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CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND KORO ASHE PLOSIVES IMPLICATION FOR ESL LEARNING

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Abstract

The study examines the Contrastive Analysis of English and Koro Ashe plosives; Implication for ESL Learning. The paper aimed at contrasting the English and Koro Ashe plosives in order to asserting the areas of their divergence and convergence for improved pedagogy. The study was guided by two (2) research objectives and two (2) research questions. The research design employed in carrying out this investigation was descriptive survey. The population of this study consisted of Koro Ashe primary 4 ESL learners in Karu Local Government Areas Nasarawa State. The sampling technique used in the study was multistage random sampling in which 20 Koro Ashe primary 4 ESL learners were randomly selected for the study. The researcher used Test of phonology production (TPP) as an instrument to carry out this investigation. Contrastive Analysis (CA) theory was used to conduct the study. Simple frequency count and percentage were the methods employed to analyse the data for this research. The findings of the study showed that, the dental consonant sounds /θ/ & /ð/, posed pronunciation difficulty to most Koro Ashe ESL learners due to the absence of the sounds in the phonemic inventory of Koro Ashe. The dental fricatives /θ/ was substitute for /t/ in the word 'through' /θru:/ to pronounce as /tru:/, while the consonant /ð/ in the word 'then' /ðen/ was pronounced [den]. The errors made by the subjects were stemmed from L1 interference to L2, the complex nature of English language spelling system and developmental errors arose from incomplete learning. It was recommended that oral aspect of this spoken English should be taught earlier to our children in nursery and primary schools, to minimize the pronunciation problem that affects the speech of adult L2 speakers of English.

Keywords: *Contrastive Analysis, plosives consonants, English language, Koro Ashe language & ESL Learning.*

Introduction

Language is a main tool for communicating with people around the world. It is an indispensable part of human beings. Every language is unique and needs to be adequately described, documented, and used by its speakers. The communicative role of language all over the world is achieved through the use of sounds often referred to as phonemes (Ashesla & Dada, 2021). Koro Ashe is one of Nigeria's middle belt languages of the Benue - Congo sub linguistic group, whose origin is traced to the then great defunct Kwararafa Kingdom. Due to chieftaincy dispute between 'Koro' and his brother 'Jukun', the Koro people migrated across the River Benue to settle in states such as Nasarawa, Kaduna, Niger, Kogi, Kano and Federal Capital Territory (Abuja). It is worth mentioning that some Koro that migrated to the core north have virtually lost their identities, having



adopted Hausa as their language and Islam as their religion. To put it simply, the Koro people are conspicuously located in the North central parts of Nigeria (Jatau, 2026).

English language has its affiliation to the West Germanic branch of the Indo European family and is regarded as lingua franca i.e., a language which is spoken in many places of the world. In Nigeria, English is spoken as a second language and the official language used in government, media, business, law, education and so on. Resultantly, English language is a compulsory subject, studied as a second language and used as the medium of instruction and communication in all educational institutions in Nigeria (Opeyemi, (2021).

Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) is a linguistic theory and methodology used to compare and contrast two or more languages in order to identify similarities and differences between them. The main goal of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis is to predict potential difficulties that learners of a foreign or second language may encounter based on the differences between their native language and the target language. Hamzeh and Chen, (2018) note that Contrastive Analysis (CA) has been extensively used in linguistics and language. In particular, it is applied in the comparative synchronic investigation of two or more languages or language varieties. Though the primary focus of CA is on differences, it usually concerns both differences and similarities of the languages under consideration. The focus on differences is characteristic for the study of linguistic interference that is the impact of one language on another. As Khalifa (2018) notes, such impact can be positive or negative; in the latter case, it is called negative transfer, which is defined as bringing a wrong linguistic feature from the mother tongue to the second, or target, language.

Pronunciation is a vital aspect of language learning, however, poor pronunciation distorts communication process and intelligibility of what it is being communicated (Opeyemi, 2021). There are certain English language consonants that pose pronunciation challenges to Koro Ashe learners of English. Among them, we have the dental fricative /θ/ in ‘think’ /θɪŋk/ which is realized as /tɪŋk/, while the dental stop /ð/ in ‘then’ is often realized /den/. This sometimes renders their pronunciations unintelligible. It is in consonance with these challenges, that the researchers adopt the Contrastive Analysis approach to the study of English and Koro Ashe and plosives in order to identify the pronunciation difficulties of L₂ speakers of the English language in sound articulation, distinguishing between phonemes and allophones of the mother tongue and the target language (L₂) for improved pedagogy (Niazi, Farhat & Ghula, 2023). It is based on this premise that the researcher undertakes a contrastive analysis of English and Koro Ashe plosives in order to identify the areas of their differences and similarities for improved teaching and learning.

Research Objectives

The following are some the objectives that guided the study:

1. To examine the distributions of plosive consonant sounds in English and Koro Ashe languages
2. To identify the pronunciation constraints Koro Ashe ESL learners have with regard to the production of English plosive consonant sounds.

Research Questions

The following are some the research questions that guided the study:

1. To what extent do the distributions of plosive consonant sounds in English and Koro Ashe languages differ or similar?
2. What are the pronunciation constraints Koro Ashe ESL learners have with regard to the production of English plosive consonant sounds?

