation follows the grapheme ⟨i⟩. This rule is evident in such words as *beauty-beautiful*, *rely-reliance*, etc. However, ⟨y⟩ is retained if it is preceded by a vowel as in *boy-boys*, *trolley-trolleys* etc. ⟨y⟩ is also retained if the suffix is {ing} as in *try-trying*, *occupy-occupying* among others. Moreover, Ryan (2017) observes that the general trend is to retain the ⟨y⟩ when followed by suffixes as in *enjoy-enjoyment*, *dry-dryness* etc. This rule, as applies to pluralisation, states as follows: change ⟨y⟩ to ⟨i⟩ and add ⟨es⟩ if a noun ends in ⟨y⟩ preceded by a consonant, and retain ⟨y⟩ and add ⟨s⟩ if the noun ends in ⟨y⟩ preceded by a vowel. Examples are seen in *sky-skies* and *day – days* respectively.

PhonR/MorR-⟨e⟩ Deletion Rule is a morphological rule that involves two deletion rules. The first rule states: delete final ⟨e⟩ preceding a suffix beginning with a vowel as in *argue-arguing*, *shine-shining* etc. The second deletion rule involves two processes – a phonological process of replacement and a morphological process of suffixation. Phonologically, the grapheme ⟨e⟩ in words ending in the diagraph ⟨ie⟩ is deleted and the ⟨i⟩ is replaced by ⟨y⟩ before suffixation as in *lie-lying* and *die-dying*. This rule is replete with many exceptions such as retain a final ⟨e⟩ preceding {ing} suffix to prevent confusion with other words as in: *die-dying*, and *dye-dyeing*; *sing-singing*, and *singe-singeing* etc. Another exception to the rule, among others, include: retain a final ⟨e⟩ preceding a suffix beginning with a consonant as seen in the following words *definite-definitely*; *like-likely* (Ryan, 2017).

MorR-⟨C²⟩ Rule involves the doubling of final consonant ⟨C-doubled⟩. It is a complicated rule in the sense that it is both phonologically and morphologically induced. The phonological consideration is noted when a shift in stress induces doubling of consonant ⟨C²⟩. This is because the non-phonological consideration outweighs the phonological. According to the rule, ⟨C²⟩ occurs in the following environment:

- When final consonant is preceded by a vowel in monosyllabic words, as in: *drag-dragging-dragged*.
- When final consonant is followed by a suffix with a vowel in monosyllabic words, as in *above*.
- When final consonant in polysyllabic words is stressed on the last syllable, as in: *transfer-transferred-transferring*.

The above rule has some exceptions and they occur in the following environment:

- When final consonant in polysyllabic words has its stress shifted to the first syllable when a suffix is added as in *re'fer-reference*, *bene'fit-benefit* etc.
- When final consonants are two, as in: *start-started*, *land-landing* etc.
- When final consonant is preceded by two vowels, as in: *feel-feeling*, *beat-beating* etc.

MorX[+☞] Idiosyncratic Spelling Rule specifies words that can be described as being morphologically conditioned in the sense that they are idiosyncratic in terms of English orthography. Such spellings are learned by rote. These include {-cede}, {-ceed} and {-sede} words such as *concede*, *exceed* and *supersede*. Others include foreign words

like *addendum*, *ellipsis*, *erratum*; and archaic plurals such as *ox-oxen*, *child-children* etc (Ryan, 2011).

From the foregoing, seven English spelling rules have been identified and one distinguishing feature of these rules is the exception that characterizes them, making it impossible to attempt a generalized rule for each. In addition to spelling rules, there are constraints in English orthography. These constraints are of three types. First, there are selection restrictions in the co-occurring strings of letters in English orthography. Deacon, Conradt and Pacton (2008) describe this phenomenon as *orthographic constraints*. This means that there are permissible and non-permissible strings of letters in English spelling. For instance, the following are permissible: <ing>, <ition>, <ple>, etc. On the other hand, the following among others are not permissible: <xng>, <cxy> and <xto>. Problems of orthographic constraints are observed in invented spelling (Sproat, 2016).

The second restriction is seen in the position of occurrence of graphemes. Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton and Johnston (2012) terms such restrictions as positional constraint which is observed in the digraph <ck>, which is orthographically permissible, but is restricted in its position as in *tick and stick*, but not at the initial position of a word. Finally, there are restrictions in the frequency with which a digraph may represent a diphthong. For instance, the digraph <ay> has more probability of representing the diphthong /ei/ at the end of words than <ey> as in: *say, play, may* and *nay*. Such knowledge is innate, explained Ryan (2011).

In spite of the apparent irregularities, English spelling is regulated. The regulation is observed in the rules and constraints described above. As Ryan (2017) has pointed out, these rules and constraints are difficult for both native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) who are formally learning the English spelling. NS learn English spelling because they learn to read and write in schools as NNS learners. Sproat (2016) observes that the difficulty in English spelling inheres in the processing of English spelling. According to them, the correspondence rules are asymmetrical. Consequently, it is usually difficult to select the appropriate grapheme corresponding to a phoneme when spelling. For instance, the phoneme /k/ has the following corresponding graphemes <k, c, ck, ch, and que>. To choose the correct alternative from the graphemic possibilities poses a problem to the speller.

Against these background of inconsistencies in phoneme-grapheme correspondence in English spelling system, and the rules and constraints for accounting for the inconsistencies, this study attempts to investigate the competence of Nigerian JSS1 students in rule-governed English spelling in terms of rules and constraint knowledge.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the mean competence score of JSS1 students in each of the rules in RUGEST?
2. To what extent do the mean competence scores of JSS 1 male students differ from those of their female counterparts in each rule in RUGEST?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the

study:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean competence score of JSS1 students in each of the rules in RUGEST.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean competence score of JSS1 male students and their female counterparts in each rule in RUGEST.

Method

Descriptive survey research design was used for this study. Descriptive survey design according to Onah, Osinem and Onu (2013) aims at describing an issue as it really is by collecting data from a particular population and analyzing the data collected for the purpose of generalizing the findings to entire population. The researcher finds this design appropriate and therefore adopts it for the study since it aims at identifying and describing systematically and individual student's competence in controlled English spelling test as the test was competence induced.

The population of the study consisted of 482 JSS1 students in Okigwe Education Zone, Imo State for the 2016/2017 academic year. Four of the co-educational schools from the zone were selected by simple random sampling. Co-educational school makes a good representation of genders. By rule of the thumb, 25% of the population which was approximated to 120 participants was selected by stratified random sampling. Stratification was along gender lines. JSS1 students were chosen for the study because they represent the entry behaviours of JSS1-3 students in the zone in rule governed English spelling.

The instrument for data collection is tagged Rule-Governed English Spelling Test (RUGEST). RUGEST is a competence-based, self-constructed tool. It is competence-based because it is a closed battery tool which is designed to determine the competence of the population on rule-governed English spelling. It must be remarked that competence in this study is used in the Chomskian sense to represent a body of knowledge as opposed to performance in language.

The instrument consists of two main parts- Parts A and B. Part A elicits information on the bio-data of sampled population. It is designed to provide information on such variables as gender (male/female) and class (JSS1). Part B comprises the English spelling test which is divided into nine sections. Originally, the test was designed to consist of ten sections, but it was discovered that what constituted the tenth section is believed to be above the comprehension level of the sampled population considering their cognitive maturity level. There are altogether 85 test items. The limitation of the test items to 85 is not deliberate. It is constrained by available data. While some of the sections have ample illustrations; others are limited in the number of test items as a result of paucity of data.

Section 1 of Part B tested PhonR-<ie/ei> Interchange Rule. It consisted of 10 test items. Section 2 with only 4 items tested PhonR-<c>+<k> rule. To compensate for the paucity of test items in section 2, section 3 consisted of 16 test items and tested PhonR/MorR-N_[+pl] rule, while section 4 has 10 items and tested PhonR/MorR -<y> Replacement Rule. Section 5 with 10 test items tested PhonR/MorR- <e> Deletion Rule, while section 6 was concerned with testing MorR - <C²> Rule. Section 7 with 10 test items tested Mor X [+∞] rule while sections 8 and 9 tested constraints in English spelling. Section

8 with 10 items tested orthographic constraints (OC rule) while section 9 with 5 test items tested positional constraints (PC rule).

The test items in sections 1, 4, 5, and 6 consist of writing the full spelling of contextualized words not fully spelt in the spaces provided. It is believed that the context will serve as cue to enable the testees to recognize the partially spelt word and spell it correctly. In sections 2, 3 and 7, the testees were expected to supply appropriate information in the spaces provided. The two sections on constraints (section 8-9) provided a different type of test. While section 8 tested the testees' ability to recognize acceptable strings in English spelling, section 9 tested the testees' ability to recognize words from scrambled letters.

