

Podcast And Senior Secondary School Students' Academic Performance in Oral English in Oyigbo LGA of Rivers State

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Abstract

The study investigated Podcast and its effect on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Oral English in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers. Quasi- experimental design was adopted for the study because it dealt with human beings whose internal and external influences may not be under the control of the researcher and besides, subjects were assigned to groups based on non-random criteria. The population of the study was 688 senior secondary two students enrolled in 2015/2016 academic section. Sample size was 150 SS2 students selected through purposive sampling technique from two public schools in Oyigbo. A researcher Made Achievement Test titled 'Oral English Achievement Test (OEAT)' that contained thirty (30) multiple choice questions was validated with reliability index of 0.77 using test-retest method. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the research question while two-way Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The study established Podcast as a digital instructional material that aroused and sustained interest of the students which brought about improvement in their performance in Oral English. It was recommended among others that our government should build digitally equipped laboratories in our secondary schools where the students will be taught Oral English using those tools to enable them learn effectively.

Introduction

Lack of adequate use of instructional materials, obsolete and traditional method used in teaching Oral English have contributed immensely to the students' poor performance in Oral English. The researcher is so much concerned about what could be done for the students' performance in Oral English to be what it should be and not what it ought to be. The researcher observed when the researcher visited some schools in Rivers State that traditional methods and teaching with obsolete teaching materials have in a great measure contributed to this problem of poor performance. Information and Communication Technology tools as digital instructional materials have great positive effect in the teaching and learning in this 21st century, therefore extending the use to Oral English classroom in our secondary schools will improve the students' performance in English Language.

Information and Communication Technology tools are highly needed in Oral English classroom in order to come closer to what the native speakers convey. To affect change in Oral English teaching and learning in our public schools, Information and Communication Technology tools should equally be used. Nowadays, educational systems are under pressure to use Information and Communication Technology tools to impart knowledge the students need in the 21st century (UNESCO, 2002). The power of new Information and Communication Technology tools should be harnessed effectively in Oral English teaching and learning to aid proficiency in English Language. To make students to be literate life-long learners and global citizens of 21st century, Information and Communication Technology should be integrated in our today's learning especially in English language curriculum and English teaching method hence Information and Communication Technology tools are valuable tools to improve quality teaching and learning.

Moreover, if it is possible for all the students to develop Information and Communication Technology skills and gain English syllabus outcomes, issues of fairness and good access to technological tools will be tackled. Information and Communication Technology integration in teaching of Oral English helps the students to acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding in the course especially as it regards to production. Teachers of Oral English can hold in a very high esteem the importance of Information and Communication Technologies in their classrooms by making sure that their students use Information and Communication Technology as an entire part of the lessons, introduce ideas and use different class of ways (Becta, 2006). The most current material of teaching Oral English that is developing is Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). In other words, the use of Information and Communication Technology tools in the field of language learning is unavoidable knowing that Information and Communication Technology and language are always in each other's company (Hartoyo, 2010). This research work adopted the use of **Podcast** in teaching of Oral English as one of the Information and Communication Technology tools in the field of language learning.

Podcast is an invaluable tool to develop oral skills. Podcast is also known as Vlog, Vod cast, or Pod chips if they use video. It is called audio blogs if they use only audio means for audio recordings on any topic. This can be downloaded to the computer or any portable listening device

such as MP3 player, listen to or watch them whenever you want to. Learners can be directed to produce their own podcasts using different platforms. It all depends on what you want to teach like listening Podcast, English as a Second Language (ESL) Podcast etc. ESL

Podcast is created to serve different purposes like- teaching of vocabulary and grammar topics, idioms, world news etc. It is especially useful for practicing pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation and accuracy which are the basic things in Oral English; but also to study verbs, past forms, models, listening comprehension quizzes, and more (Peterson, 2010). Blogs, (2010) supports him by saying that the students can listen to them as many times as possible in order to internalise the content hence practice make perfect. Podcast is a digital audio file that can be downloaded to a personal to listen to at one's convenient time. It can also be a video content that is related to a particular content. Podcast is just like TV show. It is pre-recording audio/video contents that can be edited and distributed via internet platform.