Consonant Sounds

Consonants are sounds that are produced by an obstruction of an air-stream either in the pharynx or in the vocal tract; these sounds involving closure of vocal tract partially or completely. Whereas, vowel sounds are entirely divergent from consonants because vowels do not involve



closure of vocal tract. Plosive consonant (/p, b, t, d, k, g/) are speech sound produced by fully destructing airflow from the vocal tract, building pressure, and releasing it suddenly, creating a small ‘explosion’ or ‘burst’. They occur in voiced and voiceless pairs based on tongue/lip placement (Niazi, Farhat & Ghula, 2023). Risky (2021) states that consonants are produced by the air flow through the vocal tract and disrupt them by particular place of articulation. According to him, English consonant sounds consist of 24 number of phonemes. We can identify and classify them in three ways: according to (1) their places of articulation, (2) their manner of articulation, (3) the state of the voice. Below is a chart showing the description of consonant sounds according to the state of the voice. Firdayanti (2017) sees consonant as a unit of speech sound which differs from a vowel in that there is some obstruction of the breath in its production.

Plosive Consonant Sounds

Plosive consonant sounds are sounds produced with a complete closure in the vocal tract, the air pressure builds up and can be released explosively (Firdayanti, 2017). He maintains that, there are six (6) plosive consonants sounds in English, they are: [b, p, d, t, g, k].

(Firdayanti, (2017) describes the following characteristics of articulation plosive consonant to include:

1. One articulator is moved against another, or two articulators are moved against each other, so as to form a stricture that allows no air to escape from the vocal tract. The stricture is, then, total.
2. After this stricture has been formed and air has been compressed behind it, it is released; that is, air is allowed to escape.
3. If the air behind the stricture is still under pressure when the plosive is released, it is probable that the escape of air will produce noise loud enough to be heard. This noise is called ‘plosion’.
4. There may be voicing during part or all of the plosive articulation.

Firdayanti, (2017) asserts that the production of a plosive is completed in three stages:

1. The closing stage, during which the articulatory organs come together and make a firm contact with each other.
2. The hold or compression stage, during which as a result of lung action, the air behind the closure is compressed.
3. The release or explosive stage, during which the articulatory organs part rapidly, resulting in the escape of the compressed air with explosion.
4. The English Plosive Consonants has six plosive consonants. They are: - Bilabial [b, p] - Alveolar [d, t] and Velar [g, k]. The [p, t, k] are voiceless, and [b, d, g] are voiced.

Table 1: English Consonant Chart Showing the Place and Manner of Articulation of plosives

	Bilabial	Labio Dentals	Dental	Alveolar	Post Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosives	p	b		t	d		k	g

Source: Jatau (2026)



Table 2: Koro Ashe Consonant Chart Showing the Place and Manner of Articulation plosives

	Bilabia l	Labio denta l	Alveola r	Palato Alveola r	Palata l	Vela r	Labi o velar	Glotta l
Plosive	p b		t d			k g	kp gb kw gw	

Source: Jatau (2026)

Table 3: Distribution of English plosive Consonant Sounds (R.P)

English plosives		Place/manner of Articulation	Plosives at the initial position	Plosives at the medial position	Plosives at the final position
/p/	voiceless	bilabial plosive	pot /pɒt/,	sport /spɔ:t/	pip /pip/
/b/	voiced	bilabial plosive	boy /bɔi/,	symbol /simbəl/	barb /ba:b/
/t/	voiceless	alveolar plosive	took /tuk/	tortoise /tɔtəs/	pot /pot/
/d/	voiced	alveolar plosive	dig /dig/	kindom /kiŋdəm/	pad /pæd/
/k/	voiceless	velar plosive	kind /kain/	kicking	/kikiŋ/
/g/	voice	velar plosive	game /geim/	giggle /gigl/	gig /gig/

Table 4: Distribution of Koro Ashe plosive Consonant Sounds

English plosives		Place/manner of Articulation	Plosives at the initial position	Plosives at the medial position	Plosives at the final position
/p/	voiceless	bilabial plosive	[pam] 'hold'	[pupa] 'remove'	-
/b/	Voiced	bilabial plosive	[ba] 'come'	[iban] 'enjoyment'	-
/t/	voiceless	alveolar plosive	[tā] 'eat'	[ata:r] 'three'	-
/d/	Voiced	alveolar plosive	[dē:] 'stand'	[idā:] 'tomorrow'	-
/k/	voiceless	velar plosive	[kau] 'farm'	[ekon] 'knife'	[itān] 'spider'
/g/	Voice	velar plosive	[gokpo] 'shift'	[ugam] 'sugar cane'	[ko gig] 'tight'



/kp/	voiceless	labio	velar	[kpam]	[ekpea]	[kpakpa]	
				'hold'	'do'	'catch'	
/kw/	voiceless	labio	velar	[kwer]	[ukwakwa]	[ankwai]	
				'slap'	'cocoanut'	agui] 'fresh corn'	
/gb/	Voice	labio	velar	[gber]	'cut'	[agbetenji]	-
						'lie'	
/gw/	Voice	labio	velar	[gwe]	a]	[igwer]	-
				'tight'		'lizard]	

The English and Koro Ashe Plosive Consonant Sounds Compared

Plosive consonant (/p, b, t, d, k, g,/) are speech sound produced by fully destructing airflow from the vocal tract, building pressure, and releasing it suddenly, creating a small 'explosion' or 'burst'. They occur in voiced and voiceless pairs based on tongue/lip placement. From the table above, English has six stops or the plosives while Koro Ashe has ten stops or plosives. Both English and Koro Ashe languages have the plosives /b/, /p/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, in their phonemic inventories (Jatau, 2026).