The instrument was face-validated by three specialists in Abia State University. One expert is from the Department of Linguistics, another in the Department of Psychological Foundation while the third was from the Department of Statistics. Pearson product Moment Correlation Co-efficient was used to obtain a reliability index of 0.89 which is high enough to be considered adequate to justify the use of the instrument. Data were analyzed, using mean and standard deviation for the research questions and t-test to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the mean competence score of JSS1 students in each of the rules in RUGEST?

Table 1: Mean scores of Competence Level of JSS1 Students in Each Rule in RUGEST

Code N	Rule	Raw Score	Mean
1.	PhonR-<ie/ei> (interchange rule)	731	6
2.	PhonR-<c>+<k> (addition rule)	437	3.6
3.	PhonR/MorR-N _[+p] (pluralization rule)	915	7.6
4.	PhonR/MorR -<y> (replacement rule)	681	5.6
5.	PhonR/MorR- <e> (deletion rule)	588	4.9
6.	MorR - <C ² > (double consonant rule)	866	7.2
7.	MorR- X [+☒] (idiosyncratic spelling rule)	1082	9
8.	OC (orthographic constraint rule)	292	2.57
9.	PC (positional constraint rule)	74	0.6
	Grand Actual Score and Mean	5697	4.82

Table 1 reveals that in rule 1, a raw score of 731 was recorded with a mean score of 6. Similarly in rule 2, 437 was the raw score with a mean score of 3.6. In the same vein, rules 3 and 4 recorded 915 and 681 raw scores with 7.6 and 5.6 mean scores respectively. In rules 5, 6, and 7 the following raw scores were recorded 588, 866 and 1082 with mean scores of 4.9, 7.2 and 9 respectively. Rules 8 and 9 recorded mean scores of 292 and 74 respectively with mean scores of 2.4 and 0.6 respectively. The participants scored above the criterion mean of

5.0 only in rules 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7, and scored below the criterion mean in rules 2, 5, 8 and 9.

Hypotheses 1: There is no significant difference in the mean competence score of JSS1 students in each of the rules in RUGEST.

Table 2: t-test Table on the Difference in the Mean Competence Scores of JSS1 Students in Each Rule in RUGEST

Source Variation (SV)	Degree of Freedom (df)	Sum of Square (SS)	Mean Square (MS)	Critical Value F-tab	Calculated Value F-cal	Decision
Trt	8	246.7808	30.8476	2.34	34.470	Rejected
Competence level	27	24.1605	0.8949			
Total	35	270.9410				

Table 2 shows that the calculated value of the test statistic ($F_{cal} = 34.470$) is greater than the critical value of the test statistic ($F_{crit} = 2.34$). Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. It is affirmed that there is significant difference in the mean competence scores of JSS1 students in each rule in RUGEST.

Research Question 2: To what extent do the mean competence scores of JSS 1 male students differ from those of their female counterparts in each rule in RUGEST?

Table 3: Mean Scores of Competence Level of JSS1 Male and Female Students in Each Rule in RUGEST

Code N	Rule	Males			Females		
		No	X	SD	No	X	SD
1.	PhonR-<ie/ei> (interchange rule)	60	7	3.2	60	6.6	3.5
2.	PhonR-<c>+<k> (addition rule)	60	3.7	2.7	60	3.5	3.4
3.	PhonR/MorR-N _[+pl] (pluralization rule)	60	7.5	3.6	60	7.5	2.8
4.	PhonR/MorR -<y> (replacement rule)	60	6	2.9	60	5.3	3.4
5.	PhonR/MorR- <e> (deletion rule)	60	4.7	2.8	60	5.0	2.1
6.	MorR - <C ² > (double consonant rule)	60	6.9	3.6	60	7.1	3.6
7.	MorR- X [+∞] (idiosyncratic spelling rule)	60	9.3	2.6	60	9.3	3.4
8.	OC (orthographic constraint rule)	60	2.5	3.1	60	2.2	2.7
9.	PC (positional constraint rule)	60	0.6	1.2	60	0.6	1.1

Table 3 reveals that in rule 1 male students had a mean score of 7 with standard deviation of 3.2 while their female counterparts had a mean score of 6.6 with standard deviation of 3.5. In rule 2 the male participants had a mean score of 3.7 with standard deviation of 2.7 whereas their female counterparts scored a mean of 3.5 with standard deviation of 3.4. In rules 3, 4, and 5, male and female participants had the following mean scores: 7.5, 6, 4.7, and 7.5, 5.3,

5.1 respectively with standard deviations of 3.4, 2.9, 2.8 and 2.8, 3.4, and 2.1 respectively. In rules 6 and 7, the male and female participants had mean scores of 6.9, 9.3, 7.1 and 9.3 respectively with standard deviations of 3.6, 2.6, 3.6 and 3.4 respectively. In like manner, the JSS1 male participants had mean scores of 2.5 and 0.6 with standard deviations of 3.1 and 1.2 in rules 8 and 9 while their female counterparts had mean scores of 2.2 and 0.6 with standard deviations of 2.7 and 1.1. The male participants scored above the criterion mean in rules 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 while the female students scored above the criterion mean in rules 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean competence score of JSS1 male students and their female counterparts in each rule in RUGEST.

Table 4: Difference in the Mean Competence Scores of JSS1 Male and Their Female Counterparts in Each Rule in RUGEST.

Gender	Number	X	SD	t-cal	t-critical	Decision
Male	60	5.3	2.85	0.060	1.746	Accepted
Female	60	5.2	2.88			

Table 4 shows that the calculated value of the test statistic ($t_{cal} = 0.060$) is less than the critical value of the test statistic ($t_{cal} = 1.746$). Consequently, the null hypothesis is upheld at 0.05 level of significance. It is affirmed that there is no significant difference in the mean scores in English spelling of JSS1 male students and their female counterparts in each rule in RUGEST.

Discussion

With a criterion value of 5.0 for decision, the findings of the study reveal that participants exhibited acceptable level of competence in PhonR-<ie/ei> (interchange rule), PhonR/MorR- $N_{[+pl]}$ (pluralization rule), PhonR/MorR -<y> (replacement rule), MorR-<C²> (double consonant rule) and MorR- X [+∞] (idiosyncratic spelling rule). Of the nine rules in RUGEST, the rule on which the participants exhibited the highest level of competence is the MorR-X[+∞] idiosyncratic spelling rule with the mean score of 9.0. The MorR-X[+∞] rule is the rule that can be described as being morphologically conditioned in the sense that they are idiosyncratic in terms of English orthography as in “-ceed, -sede” etc. The competency of the participants indicates that they are conversant with the idiosyncratic spelling forms. The findings corroborated by the submission of Hilden and Jones (2012) that children understand how to deal with irregular spellings.

The second rule on which the students exhibited a high level of competence is PhonR/MorR- $N_{[+pl]}$ (pluralization rule). This rule specifies conditions for various spellings of plurals of conventional English nouns. Here, the participants displayed their innate knowledge of the rule and its exceptions as most of the test items in the rule were correctly pluralized.

The participants also exhibited high level of competence in MorR-<C²> (double consonant rule) with an average mean score of 7.2. The rule is both phonologically and morphologically induced but the non-phonological consideration outweighs the phonological. Most of the students adhered to the rule and its exceptions while a few generalized it. This is suggestive of the fact that the respondents have understood the rule. The outcome also confirms the position of Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton and Johnson (2012) who hold that children at the derivational constancy spelling stage can commit few errors in consonant doubling.

The fourth rule on which the students exhibited high level of competence is PhonR-<ie/ei> (interchange rule). This rule involves the digraphs <ie> and <ei> which occur in observable phonological environment. A careful study of students' responses showed that a good number of them could not differentiate <ei> as a digraph from /ei/ as a diphthong but rather rely on the sound. According to Deacon, Conradt and Pacton (2008) the phonic stage is usually marked by over-generalization of sound-letter relationship and substitution of significant alternatives.

The last rule on which the students showed a high level of competence is in the PhonR/MorR -<y> (replacement rule). The PhonR/MorR -<y> replacement rule involves two processes: phonological and morphological. Phonologically, a final grapheme <y> preceded by a consonant is replaced by the grapheme <i> and morphologically, suffixation follows the grapheme <i>. This finding disagrees with that of Okoye (2008). Okoye found out that in terms of performance, students do have problems in applying the PhonR/MorR -<y> replacement rule.

Students, on the other hand, exhibited incompetence in the rest of the rules. The rule in which the students recorded the greatest incompetence in RUGEST is the PC rule in which they made a mean score of 0.6. The unacceptable level of competence exhibited by the participants reveals that they have little knowledge of positional constraints. Incompetency is also exhibited by the students in the OC rule in RUGEST in which they made a mean score of 2.42. The OC rule states that there are permissible and non-permissible strings of letters in English spelling. Only few of the respondents got at least 3 or 4 correct options. The unacceptable level of competence in this regard suggests their lack of competence in PC rule. In both PC and OC rules, there is no study in extant literature to either assert or refute the findings.