According to Laurie (2006), podcasting is the transmission of multimedia files over the Internet. Rather than being received and opened with different plug-ins, podcast files are ready for viewing on either a PC or other devices, such as an iPod. On the PC, users can treat podcast files like any other computer files, viewing them immediately or saving them for viewing at a later date. Second, in addition to the delivery of files, podcast also refers to their content. Frequently, podcasts are files that are sent at regular intervals. For example, many of the morning news programs are available as podcasts on a daily basis to download for listening or viewing at an individual's convenience. Once viewers determine which podcasts they want, they sign up for them and have them delivered automatically whenever their receiving device is connected to the Internet.

As with many forms of broadcasting, the development of podcasting has introduced a new vocabulary. Generally, the main aim of Podcast is to disseminate information via internet. It allows the listeners/viewers to listen and view contents, to learn more about a particular topic like Oral English. Ultimately, a podcast is a flexible way to share content. While some enjoy reading articles, others prefer something they can listen to. A podcast has the potential to inform, inspire, or engage its audience especially the language learners for a better academic performance especially in Oral English.

Oral English known as Test of Oral is the process of verbally transmitting information and ideas from one individual or group to another. Kemboja, Almagul and Rosniah (2018) see Oral English as a process where participants interact with one another for the purpose of creating and exchanging meaning. Knowing a language includes knowing the sounds of that language. Everyone who knows a language knows how to segment sentences into words and words into sounds. In lieu of this, Adams (2021) defines Oral English as the study of the speech sound of English language.

Oral English constitutes part of the Core English paper, and was introduced with the hope that it would go a long way to helping improve upon the overall performance of students. The paper had hitherto been an optional subject and did not count towards the final grades of Ordinary Level candidates at the General Certificate of Education Examination (GCE). The compulsion of the subject for all registered candidates sitting the Senior Secondary School/West Africa Senior High

School Certificate Examinations (SSSCE/WASSCE) came into force in November, 1999, (Kemboja, Almagul & Rosniah, 2020).

In teaching and learning, the teachers judge their achievement on a particular task by the progress report of the learners at the end of that task. When a task is completed, the learners are tested or evaluated to ascertain the strength and weaknesses of the task being taught. It is only through the performance of the learners that the teacher can draw her final judgement about what has been taught. Performance is the result obtained over a given period of time. It is defined as a way of ascertaining how well a set activity is (Upadhaya, Munir & Blount 2014). When a task is given, that task is looked forward to be completed with a maximum degree of excellent. Merriam Webster's New World College Dictionary (2014), defined performance as the ability to execute an action efficiently.

Performance is also seen as an exercise that a person or group does which requires what is reviewed at the end of the activity to find the success or the failure. Bossaert and Prensky (2011) defined students' performance as the outcome or the extent to which students have attained their educational goals. Bossaert and Prensky further stated that it can be measured by examinations or continuous assessment. According to Boris (2013), it is the process by which information concerning performance of an individual, group, organisation, system or component is collected, analysed and reported. It can comprise processes and strategies studied within a phenomenon to see if the output is within the intended goal or not.

Neely, Adams and Kennerley (2002) described performance as the means of quantifying how efficient and effective past actions are. Moullin, (2007) viewed it as the method of evaluating how well organisations are handled and the value they deliver. Good performance is the bases whereby an organisation decides its efficiency to prevail. Performance is measured to determine results and this done in diverse ways based on the task given. But no matter the task given, performance is directed towards determining a result. Madden, (2014) ascertained that performance is an activity that ensures that goals are constantly being met in an adequate and effectual way. It can generally be seen as the activities or task of an organisation or investment over a period of time.

Statement of the problem

Oral English is studied in Nigeria where the teachers are also second language learners. It is not an understatement for one to say that the teachers are not and will not be as perfect as the native speakers. But with the aid of Information and Communication Technology tools, teaching and learning of Oral English will be made easy. Again, when the students are not well taught, it leads to loss of interest and as such failure thereby giving them the room of saying that Oral English is one of the most difficult parts of English language.