The English and Koro Ashe Plosive Consonant Sounds Contrasted

English plosive consonants consist of six characters such as: /b, p, d, t, g, and k/; while Koro Ashe plosive consonants consist of ten characters such as /b/, /p/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /kp/, /gb/, /kw/, and /gw/.

All of English plosive consonant sounds can be found in the final position; while some of Koro Ashe plosive consonant sounds cannot be found in the final position.

English /p/, /t/, and /k/phonemes have two realisations (allophones) [p^h]. [t^h] and [k^h] while the Koro Ashe has one allophone [p], [t], and [k]. thus, there is aspiration in the realization of English plosive consonant sounds [p^h]. [t^h] and [k^h], while Koro Ashe, there is no aspiration.

The English language /p,t,k/ in final position is constantly pronounced, while in Koro Ashe, only the [k] is pronounced in the final position (Jatau, 2026).

Previous Studies

Tungkup, Ambarita, Purba and Sitanggang (2023) made contrastive analysis of the consonant sounds of the English language and an anti-heroic song in Indonesian language. The researchers took fifteen consonants of the English language and fifteen from Indonesian consonants selected from a heroic lyric song and made a comparison of these sounds by using contrastive analysis approach. The findings of the research revealed that there are various similarities in the consonant sounds of both languages. The findings showed that consonants /s/ and /r/ are used in initial, while consonant /t/ is used in the middle and final positions in the English language. Moreover, /h/w/r/l/ sounds did not appear in the middle position and sounds of /b/d/f/g/k/r/t/v/w/ did not appear in the final position. Research findings revealed that in Indonesian language /b/ and /k/ are found in the initial /r/ in the middle and /m/ in the final position.

Simbolon, Hutahaeon and Sitanggang (2022) in his research study compared the consonants between English and Batak Toba languages; he made comparison of the consonants of these two languages in educational setting. Findings of the research suggested that there is smaller number of consonants in the English language as compared to the Batak language. Findings of the research suggested that there is smaller number of consonants in the English language as compared to the Batak language.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) by Fries while Lado (1957) devised the theoretical foundations for contrastive analysis hypothesis claiming that when a



learner learns a new language, the similar notion of the target language with native one, would be easy to capture for the learner while dissimilar concepts of target language would become complicated due to non-availability of the same elements in mother tongue. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) is a linguistic theory and methodology used to compare and contrast two or more languages in order to identify similarities and differences between them. The main goal of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis is to predict potential difficulties that learners of a foreign or second language may encounter based on the differences between their native language and the target language. Hamzeh and Chen, (2018) note that the primary focus of CA is on differences, it usually concerns both differences and similarities of the languages under consideration. The focus on differences is characteristic for the study of linguistic interference that is the impact of one language on another.

Considering the topic of this paper; “Contrastive Analysis (CA) of the Koro Ashe and English languages back vowels...” CA is the suitable theoretical framework for this study, because it involves comparing the phonological features of Koro Ashe and English which have practical objectives of showing the convergence and the divergence for improved pedagogy.

Methodology

The study examines the Contrastive Analysis of English and Koro Ashe Plosive consonant sounds; Implication for ESL Learning. The aim is to find differences and similarities between the two languages to improved pedagogy. The study was guided by two (2) research objectives and two (2) research Questions. The research design employed in carrying out this investigation was descriptive survey. The population of this study consists of primary 4 Koro Ashe ESL learners in Karu Local Government Areas, Nasarawa State who are native speakers of Koro Ashe. The sampling technique used in the study was multistage random sampling in which 20 Koro ESL students were randomly selected for the study. The researcher used Test of phonology production (TPP) as an instrument to carry out this investigation. Cronbach coefficient alpha method of estimating reliability was employed and reliability index was 0.8, which shows that the instrument was highly reliable. Contrastive analysis approach and Simple frequency count and percentage were the methods employed to analyse the data for this research. The formula adopted for the Simple frequency count and percentage was as follow:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{F \times 100}{N}$$

Where: F = Total of the Responses.

Data Analysis

Research Question 1: Distributions of Consonant Sounds of English and Koro Ashe Languages

Table 5: Distribution of plosive consonant sounds /p/ and /b/ in Koro Ashe and English Languages

English Language		Koro Ashe				
Consonant Sounds	Initial	Medial	Final	Initial	Medial	Final
/p/	/pæt/ ‘pat’	/pɜ:pə/ ‘paper’	/pip/ ‘pip’	/per/ ‘beat’	/ipā:mā/ ‘pipe’	[pop] ‘come suddenly’
/b/	/bin/ ‘bin’	/ba:bə/ ‘barber’	/tæb/ ‘tab’	/ber/ ‘fetch’	/eber/ ‘grass’	-



/t/	/tin/ 'tin'	/sist ə 'sister'	/ /	/pɒt/ 'pot'	/tɛtɛ/ 'elder'	/utɛtɛ/ 'try'	-
/d/	/dɔg/ 'dog'	/digiŋ/ 'digging'		/did/ 'did'	/dē/ (stay)	/uda/ 'cutlass'	-
/k/	/kain/ 'kind'	/kikiŋ/ 'kicking'		/kik/ 'kick'	/ka:/ 'stir'	/kaka/ 'cover'	/okak/ 'roof'
/g/	/gud/ ;good'	/gugəl/ 'goggle'		/gig/ 'gig'	/golo/ 'roll'	/ugou/ 'medicine'	[kigbag] 'far'

The distribution of the consonant sounds /p/ and /b/ in the table above indicates that, the sound /p/ and /b/ occurred in all positions in the English language, however, the /p/ occurred in all positions in Koro Ashe while the /b/ only occurred at the initial and medial positions in Koro Ashe. The implication of this is that, there is the tendency for Koro Ashe ESL learners to have difficulty in realising the /b/ in the final position in the English words /tæb/. There is a possibility of the ESL Koro Ashe learners to silent the final /b/ in 'tab' /tæb/ to be rendered as /tæ/ which might affect the intelligibility of what it is communicated.