Another rule in which respondents exhibited incompetence in RUGEST is the PhonR-<c>+<k> addition rule. The PhonR-<c>+<k> addition is a phonologically conditioned rule. The rule states that in order to maintain the hard sound of <c>, add <k> grapheme to final <c> before adding suffixes beginning with <e>, <i>, <y>, etc. The participants recorded a mean score of 3.6. The unacceptable level of competence in the PhonR-<c>+<k> addition rule in RUGEST confirms Lingwang (2013) position that the phonic stage is usually marked by over generalization of spelling rules, ignorance of the letters and sounds involved.

Despite the variation in mean scores of male and female students, the findings of the study based on the second hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference in the mean competence scores of JSS1 male students and their female counterparts in each rule in RUGEST. The null hypothesis was accepted sequel to this finding. However, with 0.05

level of significance, the first hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is significant difference in the mean competence scores of JSS 1 students in each rule in RUGEST for students scored high in rules 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7, but low in rules 2, 5, 8, and 9.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study which were arrived at by providing answers to the research questions and testing of the hypotheses, the following conclusions are drawn:

- JSS 1 students are yet to attain acceptable level of competence in the following rules:
 - OC (orthographic constraint rule)
 - PC (positional constraint rule)
 - PhonR-<c>+<k> (addition rule)
 - PhonR/MorR- <e> (deletion rule)
- Gender has no influence in the development of competence in English spelling rules. This accounts for same level of competence among the males and females as revealed in this study.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study:

1. English spelling should be taught as a subject in Nigerian schools. To do this effectively, English spelling curriculum should be provided. Among the content of the curriculum should be the nine English spelling rules which formed the focus of this study.
2. Teaching methods generated by the culture of learning in Nigeria should be used for teaching of English spelling both in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria.

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Local Trade and Its Impact on Ngwa Land, Abia State, 1800 – 1960

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Abstract

This article was designed to support the debunking of the Eurocentric position that markets were absent in Nigeria before colonialism by using historical evidence from Ngwa land to further dismiss the position. It traced the existence of markets and their principles in Ngwa land from 1800-1960 and noted how the interplay of market forces supported an efficient trade and exchange system which made positive impact in Ngwa land. The impacts were in the form of wealth creation, source of livelihood, community development, women empowerment, and good intergroup relationship between Ngwa people and the Niger Delta, Ibibio, Nkwere and Aro peoples.

Key words: trade, local trade, long distance trade, development, market.

Introduction

The Ngwa are located in the present day Abia State and constitutes the largest clan in Southeastern Nigeria. According to Oriji (1983), they occupy an area of about 512.8 Square miles, within the latitude 5° and $5^{\circ}3^{\circ}$ N and longitude 7° and $7^{\circ}3^{\circ}$ E. The Ngwa constitute 9 of the 17 local government areas of Abia State which makes them the majority tribe in the State. They are bounded in the west by the Imo River, which separates them from Mbaise and the Omuma-Etche clans; in the east by Oloko-Umuahia and stretches to the Annang of Akwa Ibom State; northwards and adjacent to the Ntigha and Nsulu village groups are the Ubakala and Olokoro clans; In the south, she shares a common boundary with the Asa and Ndoki clans. Because of their location in the southeastern peripheral region of the Igboland, the Ngwa were able to establish commercial ties with the middlemen of the eastern delta before many other groups of the hinterland.

This article is designed to further support the debunking by Ekundare (1973), Hopkins (1973) and Njoku (2014) of Eurocentric historians' position that there were no market system in Nigeria before the advent of colonialism, using the Ngwa land as a case study. In doing so, basic concepts are defined.

Conceptual Framework

Hopkins (1973) has defined *local trade* as “transactions which took place within a radius of ten miles from the area of production” (p.36). According to him, this is because this distance can be covered by foot in a day or by donkey and the trader concluded his transaction and returned home the same day. It, therefore, followed that once the market trip took one overnight, involved preparations for overnight stops ,and required some market professionals, it may no longer be regarded as local trade. However, Njoku (2014) has included exchange within the same village or sections of it and the exchange between distant and disparate communities as domestic trade. Probably, Hopkins' classification may still fit in here even if the exchange involved more than ten miles, as long as it was within the same locality. Therefore, local trade in Ngwa, which forms the subject of our discussion, is the type of exchange which links economically interdependent communities and producers to a mutual economic benefit, as in the case of the Ngwa and her neighbours. Njoku (2014) has convincingly declared that “although most households produced most of their basic needs in pre-colonial era, the economy was nevertheless, considerably market-oriented” (p.117). The reason as he noted was that variations in resource endowments made economic interdependent inescapable. Trade was, therefore, a crucial component of the economy as it was through it that disparities in productive capacities of the communities were complimented. Reports of foreign visitors confirmed existence of markets in Nigeria. For instance, Allen and Thompson (1848) declared that “the strongest characteristics of the inhabitants of the interior of Africa is the love of traffic; ...every town has a market” (p.298).

Trading was part of the people's life, which was carried out even outside the market place. Nevertheless, markets existed in every community, some large and others small. According to Njoku (2014), as long as the trade occurred between the people of what later became Nigeria, it was classified as local trade as against external trade which took the forms of Trans Saharan Trade and the Trans Atlantic Trade. Local trade among the Ngwa involved exchange of various goods and services with other Nigerian peoples especially slaves in pre colonial and palm oil in colonial period and after. An Ngwa community – Abaala, in Obingwa Local Government Area of present day Abia State also prospered in metallurgy. They produced various iron implements. There were also indications that with the coming of colonialism and its end, trade in Ngwa land had developed to a stage where it knitted Eastern Nigeria into a single nexus. New products were introduced which improved the living standards of the people, community development projects, acquisition of western education, provision of amenities such as bicycles, motorcycles, cars among others became indices of development orchestrated by local trade.

The next concept to be examined is *market* from economist perspective. By a *market*, economists mean any organization whereby the buyers and sellers of particular commodity are kept in close touch with each other and so are able to fix its price. Those dealing in any market need not be physically close to each other – they may keep in touch by telephone. (Stonier et al, 1972, p.4).

However, Bohanan et al (1962) expanded the definition by differentiating between market site and market principle. While they believe that a *market place* is a specific site where a group of buyers and sellers meet, they define *market principle* as the system of determining prices by the force of supply and demand regardless of the site of the

transaction. Meillasouz. (1961) and Njoku (2014) shared a similar view of African markets. To them, West African *market place* are places where people meet regularly in order to acquire and to dispose of locally produced and imported goods and services, to exchange information with relatives, friends and strangers and to engage in recreational activities. And this matches with what market meant to an Ngwa man.

Another concept worth examining is trade. *Trade* involves exchange of goods, services, and ideas in the market place, but in this article, it would mean exchange of goods and services between one village and another and between one community and another. It deals with the movement of goods from one market to another and covers a wider area and comes under the section rightly described by modern economists as *home* or *internal trade*. Consequently, in this context, *markets* will mean specific sites in Ngwa land where varied commodities were exchanged while *trade* is the movement of the commodities from one market to another and from one community to another. Hopkins (1973) pointed to an overwhelming descriptive evidence showing that exchange was widespread in all parts of West Africa. He added that pure subsistence was the exception rather than the rule when it concerned exchange. In agreement with Hopkins, Njoku (2014) asserted that households took trade as an integral part of their activities and, therefore, planned their production strategy accordingly. Nwachukwu (1981) also confirmed that from the beginning, nearly every Ngwa man or woman was a trader who went to the market on every market day to sell or to buy. He further classified trading activity of Ngwa man into marketing and trading. Buying one's need or selling one's produce, he called *marketing* whereas buying to resell, he classified as *professional trading*. Therefore, the Ngwa man engaged in marketing and trading in Nwachukwu's terminology each local market day he or she attended to dispose of excess farm produce or bought immediate family needs and those to resell. However, whether marketing or trading, every Ngwa man was incurably involved in exchange of goods and services.

No existing records reveal the exact figures of traders in the local and long distance trades. However, indications abound from oral traditions that many Ngwa traders competed favourably with Awka, Nkwerre, Abiriba and Aro traders before the 19th century. There were also products diversification and proliferation of markets which developed along the trade routes. Nwachukwu (1981) recorded that the new markets expanded because of inaccessibility of the major markets particularly during rainy seasons, and that Ngwa traders were cited at Ibibio, Ijo, Uzuakoli and Bende areas in the 19th century. Not only the northern neighbours did they trade with, they also traded with their southern delta neighbours from whom they exchanged their agricultural products with riverine products of fish and salt. It is, therefore, clear that the Ngwa played the role of middlemen as they maintained trade links between the coastal people and the Igbo interior, between the Ibibio and Europeans.

Trade and market is inseparable as it was in the markets that trading activities took place. This fact makes it difficult to divorce market from trade. This is not to dismiss the fact that trade equally took place outside the markets and even at homes. This shows how pervasive trade as an economic activity existed in Ngwa land. Trade, in the modern sense, has become impersonal as one could trade with a customer in far remote distances without physical contact with the person. But this was not the situation with trade in Ngwa land at the time covered in this article.