With the use of Information and Communication Technologies, motivation is increased, interest is sustained, teaching is also made easy, the students are exposed to wider source of information and above all the students' performance are improved. Therefore, the problem of the study is

“Does Podcast affect senior secondary school students’ academic performance in Oral English in Oyigbo LGA of Rivers State?”

Aim and Objective of the Study

The main aim of the study is to examine Podcast and its effect on senior secondary school students’ academic performance in Oral English in Oyigbo LGA of Rivers State.

The specific objective sought to:

- i. differentiate the extent to which the academic performance of male and female students taught Oral English with Podcast differ from those taught without Podcast.

Research question

- i. To what extent does performance of male and female students taught Oral English with Podcast differ from those taught without ICT Podcast?

Hypothesis

- i. There is no significant difference between the performance of male and female students taught Oral English with Podcast and those taught without Podcast.

Methodology The design of the study was Quasi-experimental design. The population of the study was 688 senior secondary two students. Sample size was 150 SS2 students (74 males and 76 females) selected through purposive sampling technique from two public schools in Oyigbo. A researcher Made Achievement Test titled Oral English Achievement Test (OEAT) that contained thirty (30) multiple choice questions was validated with reliability index of 0.77 obtained for the study using Kuder-Richardson Formula 21 (K-R21). Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research question, while the null hypothesis was tested with ANCOVA at 0.05 levels of significance.

Results and analysis

Research Question 1: To what extent does performance of male and female students taught Oral English with Podcast differ from those taught without ICT Podcast?

To answer this research question, the post-test and pre-test mean scores of the students were compared based on their groups (experimental and control groups) to obtain the mean gain for each group based on their gender. Later, only the post-test mean scores for each of the groups based on their gender were also considered to obtain their mean difference between the two groups

of the students and that of male and female students across the groups. The results got are as presented in table 1.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of male and female students taught Oral English with Podcast and those taught without Podcast.

Group	N	Gender	Post test		Pre test		Mean Gained
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Exptal	41	Male	101.27	18.16	78.49	15.65	22.78
	38	Female	96.21	17.57	76.63	22.32	19.58
	79	Total	98.84	17.95	77.59	19.05	21.25
Control	33	Male	79.52	15.03	72.30	13.92	6.93
	38	Female	77.84	13.86	70.11	12.94	7.73
	71	Total	78.62	14.33	71.13	13.36	7.49
Total	74	Male	91.57	19.96	75.73	15.13	15.84
	76	Female	87.03	18.24	73.37	18.42	13.66
	150	Total	89.27	19.18	74.53	16.86	14.74

In table 1, it is shown that the male students in experimental group (taught with ICT tools) had the mean scores of 101.27 and 78.49 respectively for post and pre-test scores hence they gain a mean of 22.78 from their pre-test to post-test scores. The females in that group had the mean scores of 96.21 and 76.63 respectively for the post and pre-test scores hence they had a mean gain of 19.56. Based on the mean gain by male and female students, it is deduced that the male students gained higher than the female by the difference of 3.20.

Consequently, when the post-test scores were considered, the male and female students had the mean difference of 5.06. Considering the group taught Oral English without ICT tools, the male students had the mean scores of 79.52 and 72.30 respectively for post and pre-test scores hence they had a mean gain of 6.93. The females in this group had the mean scores of 77.84 and 70.11 respectively for post and pre-test scores. This gave rise to a mean gain of 7.49. When the post-test scores of the male and female students were considered, it was seen that the males had the mean score of 79.52 while the females had 77.84. This gave rise to the mean difference of 1.68.

Furthermore, when the scores of the students were considered based on their group, those taught Oral English with Information and Communication Technology tools and those taught Oral

English without Information and Communication Technology tools, it was discovered that those taught Oral English with Information and Communication Technology tools had the mean scores of 78.84 and 77.59 respectively for their post and pre-test hence they had a mean gain of 21.25. Then, the group taught Oral English without Information and Communication Technology tools had the mean scores of 78.62 and 71.13 respectively. It could be deduced that the group taught Oral English with Information and Communication Technology tools gained higher than their counterpart taught Oral English without Information and Communication Technology tools by a difference of 13.76.