The distribution of the consonant sounds in the table above shows that, the two sounds /t/ and /d/ are present in English and Koro Ashe languages. The /t/ and /d/ consonants occurred in all positions in the English language. However, the /t/ in the Koro Ashe language is found only at the initial and final positions and /d/ occurred only at the medial position. The implication of this is that, there is the possibility of Koro Ashe ESL to have difficulty in realising English words that have the sound /t/ at the final position in word like /pit/ 'pit'.

The distribution of the consonant sound /k/ in the words initial, medial and final positions in English and Koro Ashe languages revealed that, the consonant sounds /k/ occurred in all positions in the English language and so also in the Koro Ashe language, There is the possibility of Koro Ashe ESL not to have difficulty in realising /k/ in all positions of words in English. The distribution of the consonant sound /g/ in the words initial, medial and final positions in English and Koro Ashe languages revealed that, the consonant sound /g/ is present in English and Koro Ashe languages and it occurs in all positions. The implication of the presence of the consonant /g/ in Koro Ashe is that, ESL learners might not have difficulty in realising the English words that have the /g/ sound in words like 'dig' /dig/ and /gig/ 'gig'.

Research Question 2: What are the constraints Koro Ashe ESL learners have with regard to production of English plosives?

Table 6: Showing the Realization of Plosive Consonants /p/, /b/, /k/ & /g/ by Koro Ashe ESL Learners

S/N	Plosive Consonants	Words	IPA	Participants' Deviations	Sound substituted	Pass (%)	Fail (%)
21	/p/	pack	/pæk/	[pæk]	-	20(100%)	0 (0%)
		purpose	/pɜ:pəs/	[pɔpos]	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
		cup	/kʌp/	[kop]	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
22	/b/	bin	/bin/	[bin]	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
		barber	/ba:bə/	[ba:bæ]	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)



		tab	/tæb/	[tap]	/b/ for /p/	5 (5%)	95 (5%)
23	/k/	king	/kiŋ/	-	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
		account	/əkaunt/	-	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
		sick	/sik/	[sik]	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
24	/g/	good	/gud/	[gud]	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
		bigger	/bigə/	-	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
		big	/big/	[big]	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
	/t/	tin	/tin/	[tin]	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
		potter	/pɒtə/	[pɒtæ]	-	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
		cat	/kæt/	/kæ/	/t/ is silent	6 (30%)	14 (70%)
	/d/	dog	/dɒg/	[dɒg]	-	100 (100%)	0 (0%)
		daddy	/dædi/	-	-	100 (100%)	0 (0%)
		dad	/dæd	/dæ/	/d/ is silent	8 (40%)	12 (60%)

Analysis on table above indicates that, 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the consonant /p/ at the initial position in word ‘pack’/pæk/ correctly due to the presence of the consonant /p/ in Koro Ashe. For the production of the consonant /p/ at the medial position in word ‘purpose’ /pɜ:pəs/, 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the /p/ due to its presence in Koro Ashe. For the production of the consonant /p/ at the final position in word ‘cup’ /kʌp/, almost 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the sound /p/ correctly, due to the presence of the consonant /p/ in both languages.

For the pronunciation of the consonant /b/ at the initial position in word ‘bin’/bin/, 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce it correctly due to the presence of the consonant /b/ in Koro Ashe. In realising the consonant /b/ at the medial position in word ‘barber’/ba:bə/, almost 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the /b/ correctly due to its presence in Koro Ashe. For the production of the consonant /b/ at the final position in word ‘tab’ /tæb/, almost 95% of the respondents failed to pronounce the sound /b/ correctly due to the absence of the sounds at the final position in Koro Ashe language.

In pronouncing the consonant /k/ at the initial position in word ‘king’/kiŋ/, almost 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce it correctly. In realising the consonant /k/ at the medial position in word ‘account’ /əkaunt/, almost 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the /k/ correctly. For the production of the consonant /k/ at the final position in word ‘sick’ /sik/, almost 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the consonant /k/ correctly due to its presence in the phonemic inventory of Koro Ashe.

In pronouncing the consonant /g/ at the initial position in word ‘good’/gud/, almost 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce it correctly due to the presence of the sound in Koro Ashe language. In realising the consonant /g/ at the medial position in word ‘bigger’ /bigə/, almost 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the /g/ correctly. For the production of the consonant /g/ at the final position in word ‘big’ /big/, 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the consonant /g/ correctly due to its presence in the sound in the phonemic inventory of Koro Ashe language.