Origin of Trade as Economic Activity in Ngwa land

The origin of trade as an economic activity in Ngwa is fraught with difficulties. Unable to resolve the riddle, Afigbo (1975) remarked that “we may never be able to know for certain how trade and marketing developed among the Igbo” (p.43). But Nwachukwu (1981) believed that trade in Ngwa developed the same time settlements developed, as a result of division of labour and the differences in the natural and human resource endowments of communities. Each village organized its own market usually located at the centre of the village. Among the Ngwa Igbo village settlements seem to have started under the cover of very large trees which protected the inhabitants from the elements of weather. Family huts were usually built few yards from the gigantic trees. Eventually, the village square became a multipurpose centre serving, both commercial, cultural and political purposes. Many factors determined the necessity for a market for a group of people. Among them were centrality of the market to the village group, accessibility to both the owners of the market and to traders from neighbouring areas, safety of the marketers and traders and concentration of population. Because Ngwa villages were made up of people who trace their decent to a common ancestry, it was easy for them to come together and to take decisions on common interests. This, according to Nwachukwu (1981), was how the central markets emerged. Such markets were located at the square commonly owned by the various component villages that make up the village group.

Apart from the central and the village markets, some other markets were held in the evenings which earned them the name, “evening markets”. In the 19th century, when people combined farm work with palm oil production, the evening markets became more popular and increased in number because the local people were busy with farm work and palm oil production in the morning hours. Unlike the village markets, the central markets attracted people from far and near. Commodities in the central markets were more diversified, ranging from agricultural to industrial crafts. Generally, markets in Ngwa land in the 19th century could be divided into four namely: the village markets, the evening markets, the daily markets and the central markets. The four markets named above were grouped under local markets and regional or relay markets. Eke Ukwu Uratta, Nkwo Umuekpe, Eke-Umuchima, Afor-Avoh, Ezianya and Eke Umuojima are good examples of local markets in Ngwa land. The evening markets were not found in the villages that had normal village or daily markets. Some of the central or village markets were Orie Ntigha, Orie-Ukwu Amorji, Afor-Osukwu, Orie-Nnenu, Eke-akpara, Nkwo-elechi, Nkwo Ebe, Eketa-Umueleghele, Nkwo-Amachi, Orie-Abaala, and Eke-Oha Aba. Of these, the largest and most popular were the ones located at the borders of Ngwaland such as Orie-Ntigha, Orie-Nenu, Afor-Osukwu. Other markets were located at Obegu, Umuajuju, Obehie and so on. The daily markets seemed to have developed fully during the colonial period. They were mostly seen along the railway lines and on some of the roads constructed by the colonial masters. They were locally known as *Ogwumabiri* markets such as the ones at Omoba, Aba and Nbawsi. Some of the central markets gained the patronage of many traders and marketers from within and outside Ngwaland; they were located at the border of the major ecological zones. In the south, the Obegu market and Ngwa Omuma markets located at the border were centers where the Ngwa exchanged wide range of products with the riverine products.

One factor that helped in the expansion of markets was the security offered to traders. Before the 19th century, insecurity along trade routes constituted a major barrier to the easy flow of goods and services from one place to another. Oral sources indicated that both men and women were kidnapped along the trade routes and in the market places for slave to the slave traders. Also inter village disputes inspired by slave raiders contributed to insecurity of traders. However, this did not hamper the economy of the area as the Market Councils came up with measures which appeared to have reduced insecurity in the areas. The Market Councils stationed able-bodied men at strategic points along the market routes particularly on the market days. Another factor that aided the expansion of the central markets in the 19th century was the existence of several village markets that constantly fed the central markets in terms of commodities and market participants. The central markets stocked essential and diverse products like crafts, smiting and agricultural products.

Each market had a Market Council whose primary objective was the maintenance of law and order. This policy ensured peaceful buying and selling and above all guaranteed the safety of traders in the markets and trade routes. For the central markets, counselors were drawn from the various villages that own the market. In pre colonial period, the Eze muo or Eze ala, the dominant authority holder in the village appointed members of the Market Council. Membership of the Council was not hereditary, but rotated among members of the sub-lineages that make up the village or village group. The Council decided cases relating to fighting, killing, assault and so on. Cases were brought to the Council by litigants. Punishment for offenders ranged from confiscation of goods and fines, while the winner was repaid litigation fee. Stealing was regarded as a very serious offense and thieves were publicly disgraced. They were stripped naked, and paraded round the market with clapping, jeering, booing and ridicule by all. Fighting and stealing were the most serious offenses that led to closure of market and sharp decline in the number of visiting traders.

Ngwa markets were held periodically. There were four-day and eight day markets namely, Orie, Afor, Nkwo and Eke. The market calendar operated on village group level and it ensured that no two neighbouring markets were held on the same day and at the same time. It is really difficult to say with precision the number of markets that existed in Ngwa land by the 19th century. This is because statistical data were not easily available. Nevertheless, it would be safe to say that local markets existed in sizes and quantities that satisfied the exchange needs of the Ngwa communities.

Trade Items of Ngwa People

Trade items in Ngwa land included slaves, palm oil, yam, cassava, iron implements and textiles. This article limit discussion on the following: slaves, palm oil, yam and iron implements.

Slaves

During the Transatlantic Slave trade, the Ngwa exported slaves and after the abolition, they became major producers and merchants of palm oil and kernels. Although the transatlantic slave trade had been abolished by the 19th century, the internal slave trade still existed and even boosted the legitimate trade in palm oil of which its production needed intensive labour that the slaves supplied. Oriji (1983) recorded that wealthy members of the community

purchased slaves from leading members of Okonko secret society who themselves obtained the slaves from the Aro slave merchants.

Palm Oil and Kernel

Palm produce within this period even as it remained in the decades after independence was profuse within the Ngwa-Igbo as the tree grew abundantly within the rainforest zone, the home of the Ngwa. The crop is also found most predominantly in Akwa Ibom, Ebonyi, Imo, Anambra, Enugu, Edo, Delta and some savannah belt states of Ekiti, Ondo, Ogun, Osun, and Oyo. Every part of the tree was beneficial – from the fronds to the stem. From the fruits were produced the oil and kernels which were used, in addition to preparing meals, were also used for making soaps and pomade. This was the part the Europeans found most relevant in their economic exploitation of Nigeria. The oil from the palm tree was used by the British industries during the colonial period to lubricate the engines as well as to produce products such as soaps, candles, creams etc. The kernel shell served as fuel for fire in cooking and for iron smelters. When tapped, the trunk yielded palm wine, a popular traditional drink. The palm wine could be fermented and used to produce hot spirituous drinks like *kai kai* or *ogogoro*. The dead trunk produces highly proteinous maggots and mushrooms. From the fronds, brooms and ropes for making baskets were produced as well as canopies for social gatherings, farm houses and fences. In fact, every part of the palm tree is useful. The palm kernel oil is used for the manufacture of margarine and cooking oil. The residue obtained after the extraction of oil is called kernel cake and it is used in livestock feed production. The sludge from palm oil processing is used as fertilizer. The empty bunch and fibre that remain after oil extraction can be used for making soap, mulching, as manure and source of fuel. After the processing of the palm oil, the women carried them in containers mostly calabashes to the beaches. According to Oriji (1983), the leading market centre for palm oil trade among the Ngwa at that time was at Obegu, a town near Akwette. Other palm oil centres were at Abaala, Azumini and Ohambebe. It was from here that the oil merchants from the Eastern Delta came to buy the oil for onward sale to the European merchants at the coast.

Yam

Another trade item produced and exchanged among the Ngwa was yam which was regarded as the king of crops. The excess harvest over the seedlings for next planting season and for consumption, were therefore traded in the daily and weekly markets. It was not a trade item for long distance trade or the coastal trade of the colonial period. The particular reason Ngwa yams were not exchanged in long distance markets was basically its specie which could not compete aesthetically with those from other part of Igbo land or elsewhere. The specie of yam indigenous to Ngwa land were *nadirim*, *ji oko*, *ji abala* etc to mention these few. They are usually big, especially the *nadirim* specie; *ji oko* is yellowish in colour and were usually strong when it is done, and so were not preferred. These yam species have gone almost extinct as the Ngwa now plant the white yam introduced from other part of Nigeria. Apart from being a trade item, yam in Ngwa land was a mark of social status.

Iron Implements

Iron implement that aided agricultural activities formed a significant trade item of the people of Ngwa within this period. Produced at the Abaala Autonomous Community, farm implements such as hoe and machete were produced. Also spears and arrows and weapons were also produced and exchanged not only with their neighbours but far and near, particularly among belligerent communities.