In another dimension, when the scores of male and female students were considered irrespective of their groups, it was discovered that male students had the mean scores of 91.57 and 75.73 respectively for post and pre-test. This gave rise to a mean gain of 15.84. The female students had the mean scores of 87.03 and 73.37 respectively for post and pre-test scores hence a mean score gain of 13.66 was achieved. Based on their mean gain, it is deduced that male students gained higher than the females by a difference of 2.18.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the performance of the males and female students taught Oral English with Podcast and those taught without Podcast. This null hypothesis was tested using two-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). This was because ANCOVA dealt with the ability of influence and compared the students at the same level. The results got are as presented in table 2.

Table 2: Summary of ANCOVA on the performance of male and female students taught Oral English with ICT tools and those taught without ICT tools

Source of variation	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	p-value
Pre-test	4180.96	1	4180.96		
Group	11672.96	1	11672.96	17.44	0.000
Gender	273.75	1	273.75	48.68	0.000
Group x gender	113.76	1	113.76	1.14	0.287
Error	34770.70	145	239.80	0.474	0.492
Total	54787.33	149			

Table 2 shows that the f-ratio obtained for group 48.68 at df of 1 and 145 at 0.0005 ($R < 0.05$) hence the null hypothesis is rejected indicating that a significant mean difference existed between the performance of students taught with ICT tools and those taught without ICT tools. It is also shown in table 4.8 that the f-ratio obtained for gender was 1.14 at df of 1 and 145 at 0.287 level of significant ($p > 0.05$). Thus, gender does not significantly affect the performance of students in Oral English.

Discussion of findings

The results obtained were presented in table 2 deduced that those taught Oral English with Podcast gained higher than their counterparts taught Oral English without Podcast. It was indicated that there is significant difference between the performance of students taught Oral English with Podcast and those taught Oral English without Podcast. In line with this finding, African Virtual University (2012) noted that ICT tool is one of the fundamental building blocks of modern society. The result as presented in table 2 about the performance of those taught with ICT tool (Podcast) as against those taught without

Podcast when ICT tools (Podcast) are being used in the class. Their interests are also sustained when they are taught with it according to the study carried out by Maharana (2009) on effect of ICT tools in 21st century teaching on Malaysian students. Furthermore, he stated that ICT tools have effect on what to learn and how it is learnt just as in the case presented in table 2. Based on gender (male and female) The result got as presented in the same table 2 revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female performance taught Oral English with ICT tools. This finding corroborates with Solomon, (1997) who observed that whether you are a male or a female, all you need is to be competent in both verbal and written aspect of English language. Both male and female students have improvement in performance once exposed or taught with digital teaching materials.

Conclusion

The study has concluded that Information and Communication Technology tools are digital teaching materials. The students in public secondary schools who had already concluded in their mind that Oral English was a very difficult subject were aroused to learn when Information and Communication Technology tool (**podcast**) was used. This was because Information and Communication Technology tools have a special way of arousing and sustaining interest. This study showed that the students who were taught with Podcast had a better result than those taught without Podcast (only a lesson note which is a traditional method). The study established that Information and Communication Technology tools (Podcast) can improve performance if we integrate the usage in our today's teaching and learning especially in Oral English classroom.

Recommendations

From the findings, some recommendations were made:

1. Government should build Information and Communication Technology equipped laboratories in the schools where the learners can be taught using those tools.
2. Training should be organised for the teachers once in a while to help them teach with those tools effectively.
3. There is supposed to be an awareness programme once in a while to educate the community, learners and teachers on the benefits of Information and Communication Technology to man.
4. Services of trained personnel should be engaged for maintenance of the equipment.
5. Where these ICT tools are provided, they should not be for fancy but for the teachers' students' use as often as they are required.

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