For the production of the consonant /t/ at the initial position in word ‘tin’/tin/ 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the /t/ correctly. For the production of the consonant /t/ at the medial position in word ‘potter’ /pɒtə/, almost 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the



/t/ correctly. For the production of the consonant /t/ at the final position in word ‘cat’ /kæt/, 70% of the respondents failed to pronounce the consonant /t/ correctly due to the absence of the sound /t/ at final position in Koro Ashe. For the pronunciation of the consonant /d/ at the initial position in the word ‘dog’ /dɔg/, almost 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce it correctly due to the presence the sound /d/ in both languages. For the production of the consonant /d/ at the medial position in word ‘daddy’ /dædi/, almost 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the /d/ correctly. For the production of the consonant /d/ at the final position in word ‘dad’ /dæd/, 60% of the respondents failed to pronounce the consonant /d/ correctly due to the absence of the sound /d/ at the final position in Koro Ashe.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings on table above regarding the challenges Koro Ashe ESL learners had with regard to realization English plosives /p/, /b/, /k/ /g/, /t/ & /d/ revealed that, for the production of the consonant /p/ at the initial, medial and final positions in the words ‘pack’ /pæk/, ‘purpose’ /pɜ:pəs/ and ‘cup’ /kʌp/ 100%, 100% and 100%, of the respondents pronounced the consonant /p/ correctly due to the present of the consonant /p/ in Koro Ashe. The findings regarding pronunciation consonant /b/ at the initial and medial positions in word ‘bin’ /bin/, ‘barber’ / bɑ:bə/ showed that, 100% of the respondents were able to pronounce the consonant sound /b/ correctly at the initial and medial positions correctly due to the presence in these in Koro Ashe. For production of /b/ at the final position in the word ‘tab’ /tæb/, 95% of the respondents failed to pronounce correctly due to the absence in the final position in Koro Ashe.

The findings regarding the pronunciation of the plosive /k/ at the initial, medial and final positions in the words ‘king’ /kiŋ/, ‘account’ /əkəunt/ and ‘sick’ /sik/ showed that, all the respondents were able to pronounce the vowel /k/ correctly due to the present of the consonant /k/ in Koro Ashe. Where two languages shared similar sounds, there tend to be positive transfer from L1 to L2. The findings regarding the production of the consonant /g/ at the initial, medial and final positions in the words ‘good’ /gud/, ‘bigger’ /bigə/ and ‘big’ /big/, showed that, almost all the respondents pronounced the consonant /g/ correctly due to its presence at the consonant /g/ in Koro Ashe.

The findings on table above on the difficulty Koro Ashe ESL have with regard to the realization of the English alveolar plosives /t/ and /d/ showed that, for the production of the consonant /t/ at the initial and medial positions in the words ‘tin’ /tin/, ‘potter’ /pɒtə/ showed that, almost all the respondents pronounced the consonant /t/ correctly due to its presence in Koro Ashe. However, in realising /t/ at the final position in word ‘tab’ /tæb/, 70% of the respondents failed to pronounce the sound /t/ correctly due to its absence at the final position in Koro Ashe. For the realisation of the consonant /g/ at the initial, medial and final position in Koro Ashe, almost 100% of the respondents pronounced the word correctly in Koro Ashe. For the production of the plosive /d/ at the initial and medial positions in the words ‘dog’ /dɔg/ and ‘daddy’ /dædi/ almost all the respondents were able to pronounce the /d/ correctly due to its presence of the sound in Koro Ashe. However, in realizing the plosive /d/ at the final position in the word ‘dad’ /dæd/, 60% of the respondents failed to pronounce the sound correctly due to the absence of the plosive /d/ at the final position in Koro Ashe.

Conclusion

The findings on “contrastive analysis of English and Koro Ashe back vowels; Implication for ESL learning” demonstrated that, the distribution of the back vowel s in English and Koro Ashe languages differ significantly. The plosives consonant sounds /b/, /t/ and /d/ do not occur at the final position as it was in the English language. This divergence resulted to the transfer from L1 (Koro Ashe) to L2 (English language). Also, the errors made by the respondents consist of both inter-lingual and intra-lingual due to the L1 interference coupled with the complex nature of English spelling system. The plosives consonant sounds /b/, /t/ and /d/ at the final position posed pronunciation challenge most respondents due to the absence of these plosives at the final position



in Koro Ashe. Some of these errors made by the respondents resulted to confusion, misinterpretations and affected the intelligibility of the message communicated.

Recommendations

1. Teachers teaching English phonology to primary 4 Koro Ashe ESL learners should focus on the pronunciation of words that have the plosive /t/, /b/, and /d/ at the final position in English.
2. Teachers of the English language in primary and nursery schools should introduce the teaching of oral aspect of the English language at the nursery and primary schools so as to enable the pupils to be familiar with the basis of the spoken language.

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**EFFECTS OF SEMANTIC MAPPING INSTRUCTION ON READING COMPREHENSION
OF PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KEFFI LOCAL
GOVERNMENT OF NASARAWA STATE**