Colonialism and Local Trade in Ngwa land

With the advent of the Europeans and their attempt to penetrate the hinterland, local trade middlemen suffered loss of their veritable means of income including the Ngwa. The Kalabari lost their middlemen position because they followed the Europeans into the hinterland as interpreters and local purchasing and loading agents in the depots that have been established along the inland rivers. These depots were located along the Imo river, Otamiri river, and other rivers. In Ngwa land and beyond, Aro and Nkwere lost their roles as middlemen and were employed as local purchasing and loading agents in certain strategic beaches located in many parts of Ngwa land. Many Nkwere who were not satisfied with this new role went back to their full blacksmithing profession while the Aro began to migrate to the developing urban centers where they took up jobs or became self employed. Many of the European trading depots or collecting centers were the nucleus of the present urban centers. The construction of railways and roads for easy evacuation of palm produce and other raw materials needed by the Europeans in the early decade of the 20th century sealed the last hopes of the Aro, Nkwere, Kalabari and Ngwa middlemen. Both the Ngwa and the immigrant traders became petty traders subject to the dictates of the colonial masters who exploited them as and when necessary. By the second decade of the 20th century, the last local resistance to colonial control of the economy and sovereignty was over.

After independence and with the establishment of big commercial centres one at Aba and another at Ariaria, one would have thought that the importance of the traditional markets would have diminished. On the contrary, these markets seemed to have risen in importance. The reason for their sustained and increased importance despite the big markets was their complimentary role to the big modern markets and as sources of agricultural products peculiar to them. For instance, Afo Ogwe was known for abundance of plantain; Ekeakpara at Osisioma Ngwa sells palm oil. This does not mean that the one particular product is what was sold or bought in such markets, rather such products were sold in large quantities there and those who dealt on such products found them in commercial wholesale quantities. Besides, villagers around the big markets eagerly waited for the markets as they supplied them what the big modern markets offered.

Capital Formation in Ngwa land (Isusu, oha, Utu, or Ogbo)

In this section, the means through which the aforementioned trades or other developmental efforts were financed in Ngwa land are discussed. Nwabughogu (1984) attributed the origin of capital formation in Ngwa land to the Nkwere, and Opobo traders who settled in Ngwa land, and who were famous for money lending business. They settled in Aba, Owerinta, Omoba and Nbawsi. The Nkwere money lenders would borrow money from the Opobo traders at an interest rate of 50 per cent. They would thereafter encourage the Ngwa man to

join economic club variously called: *isusu, oha, utu, ogbo*. The economic benefits of the club is to get a loan to finance a major project such trade capital, and others like it. The loan given to the member of the club attracts a 100% interest rate. In addition to this exorbitant interest rate, the Ngwa man would be charged a bottle of gin, three jars of palm wine and twenty shillings for the heads of the club. Furthermore, members who had defaulted in the monthly repayment of their loans were charged additional manilas, about six manilas for each week of default. Also, members had to pay some charges before they could receive their own loans. Besides, because of their attachment to the Warrant chiefs, judgment involving cases of *isusu* were usually decided in the favour of the Nkwerre club heads. This was because the warrant chiefs had interest in the clubs and some were handsomely rewarded by the club heads. Despite this exploitation, people still patronized them as there was no other means of obtaining ready money for their major socio-economic needs; hence, the Nkwerre *isusu* club remained the main means through which the average Ngwa man could marry, begin trading, join the respected societies and meet other expenses requiring a large financing.

The importance of *isusu* in Ngwa land, as a means of financial empowerment, was revealed in the fact that the Ngwa man never wished its abolition despite the level of exploitation it emitted on its members; the Ngwa man valued the services of *isusu* over its excesses and even in the 21st century, *isusu*, renamed *akawo, oha, utu or ogbo* remained a source of financial empowerment for the average Ngwa man.

The question remains why, in the presence of multiplicity of modern sources of financial capitalization, such as banks and microfinance outfits, within and around Ngwa, the average Ngwa man and woman prefers to raise capital for business investment and capital projects from *isusu*. It has been noted that the average Ngwa man depended on his farm and palm produce from his land and had to wait till the harvest time before he could have any lump sum of money. Yet he lived in a society which expected him to meet social obligations some of which arose suddenly and most of which involved what were to him, huge sum of money. For instance, he was expected to marry early in life, and to join the respectable societies of Okonko or Diji. If either of his parents died, he was expected to provide a decent burial which involved the slaughter of cows, goat and fowls, and the hiring of traditional musicians, and he was expected to pay any outstanding debts incurred by the deceased. To these were added the pressures brought by colonial rule and its influences such as payment of school fees of children, purchase of prestigious goods like sewing machines, and bicycles. The sum of money involved in the satisfaction of these needs were such that could not be raised from the sale of farm produce, or if he was a civil servant or a clerk in a mercantile establishment, from his monthly salary. If the demand occurred suddenly, as it often did, he did not have any substantial savings to meet the challenge. The *isusu* provided the only source of such relatively huge sums and easily too. Thus, the *isusu* saved the Ngwa man from embarrassment which the inability to fulfill his social obligations would entail and enabled him to retain his prestige within the community.

IMPACT OF LOCAL TRADE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF NGWALAND

As we have mentioned earlier, one of the impact of local trade on the development of Ngwa was:

- capital accumulation
- improved intergroup relationship with her trade partners
- women empowerment

Each is discussed in turn.

Capital Accumulation

From the proceeds of the local trade, there arose a class of wealthy merchants in Ngwa land. In the palm oil trade, palm oil dealers bought from the producers from the various Ngwa communities and from their beaches, the coastal middlemen bought in large quantities. Heads of clans who derived much income from the palm produce trade accumulated much wealth from legitimate trade. A typical example was Chief Ananaba of Obegu who dominated palm produce trade in that town. He established special relations with Akwette traders, who, in turn, were the major trading partners of Bonny middlemen in the Igbo hinterland. According to Oriji (1983), Ananaba supplied over one quarter of the palm produce which was shipped to Akwette and because of his towering influence in his community and neighbouring settlements, the British recognized him as the “King of Ngwa land” in 1895.

Apart from individuals, the Okonko leaders also got enriched from the local trade transactions as they served as guards of the trade routes. The Okonko club houses were located at the fringes of the trade routes, from where they collected tolls from traders who traversed the footpaths to the palm oil centres. Those who refused to pay the tolls were harassed and their goods seized. Consequently, they became rich and popular due to the tolls they collected from palm oil traders.

The *isusu* club heads equally amassed great wealth as financiers of the local trades. Nwabughuogu (1984) recorded Enwereji Nwanunu as one of the Ngwa men who grew wealthy through the local trade financing. Financing of local trade through the *isusu* produced a class of capitalist in Ngwa land who dominated the social, political and economic life in Ngwa land. Even in the 21st century, despite the proliferation of banks and modern financial institutions, *isusu* club heads remained a wealthy class in Ngwa land as they financed not only trade, but other economic, social and political needs of the Ngwa man.

During the pre colonial, colonial and the post colonial period, proceeds from trade in palm oil conferred on Ngwa man socio-economic benefits such as membership of respected titled societies. Such titled societies required huge sums of money as initiation fees and sundry payments. For most villages in Ngwa land to have members of Okonko, Ezeji etc confirms that the proceeds from economic activities of Ngwa land supported such activities. Not only titles did trade proceeds assist the Ngwa man to acquire, proceeds from trade enabled the Ngwa man to acquire properties, lease lands and marry. Achievement of these things are evidence of wealth in Ngwa land.

Women Empowerment

One trade in which the women were intrinsically involved in was the production and sale of palm oil. The profit they made from the sale of oil and kernels improved their financial standing in the society. Njoku (2014) recorded that trade was a part of Ngwa people especially women. The local markets were populated by women traders and their marriageable daughters.

Suitors who looked for women to marry preferred the daughters of big women traders. This is because they believed that the daughters of big women traders would too become great traders like their mothers.

Oriji (1998) noted that the women who dominated the palm produce trade were said to be so influential that, when the British penetrated Ngwa land in the latter part of the 19th century, they thought of appointing them as warrant chiefs. He further recorded that many influential women were invited to important meetings of the communities. In Aba, “but for men's opposition, women would have been made warrant chiefs”. (Oriji, 1983, p.327). Even after they had conceded to the wishes of the men, the British had invited some of these wealthy women to the Native Courts when important marital matters were to be discussed for their advice. Some of the names of such influential women include Nwanyo Egbelu, Olujie Egbulefu, and Nwangelasi Oguike who was their leader. (Oriji, 1983, p.328).

Community Development

The importance of local trade to the development of Ngwa communities cannot be overemphasized. The proceeds from these trading activities were used for community development. They used the proceeds to build and maintain the markets. They also used it to build community halls and also engaged in other self-help projects among the members of the various communities. During the colonial, and post colonial period, the Ngwa resisted government intervention in these markets. Mrs. Silver Nwachukwu narrated how the indigenes of Umuikaa resisted the law enforcement agents from Isiala Ngwa South Local Government who had wanted to take over the Nkwo Okpu market by force having failed to achieve that by appeals. As an eye witness, she narrated how the indigenes of Umuikaa rose up in arms with their machetes and clubs as early as 6.00 a.m. on that fateful day against any government official that would refuse them entry into the market. Eventually, they succeeded in warding off the local government authority and retained the ownership of the market to date. The story is the same in all the local markets in Ngwa land, the communities retain the control of the local markets and collect the tolls for community development. Even in the markets that are in the urban centres like the Eke oha market at Aba, Cemetery and Ariaria markets, that government succeeded in penetrating, yet the indigenes still retain control of certain sections of those markets called free zones. In those free zones, the indigenes of the community where the market is located still collect tolls from traders. The tolls are used for the development of the communities.

Source of Livelihood

Apart from farmers and traders, another set of people that benefitted from the local trade were the transporters – bicycle, motorcycle and bus transporters. Within the period covered by our study, transporters visited the homes of traders to convey them and their goods to the

markets. They waited for them at the close of the market to carry their goods back home. Commuters on other routes not leading to the markets usually found it difficult to get means of transportation to their destination because all the transporters had gone to the market routes. The situation has not changed remarkably in the recent time.

Market cleaners and watchmen earned their means of livelihood from the services they rendered to the traders. The market cleaners cleaned the market the day before the market and they get paid by the market administrators from the tolls they collected. Also, traders from far distances who arrived the market venues a day before the market day relied on the market security for the safety of their goods.

Improved Intergroup Relationship

Cookey (1974) observed the expanded intergroup relationship between the Eastern Delta State of Opobo with the Igbo communities. Not only did Opobo relate with the Ngwa people before this period, the Annang of Ibibio also related with the Ngwa in the palm oil trade as they established collection centres in Ngwa communities among the Onicha Ngwa from where they carried palm produce for onward delivery to the delta middlemen. From the trade relationship, intertribal marriages between the Annang and the Ngwa developed. Thus, among the Ngwa and Ibibio communities, are mixed tribe population, speaking Ngwa and Ibibio languages as a result of marital relationships that developed during this era. It is important to note here that this intermarriage relationship curbed to a great extent the annual inter communal conflicts that usually arose between the Ngwa community of Onicha Ngwa and those of their Ibibio neighbours every farming season. Uchacha, an indigene of Onicha Ngwa, testifies of such marriages and the impact it has had on both communities.

Apart from Ngwa/Ibibio, Ngwa/delta relationships, there also developed intertribal relationships between the Ngwa and the Aro as well as Ngwa and Nkwerre. In many Ngwa communities today are various Aro settlements, that bear appendage of Ngwa names. Such Aro settlements bear AroNgwa, Aro Unuekwe, Aro Umunka etc The Aro and Nkwerre were known to be industrious as well as exploitative. They were also shrewd in business and this impacted on the communities they settled. Besides, they were employed by the Ngwa people for farming works. As testified by Pastor Daniel Michael, some of them occupied positions as village heads and during their tenure, they engaged on tangible community development projects such as building of a primary schools. One unimpressive attitude of the Aro which the Ngwa people detested was their greed in acquiring more lands than their hosts had generously given to them. On the other hand, the Aro used their tenancy in Ngwa land to attain their political ambitions. The most glaring was during the 2015 gubernatorial elections in Abia State when Dr. Alex Oti, an Aro settler descendant claimed he was an Ngwa man because the governorship position of the State was zoned to the Ngwa land. Even before 2015, almost all the Local Government Areas of Ngwa land were chaired by non-Ngwa indigenes because they live in Ngwa land.

Conclusion

From pre colonial times, Ngwa land has possessed market and exchange principles of forces of demand and supply. This article has, therefore, debunked the Eurocentric position that market principles were absent in pre-colonial Ngwa land. After tracing the existence of

markets and their principles, it is noted how the interplay of the market forces supported an efficient trade and exchange system in Ngwa land that impacted positively for the economic and social development of Ngwa land.

The impact of local trade in Ngwa land included wealth creation. Proceeds of local trade created a class of capitalists who dominated the social, economic and political affair of the land. It provided a source of livelihood. Local trade fostered good intergroup relationship between the Ngwa and her Niger Delta, Ibibio, Aro and Nkwere neighbours and settlers.

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Oral Interviews

Mrs. Silver Nwachukwu. Aged 69, at Obehie, Ukwa west LGA, on April 14, 2019

Pastor Daniel Michael, Aged 41, at Aro Ngwa Central, Osisioma Local Government Area of Abia state, April 23, 2019.

Digital Technology for Professional Development of College-level Technology Teachers on Instructional Delivery Skills in South-Eastern Nigeria.

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Abstract

The imperatives of the prevalent COVID-19 pandemic necessitates exploring various methods of implementing continuing professional development of technology teachers. This study determined how a cloud-based portal as a digital technology can be utilized to support technology teachers' professional development and their use of digital technology for instructional skills delivery. Specifically, the study examined ways in which a cloud-based portal can be utilized to enhance the instructional skills of the practicing technology teachers in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria. The study was carried out in two stages: a preliminary survey was conducted to determine the skills needs of the teachers in the use of technology for instruction. The second stage involved training the teachers on the use of the cloud-based portal, ttcloudportal, which was developed based on the result of the preliminary study. A validated questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was administered to the teachers after the two weeks of utilizing the portal. The findings revealed that using the portal ttcloudportal, teachers' could enhance their skills in e-forum features manipulation, students' assessment using digital technique, implementation of different digital learning platforms as well as circuit designing and analysis for electronic teachers. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that cloud-based portal ttcloudportal should be made known to technology teachers in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria to foster their skills in instruction delivery.

Keywords: Cloud technology; cloud-based portal; instructional skills; technology teachers; professional development (PD).

Introduction

Today, digital technologies have been successfully adopted in a variety of ways of teaching and learning. The integration of digital technology into instruction has been the contemporary focus of educational reform (Shameem, 2020; Riley, 2017; Hidden curriculum, 2014). Cloud technology is a type of digital technology that involves working and storing data as well as sharing resources, software, infrastructure, services and information via some applications in a central place, (Encalada, & Sequera, 2019; Griffith, Walker, Spies, Ainscough & Griffith, 2015). The information stored in the cloud can be accessed and edited from anywhere and at any time as long as the location has internet network. In cloud technology, data and software packages are stored in servers rather than on personal computers. This type of system allows people to work remotely and it is a contemporary technology that is referred to as using the internet as a service.

The goal of cloud technology is to allow users to take maximal benefits from all the services without the need for deep knowledge about or expertise on each one of the services (Encalada, & Sequera, 2019; Rouse, 2015). Applications that are developed to use cloud technology services can be called cloud-based applications. On the other hand, any portal which leverages cloud technology and utilizes the different services it provides is therefore referred to as a cloud-based portal (Mell, Peter, & Timothy, 2011). The cloud-based portal can contain arrays of cloud-based applications.

Silky, Sawtantar, and Amit, (2013) noted that cloud technology can be implemented in solving educational problems. Teachers are expected to adopt this technology advancement for continuing professional development and instruction. Technology teachers refer to professionals trained to facilitate learning in various aspects of technical occupations. These technical occupations include those in agriculture, engineering, manufacturing, business, etc. Technology education relates to programs designed to teach students on the processes (Karehka, 2014), skills, concepts entailed in the design, use, and maintenance of technology. Technology teachers, therefore, are professionals who handle the type of education mapped out for the acquisition of technological skills, knowledge, and competencies (Okorie, 2001). These teachers use various forms of technology for instructional delivery.

However, the level of digital technology integration into instruction by technology teachers in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria is still in its minimal level (Obakhume, 2016). In order to meet up with the expectations in the reforms, there is a need to enhance the teachers' competence in this regard. While targeting the enhancement of teachers' quality, professional development (PD) of the teachers should enable them to improve their instructional delivery skills. PD provided for technology teachers in South-Eastern Nigeria has some shortcomings which inhibit its ability to provide the teachers with certain skills. Just like other areas of education, the PD for technology teachers has been limited to the face-to-face seminars, conferences, and workshops which has been hampered by the prevalent COVID-19 pandemic. For the technology teachers to improve the instructional delivery skills necessary for the implementation of digital technology; they

need individual usage level digital technology-based professional development (IULDTBPD). The cloud-based portal which is accessible using mobile communication technologies can be developed and be implemented to provide the teachers with technology-based professional development (TBPD) which is needed by the teachers to master the needed skills for digital technology integration into technology education instruction. This is such that teachers can utilize the portal at the individual level, anywhere, and at any time for the instructional purpose.

Individual Usage Level Digital Technology Based Professional Development (IULDTBPD).

Cloud technology can be leveraged to develop a cloud-based portal. The cloud-based portal which is stuffed with PD supportive services and also accessible through mobile technology communication devices (MTC) that can be implemented to facilitate the identified instructional skills of technology teachers. This will be such that the teachers can use the PD services at their convenient time, place, and pace to acquire the experience and skills needed for integration of digital technology into instruction. Such professional development should be able to engage the teachers in constant practice at the individual level since this is needed for teachers to be able to master the required skills.