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Abstract

Reading comprehension is a vital aspect of the examination conducted by West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) for final year students in secondary schools in Nigeria. Reports from the bodies revealed that many students performed poorly in the aspect of reading comprehension. Reading comprehension contributes to a reader's overall language development because the more an individual reads, the more words they acquire and are able to communicate using most appropriate words. The semantic mapping strategy is a visual learning tool that helps readers organize and connect ideas using maps. The study investigated the effect of semantic mapping strategy on reading comprehension of senior secondary school students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa state, Nigeria. All the senior secondary schools students 2 (SS II) in Keffi Local Government Area made up the population of the study while 100 (one hundred) students, 50 (fifty) each from two schools, out of the seven senior secondary schools in the Local Government Area, made up the sample for the study. The two schools used as sample were randomly selected as the experimental and the control groups. While the experimental group was exposed to the treatment, the control group was treated to an alternative method. The quasi experimental research design was adopted in this study since scheduling and implementation of experimental treatment conditions or randomization and grouping of subjects were not possible. The data for the study were collected using the English Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (ERCAT) which was based on one reading passage. The comprehension passage was adapted from WAEC/SSCE (2023) because it is a standardized examinations. The instrument consisted of three sections which were required to answer the three research questions of the study. The same instrument was used and administered as pre-test and post-test. The achievement test required students to use semantic mapping to answer literal, inferential and critical comprehension questions. The statistical tools used to analyze data included t-test and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). The findings showed better performance of students' achievement in the posttest than that of the pretest. Following the intervention, the Experimental group, which was taught using the Semantic Mapping Strategy, saw its average score move up to 9.94, while the Control group, which continued with conventional methods, experienced only a modest increase to 0.80. It also revealed that the students' performance in reading comprehension after instruction in semantic mapping is improved. Following the findings, these recommendations



among others were made by the researcher: that teachers of English Language should use semantic mapping during reading sessions. The researcher is of the view that a student's success in reading comprehension will adversely bring about success in other subjects thereby causing an all-round academic success. Furthermore, deliberate efforts backed with the necessary action by the government at all levels need to be made to provide teaching and learning materials especially on reading comprehension and strategies to teach it.

Keywords: Effects, Reading Comprehension, Instruction, Semantic Mapping, Strategy

Introduction

The place of English language in global activities cannot be overemphasized. In Nigeria, English is an essential linguistic tool for any pedagogical engagement which are the teaching and learning process. Hence, the National Policy on Education (2014), clearly stipulates that English should be taught as a subject in primary schools while the medium of instruction at this level remains the language of the environment for the first three years. It further avers that from the fourth year, English should predominantly be used as the medium of instruction and the language of immediate environment should be taught as a subject. The importance of English is x-rayed by the requisite credit pass in English for an applicant to secure admission to any tertiary institution in Nigeria. Subsequently, upon entry into any tertiary institution in Nigeria, a course tagged 'Use of English' has to be taken and passed by an undergraduate before graduation. Considering the vital role assumed by English, in Nigerian education, instruction in both productive and receptive language skills (which include the reading skill) must be effective.

Reading is one of the essential skills in learning English language. However, numerous English learners still find it difficult to comprehend texts in English language. Reading contributes to the overall language development because the more an individual reads, the more words he/she acquires and the more he/she is able to communicate using most appropriate words. Reading skill was taught for instructional purpose and learners were only exposed to narrative, expository and descriptive genres. These days however, students are expected to read a variety of texts which differ in content, context and readability thereby making the learners have much more difficulty in reading and comprehending the texts.

Reading is an indispensable language skill for learners especially for the purpose of receiving information. Ofuani and Gbenedio (2016) maintain that reading encompasses the active participation of the reader who makes connections between existing knowledge and the construction of meaning from the texts read. Students' successful understanding of a text will require an awareness of print which can be obtained through multiple channels to facilitate word recognition. Generally, information is received and acted upon when there is understanding - that is comprehension. According to Abeleh, Al-Ghazo and Al-Sobh (2021) and Birsch (2011), reading comprehension is concerned with the capacity of the reader to obtain meaning from what is read and it involves the sub-skills of word recognition, fluency, lexical knowledge as well as pre-existing knowledge which are necessary for the reader to get information from text. Therefore, Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) assert that reading is essential to learning and the ultimate goal of teaching reading is reading comprehension.

From the researcher's personal experience, what constitutes a reading comprehension lesson is where the teachers of English call on students to do a loud or silent reading of a given passage. Then, the teacher reads the passage while students listen. This is mostly done without the teacher giving due attention to difficult concepts in the passage. Comprehension lessons usually consist of students answering teachers' questions and/or writing responses to questions on their own. Reading comprehension constitutes a vital aspect of final examinations such as WAEC (West African Examinations Council) and NECO (National Examinations Council) and WASSCE (West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations) taken by final year students in Nigeria. It is therefore required that students carefully read the comprehension passages and answer the questions that follow. It is expected that students who have been taught English language especially reading which



is one of the four language skills, should be able to answer literal, inferential and critical comprehension questions correctly in both internal and external examinations.

In students' attempting to demystify new words in a passage for the purpose of understanding, they can use semantic mapping strategy to help them decipher the meaning of given word(s). Semantic mapping is a strategy for graphically representing concepts. The strategy portrays the schematic relations that compose a concept which helps students, especially struggling students, to identify, understand and recall the meaning of words they read in the text. It visually displays the meaning-based connections between a word or phrase and a set of related words or concepts (Zorfass, Gray & Powerup WHATWORKS, 2014). Neneng (2015) opines that semantic mapping can be applied by the teacher in the classroom to improve students' reading comprehension.

Statement of the Problem

Reading comprehension constitutes a vital aspect of final examinations taken by final year students such as WAEC (West African Examinations Council) and NECO (National Examinations Council) WASSCE (West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations) in Nigeria. The section on reading comprehension requires students to carefully read comprehension passages and answer questions on them. However, in recent years, the Chief Examiner's Report on the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WAEC) (2023) highlighted candidates' weaknesses in the aspects of comprehension and summary in Paper 2. Failure was partly attributed to candidates' inability to correctly answer comprehension questions in the aspects of vocabulary of replacement, and this according to Okeke (2013) is partly because of the methods and strategies of teaching reading skill which is the core of the school curriculum. Poor pedagogical methods and strategies of teaching reading comprehension have therefore been assumed to be responsible for mass failure in English language in external examinations in Nigeria.