Design and Development of the Technology Teachers' Cloud-based Portal (ttcloudportal)

The “ttcloudportal” was developed using the server-client system. The server-client system enables an application to be hosted in a cloud-based server as well as offers an environment that will enable the client to connect and access the application from anywhere and anytime. Employed in the development of this application include server coverage PHP, HTML, Javascript, and CSS. In the case of the database, MySQL was used. For the addition of interactivity to the system, PHP which is Personal Homepage Hypertext pre-processor is used because of its ability to perform server-side processes as well as handle the logical part of the system. PHP stands between the user interface and the database. HTML, Javascript, and CSS were used for the user interface which enables proper system UI (user interface) by the browser.

MySQL on the other hand is a DBMS (Database Management System). This was employed in the management of the database used in the system. SQL scripting language was employed to manage the database via PHP and the DB server. Tools used for the development of the application include Dreamweaver, Apache, web server, MySQL, DB server, and web browser. The application was finally hosted in a XAMPP localhost which was installed for the respective respondents to enable local access.

Cloud-based Portal and Instructional Delivery Skills



Fig. 1. The cloud-based portal login page

Instructional delivery skills simply refer to the ability or expertise used by the teachers as their method of teaching (Jeschke, Kuhn, Lindmeier, Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia, Saas, & Heinze, 2019; Watkins & Mortimer, 1999). Many higher education institutions are discovering that new models of instructional skills are required to meet the needs of the present generation of learners seek greater autonomy and connectivity as well as opportunities for socio-experiential learning. These new instructional skills are more pertinent especially in this era while digital literacy is imperative for any meaningful instructional delivery. Therefore, technology teachers have more dare professional need for these instructional delivery skills.

In this regard, the preliminary findings of this study (stage one) show that the instructional needs of technology teachers include: teaching resources, taking the related assessment, monitoring the students, preparing lessons, collaborative tutoring, and teaching method. The tcloudportal was developed using the baseline data derived from the preliminary study that identified these instructional skills needs. Among others, the cloud-based portal provided links to some e-teaching resource, downloadable customized template for easy computation of students' scores, platform for different teaching methods as well as captured the professional profile of technology teachers in different colleges of education.

Consistent usage of the features of the cloud-based portal is expected to offer technology teachers the opportunity to use new model skills to meet up with the above-identified instructional needs as well as enhance their proficiency in digital skill integration into technology education.

According to Watkins and Mortimer (1999) areas of Instructional skills needs of technology teachers include: Teaching Resources, Taking Related Assessment, Monitoring Students, and Teaching Methods.

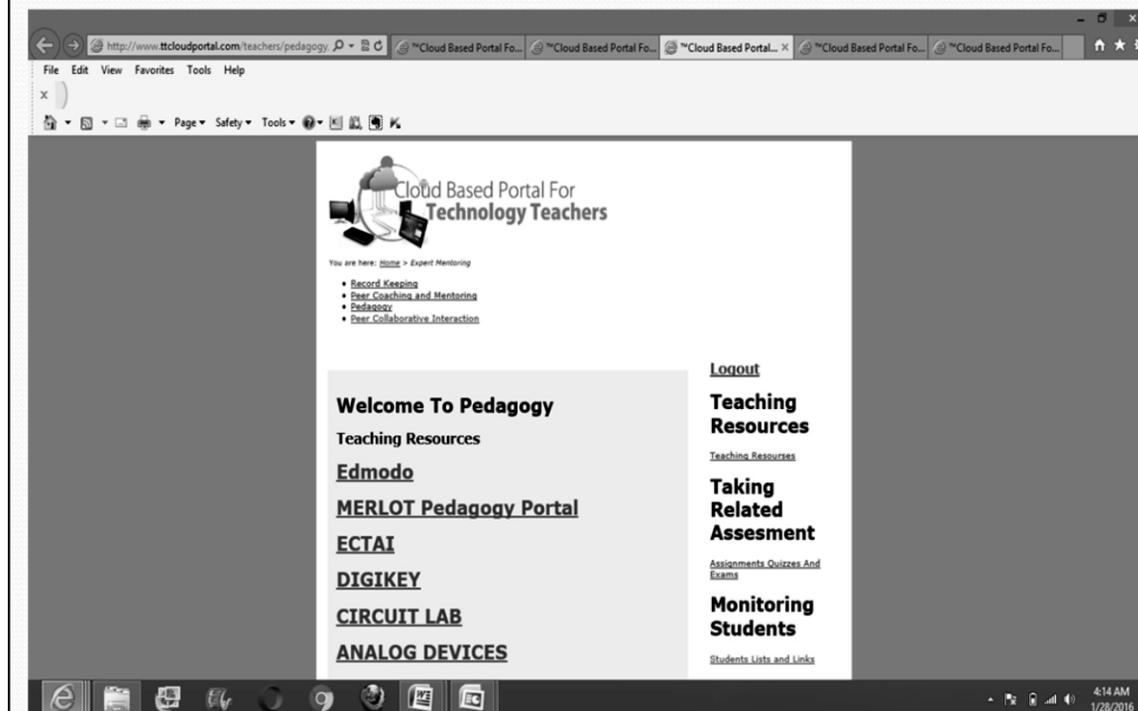


Fig. 2. Cloud-Based Portal Instructional Skills Page

Statement of the Problem

Digital technology and digital literacy are now more imperative for career and academic success than ever before. Every technical occupation requires significant digital literacy and skills for advancement. Every job seeker is expected to possess some levels of digital skills to secure and retain employment. Graduates who are potential job seekers are expected to possess some digital skills upon graduation and this is hardly plausible if the teacher who teach these students do not possess the needful digital skills to impart to the students. A preliminary findings of this study show that the majority of the technology teachers in colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria hardly possess the needful digital skills required to educate the students to meet the needs of today's workforce. This was evidenced

by their inability to implement digital technology in different instructional areas.

Consequently, the inadequate proficiency of the technology teachers to teach the students on how to manipulate digital technologies for educational purposes has led to students' poor acquisition of digital skills required to meet the needs of the present-day workforce. To overcome these challenges and institute the needed professional development reforms, technology teachers need to be provided with individual-level usage of digital technology-based PD (IULDTBPD). This would engage the teachers in regular practice. To achieve this, teachers are encouraged to engage consistently with the digital technology platforms for improving their instructional skills.

However, most of these PD platforms developed and hosted in the cloud are accessible from anywhere were designed to serve the needs of teachers from the host countries and do not meet the needs of Nigeria technology teachers. As such, these platforms do not offer the teachers the best PD opportunities; networking with their colleagues in other local institutions, relevant course content and course materials as prescribed by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). There is the need for a cloud-based portal that would offer a common pedagogical platform for Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria with potentials for networking with other colleagues as well as course materials. The platform will enable the teachers to network with their colleagues for inter-institutional instructional collaboration. The pivotal research question is how can ttcloudportal be utilized to fill the PD instructional delivery needs of technology teacher in which the existing foreign cloud-based platforms are unable to fulfil?

Theoretical Framework

Social Constructivism theory, developed by Lev Vygotsky (Nada (2015)), formed the theoretical framework for deploying the intervening role of ttcloudportal in creating the knowledge and skill update for technology teachers. The theory contends that human learning as well as development is socially situated and knowledge is constructed through interaction with others. The PD of technology teachers on instructional delivery provided in ttcloudportal enables social networking among the peer teachers and social constructivism utilizes social networking/technologies to link technology teachers in different Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria within a socio-technical community for knowledge construction. In this process, social constructivism theory postulates that individuals construct knowledge through the process of social negotiation and evaluation of the viability of individual understanding of available technical concepts. Educators have to update their knowledge and skills for them to remain professionally relevant in the ever changing technology occupations. This makes them simultaneously scholars and learners in their discipline. As learners, the social constructivism theory states that learners learn effectively in a social setting, adding that they construct their meaning from social communities within their perspective. ttcloudportal provides opportunities for educators to link to edcative sights where they can access articles, tutorials, design resources, and a wealth of other helpful resources that could enhance their PD. In this regard, the educators utilize the resources,

analyze, internalize and construct their knowledge which could be shared within the portal. The organic interaction among the educators within the portal provides the socio-technical environment for the teachers to construct their own knowledge against the background of collegial professional context.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to determine ways in which a cloud-based portal (ttcloudportal) can be utilized to enhance the use of digital technology for instructional delivery upskilling needs of technology teachers in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria.

Research Question

In which ways can cloud-based portal (ttcloudportal) be utilized to enhance the use of digital technology for instructional upskilling needs of technology teachers in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria?

Research hypothesis

H₀₁. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers on how cloud-based portal (ttcloudportal) can be used to enhance the use of digital technology for instructional upskilling needs of technology teachers in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria.

Methodology

Research Design

The study used the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study is 81 technology teachers. This comprised all the technology teachers in the Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze, Enugu State College of Education (Technical), Enugu, and Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba. According to the departmental nominal roll provided by the Deans of each of the three institutions on 17th, 16th, and 15th of June 2014 respectively, there are 28 technology teachers in FCE (T) Umunze, 13 in ESCE (T) Enugu and 40 in FCE (T) Asaba. The cloud-based portal that leveraged on cloud technology and questionnaire were developed by the researchers for the data collection.

To enable access to the portal, the localhost of the portal was provided in the respondents' respective computers. The questionnaire was made of two sections; sections A and B. Section A consisted of items on the background information of the respondents. Section B was made of items eliciting information on how cloud-based portal can be implemented to enhance the use of digital technology for instructional upskilling purpose by technology teachers in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria.

The questionnaire was validated by three experts from Industrial Technical Departments, University of Nigeria Nsukka, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, and Federal

College of Education (Technical) Umunze respectively. A 5-point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) was used with values of 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. The Mean as well as the standard deviation were used to answer the research question. In analyzing the hypotheses, t-test was used. In the data collection, the respondents were allowed to use the portal for two weeks after which they were asked to respond to the questionnaire based on their interactions with the industry-based experts and amongst themselves on the ttcloudportal.

Results

Research Question

In which ways can cloud-based portal (ttcloudportal) be utilized to enhance the use of digital technology for instructional delivery upskilling needs of technology teachers in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria?

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the utilization of Cloud-based portal (ttcloudportal) for enhancement of the use of Digital for Instructional Skills Needs of Technology Teachers.

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Item Statement</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>Decision</i>
1	Interacting with the students via the portal would up skill the teacher with e-forum features manipulative skills which could be used for digital learning.	4.38	0.81	Agree
2	Setting questions for students to respond via the portal would enhance teachers' development of skills for students' assessment using digital technique.	4.20	0.60	Agree
3	Recording live lectures and uploading it in the portal for the students to download and watch would up skill the teachers in implementation of different digital learning platform.	4.21	0.59	Agree
4	Uploading and accessing instructional materials through the portal enhances teachers' skills on material development through digital process.	4.42	0.67	Agree
5	Accessing different applications linked to the portal would expose teachers to different applications which can be integrated into instruction.	4.30	0.56	Agree
6	Teachers' instructional experience can be broadened through accessing different educational recourses in the portal.	4.40	0.58	Agree
7	Teachers can enhance their skills for monitoring the students through digital system by accessing some students monitoring features provided in the portal.	4.26	0.98	Agree
8	Teachers in electronics can access and utilize some circuit designing tools linked to the portal and this would up skill them in circuit designing and analysis.	4.34	0.58	Agree

The data presented in table 1 above showed that all the items had their mean ranged from 4.20 to 4.42. This implies that all the respondents agreed that all the items are ways in which a cloud-based portal can be utilized to enhance the use of digital technology for instructional delivery upskilling needs of technology teachers in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigerian.

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers on how a cloud-based portal (ttcloudportal) can be used to enhance the use of digital technology for instructional delivery upskilling needs of technology teachers in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria.

Table 2: t-test Analysis of Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Male and Female Teachers

S/N	ITEMS	Degree/equivalent		Masters/equivalent qualification		t-cal	Sig (2-tailed)
		\bar{X}_1	S.D ₁	\bar{X}_2	S.D ₂		
1.	Interacting with the students via the portal would up skill the teacher with e-forum features manipulative skills which could be used for digital learning.	4.39	0.70	4.44	0.75	-0.32	0.73
2.	Setting questions for students to respond via the portal would enhance teachers' development of skills for students' assessment using digital technique.	4.41	0.60	4.43	0.51	-0.43	0.67
3.	Recording live lectures and uploading it in the portal for the students to download and watch would up skill the teachers in implementation of different digital learning platform.	4.36	0.49	4.24	0.60	1.09	0.30
4.	Uploading and accessing e-instructional materials through the portal enhances teachers' skills on material development through digital process.	4.51	0.48	4.39	0.66	0.83	0.39
5.	Accessing different applications linked to the portal would expose teachers to different applications which can be integrated into instruction.	4.35	0.57	4.37	0.56	-0.16	0.91
6.	Teachers' instructional experience can be broadened through accessing different educational recourses in the portal.	4.42	0.51	4.30	0.46	1.12	0.64
7.	Teachers can enhance their skills for monitoring the students through digital system by accessing some students monitoring features provided in the portal.	4.33	0.67	4.29	0.79	-0.25	0.02*
8.	Teachers in electronics can access and utilize some current circuit designing tools linked to the portal and this would up skill them in circuit designing and analysis.	4.30	0.64	4.43	0.51	-0.94	0.35

From the t-test analysis in Table 2, it can be seen that the probability level gotten after computer-based analysis for each of the items tends to be greater than the stated 0.05 level of significance except for item 7. The null hypothesis for each of the items was therefore accepted except item 7.

Summary of the Findings

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the following are the study's findings. The cloud-based portal can be utilized to enhance the use of digital technology for instructional delivery upskilling needs of technology teachers in South-Eastern Nigeria in certain ways:

- Interacting with the students via the portal would up skill the teacher with e-forum features manipulative skills which could be used for digital learning.
- Setting questions for students to respond via the portal would enhance teachers' development of skills for students' assessment using digital technique.
- Recording live lectures and uploading it in the portal for the students to download and watch would up skill the teachers in implementation of different digital learning platform.
- Teachers in electronics can access and utilize some current circuit designing tools linked to the portal and this would up skill them in circuit designing and analysis.

Discussion

The cloud-based portal is a portal that leverages cloud technology. Cloud technology, on the other hand, is a type of digital technology that offers different services such as sharing and storage of information which can be accessed and edited from any place and at any time as long as there is access to internet. Developed countries have continues to explore the potentials of cloud-based technology for academic purposes. Conversely, the practice of using cloud-based technologies for academics purposes is hardly found in colleges of education in Nigeria. The findings of this study revealed how cloud technology can be leveraged on to provide a cloud-based portal which can be utilized for PD in Nigeria, especially to support teachers' professional development and provide IULDTB PD for instructional upskilling need of technology teachers in colleges of education in South-Eastern Nigerian.

From the findings; interacting with the students via the portal would up skill the teacher with e-forum features manipulative skills which could be used for digital learning; setting questions for students to respond via the portal would enhance teachers' development of skills for students' assessment using digital technique; recording live lectures and uploading it in the portal for the students to download and watch would up skill the teachers in implementation of different digital learning platforms; teachers in electronics can access and utilize some current circuit designing tools linked to the portal and this would up skill them in circuit designing and analysis. These findings corroborate the views of Amhag, Hellström, & Stigmar, (2019) that described the quality of peer-to-peer as well as students-teacher interaction as an important factor in digital technology instructional skills.

The cloud-based portal provides many opportunities to foster an interactive classroom, including two of the most commonly used instructional techniques to promote interactivity that include online discussion forums and student collaboration on assignments. Muilenburg and Berge (2014), on the other hand, concurred to this finding when they pointed out that online discussion forums are one of the best ways to facilitate interaction and learning in the online classroom, in part due to their ability to promote constructivist thinking (in which knowledge is constructed from personal experience), critical thinking, and higher-order thinking (thinking creatively and critically in decision-making or problem-solving manner), all while distributing knowledge among all the students in the class.

Hughes, Costley, & Lange, (2019) collaborated the study finding that recording live lectures and uploading it in the portal for the students to download and watch would up skill the teachers in implementation of different digital learning platform. They pointed out that using multimedia as a supplementary lesson is a great way to engage students in learning and noted that recorded videos make for an incredible teaching tool. On the finding teachers in electronics can access and utilize some current circuit designing tools linked to the portal and this would up skill them in circuit designing and analysis., Kurzweil (2015) confirmed this by stating that many students are more stimulated to learning when they interact with hands-on learning tools. The cloud-based portal provides electronic learning tools that can be used by technology teachers to engage the students in hands-on learning.

Conclusion

There is a need for technology teachers to acquire the necessary skills, competences, and experiences needed for the integration of digital technology into instruction. Some professional development strategies provided to enable the teachers to acquire these competences have not been effective due to some challenges. These challenges include high cost of the programmes, poor information accessibility, locations of the venues of the programmes, short time training sessions as well as overburdened teacher workload. Other challenges are insufficient support for PD from administrative leadership, difficulty in finding adequate time in the school day for teachers to participate in PD. These challenges might have accounted for the ineffectiveness of these programmes in improving the teachers' competence in the integration of digital technology into instruction. To overcome the challenges, teachers need individual-level usage of digital technology-based professional development platform such as ttcoludportal. The cloud-based portal (ttcoludportal) which can be accessed via personal computers and mobile phones commonly owned by the teachers can be implemented to provide the teachers with the needed upskilling in instructional delivery. This can be realized by utilizing a cloud-based portal to enhance the existing professional development resources of technology teachers such as instructional skills, peer coaching and mentoring, peer collaborative, and record keeping.

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