WAEC Chief Examiners' Report specifically stated that students were unable to correctly answer questions at the literal, inferential and critical levels in comprehension passages. Consequently, this research attempted to examine the effectiveness of instruction in semantic mapping to ascertain if it will possibly improve achievement in reading comprehension of senior secondary school students.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to ascertain the effects of semantic mapping strategy on reading comprehension achievement in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Keffi Local Government of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. ascertain the extent to which semantic mapping strategy will enhance senior secondary II (SS 2) students' ability to accurately answer literal comprehension questions in given passages,
2. ascertain how semantic mapping strategy will enhance senior secondary II (SS 2) students' ability to accurately answer inferential comprehension questions in given passages,
3. determine the extent to which semantic mapping strategy will enhance senior secondary II (SS 2) students' ability in answering critical comprehension questions correctly in given passages.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent are SS 2 students who are taught reading comprehension using semantic mapping strategy able to correctly answer literal questions on the given passage?
2. To what extent are SS 2 students taught reading comprehension using semantic mapping strategy able to answer inferential comprehension questions in given passages?



3. What is the extent to which SS 2 students taught reading comprehension using semantic mapping strategy are able to correctly answer critical comprehension questions in given passages?

Literature Review

The Nature of the Reading Process

Reading is the process of understanding the meaning of written symbols, typically letters and words, to extract information or enjoyment from print. It involves recognizing individual letters and words, and then constructing a mental representation of a text's meaning. For educators and researchers, reading is a multifaceted process involving such areas as word recognition, orthography (spelling), alphabeticity, phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. Reading is generally an individual activity done silently, although on occasions, a person reads out loud for other listeners; or reads aloud for one's own use, for better comprehension. According to Surasawadee in Sawitri (2021), reading is a complex process and requires communication between the writer and the reader by interpreting the symbolic characters using various skills in sound, linguistics, and mechanics. The way to solve the problem comes out into an idea based on the reader's original experience to create reading comprehension.

From the researcher's experience, students without the solid foundation of the reading skill struggle with comprehension of texts. Ofuani and Gbenedio (2016) maintain that reading encompasses the active participation of the reader who makes connections between existing knowledge and the construction of meaning from materials read. Luana, Abdul and Nasmilah (2018) note that reading is one of the essential skills in learning a language. Thus, it is inevitable that reading is a complicated activity not only to teach but also to learn. The process of reading can therefore be summarized as a complex interaction between the text and the reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude and the language community.

Types of Reading

There are several types of reading and corresponding types of activities to develop the corresponding reading skills. McDonald (2012) outlines types of reading as skimming, scanning and close reading. These are however not exhaustive. Other reading types include intensive, extensive, critical, literal, inferential and analytical reading.

Skimming is the type of reading that involves quickly glancing over a text to grasp its overall idea or gist. Furthermore, Spratt et al (2011) describe skimming as reading for global understanding while **Scanning** or General reading is reading to extract specific information; reading for general understanding. **Close reading or searching reading or Intensive reading** is reading for complete understanding; reading for detailed comprehension (information; function and discourse). It is the most important skill needed for any form of literary studies. It means paying especially close attention to what is printed on the page. It is useful for analyzing and understanding complex texts (Hatami & Asl, 2017) and **Extensive reading** is the application of comprehension skills, understanding literal meaning, reading between the lines and evaluating meaning and method, in a much wider context of communication. It is a reading for wider information and details such as newspapers, magazines, and fiction-biography. For this type of reading to be effective, the reader has to be carefully organized and have adequate material on what is to be read. Yamashita (2015) describes extensive reading as reading large amounts of material, often for pleasure, to improve reading fluency and comprehension.

Stages of Reading

Reading is a complex and dynamic process that involves multiple stages, each playing a crucial role in comprehension and understanding. The stages of reading can be broadly categorized into three stages: pre-reading, reading or contact stage and post-reading. **Pre-Reading Stage** involves previewing the text by glancing over the text to get an idea of its content, structure and relevance (Grabe & Stroller, 2013). The teacher, at this point needs to ask purpose-setting questions which should be literal (factual), inferential (interpretive) and critical (evaluative or applicative); the



second stage is **During Reading or Contact Stage** which deals with decoding by recognizing and pronouncing words, and understanding their meanings (Kilpatrick, 2015). At this stage, reading is done silently because reading is a sustained silent activity. During this reading stage, the teacher monitors the comprehension by checking understanding and adjusting reading strategies as needed; and the third stage is **Post-Reading Stage** where the reader summarizes, analyzes, evaluates and reflects on what has been read by recapitulating the main ideas and key points; breaking down the text into its component parts by examining relationships and drawing conclusions; assessing the text's credibility, relevance and usefulness; and thinking critically about the text by making connections to personal experiences and considering implications.

Reading Comprehension

Comprehension is an important aspect to develop students' ability to read with understanding. It is the primary objective of the reading process. Understanding is the ability to infer meaning that is desired from reading as efficiently as possible. Mirqodirova (2024) describes reading comprehension as a crucial skill that underpins academic success, cognitive development, and lifelong learning. Proficient reading comprehension is essential for academic achievement, information processing, and critical thinking. Comprehension is the major purpose of reading, for without comprehension, reading is a meaningless activity regardless of age or ability of the reader.

According to Duffy and Roehler in Ruan (2023), reading comprehension means being able to correctly interpret the meaning of the readings as well as being able to understand that meaning. Based on the reader's original knowledge base, reading comprehension can be achieved when the reader relates his previous experience with the written text. In addition, there are three levels of understanding: reading **'the lines'**, reading **'between the lines'**, and reading **'beyond the lines'**. The first refers to the literal meaning of a text, the second to inferred meanings, and the third to readers' critical evaluations of a text (Ruan, 2023).

It should be noted that the way teachers teach reading comprehension has an important influence on whether or not learners view reading as a meaningful activity. Students who read aloud are likely to concentrate on the way they call words rather than on getting meaning from what they are reading. Reading comprehension lessons should be made an enjoyable activity.

Methods of Teaching Reading

There are a number of important instructional methods and activities that can be employed in teaching reading, although it largely depends on the teacher and the course book being used. It should be noted that the way teachers teach reading comprehension has an important influence on whether or not learners view reading as a meaningful activity. Ramsa and Rawian, (2021) opine that teachers need to be attentive and value the systematic, guided reading strategies that act as the sustenance for their students' reading comprehension. The following are some methods of teaching reading: **Literacy Awareness Programme (LAP)** promoted by UNESCO (n.d) and Reading is Fundamental (RIF) is termed so as it is a method where a child 'sits on the lap of someone and hears a story read to him/her as the child follows the text with the eyes'. The important thing about this method is that it is a method where a child learns to read at home thereby making it very useful to the child. Suffice it to say that parents can encourage their children to reading by reading aloud. This is partly because it stimulates a love for books at an early age. It also makes children aware of the connection between print and spoken language. Reading to a group of students creates a conducive atmosphere for LAP. The teacher then reads from a story as they (the students) listen; **News on the Board (NOB)** is a general teaching strategy that can be used to get children started out in learning to read. It particularly helps children to see the relationship between speech and print. It involves having children share their experiences in class. The teacher then records these experiences on the board in the form of news items. What has been written on the board then becomes the students' reading materials. The teacher may give a news item of anything that may take place in the school that day before inviting the children to give theirs; **Language Experience Approach (LEA)** is an approach which ideas are related to Graves, (2016). It uses the language and personal



experience of the child to create materials for reading. The child learns to read his own experience in print as the thought or speech of the child is put into print. A child is taught reading through his/her own dictated story. This approach is characterized by learning activities involving close relationship between thinking, talking, writing and reading. The teacher stimulates the children by presenting items or events to draw their attention through the use of animals, puzzles, problems, personal concern, etc. where children are encouraged to express their thinking about the situation orally. Those things that are said are written down by the teacher. Children therefore read with the meaning what they have thought, spoken and written; **The Phonic Approach and alphabetic approaches** belong to the synthetic method, influenced by Bowers and Bowers (2017) which focus on teaching students the individual sounds of letters and then blending these sounds together to form words. The learner starts the alphabetic approach by learning to recite and recognize all the letters of the alphabet both capital and small letters. These letters are combined to form words before sentences are formed or introduced though they have little or no meaning to the learner since it is the letters that the learner recognizes. The learner can spell the words formed by the alphabets but still have problem in the reading. The phonic approach on the other hand is the use of speech sounds represented by letters and groups of letters such as an aid toward word recognition during reading. The phonic method is equally used at the teaching to read stage but has a major disadvantage which is phonetic-orthographical divergences where the word is pronounced differently from the letters that make up the word; **The Analytic Method** involves breaking down words into smaller parts like phonemes or syllables to help readers understand texts. The method focuses on analyzing the sound and structure of words to improve reading skills. This includes the whole word, phrase and sentence methods; Moats, (2020) greatly contributes to the development of **the whole-language approach**. Here, meaningful words are the first unit presented to the learner. In this method, children do more of memorization without knowing the letters that make up the word; **The Sentence Method** encourages reading for meaning and memorization though in some cases, the learner may not recognize the words when they stand alone or are embedded in new sentences. The children are exposed to the entire sentence. The initial reading is in form of sentences after which they will be analyzed. The method helps children to see reading as a meaningful activity, and they also learn that reading is done from left to right (Oyetunde, 2013). Here, the belief is that a story is likely to interest the learner if the learner gets the idea of the story or the information in the text; and **The Eclectic Method** is as important as the others mentioned. It is a method that is a mixture of methods for their reading programme. There is no evidence that any one pure approach or method was in practice more successful than the others as such, this method teaches reading using multi-sensory approach.

Semantic Mapping

Having strong vocabulary knowledge is positive for comprehension, while on the other hand, not having sufficient vocabulary can easily limit a student's comprehension. In order for students to increase their vocabulary knowledge, they may need to know word learning strategies that will help them learn words independently. The use of semantic mapping is one strategy students can use to independently learn words on their own without interrupting the comprehension process.

Semantic mapping can be described as a web-like graphic display. It is a graphic arrangement of words and it shows how new words and ideas relate to each other within a text. Semantic mapping, which is also known as graphic organizer, is a process for constructing visual displays of categories and their relationships (Luana, Abdul & Nasmilah, 2018). Plotnik in Luana, Abdul and Nasmilah (2018), states that attempts of semantic mapping enhancing reading skill is the use of visual symbols rendering benefits in learning reading on a concept map, so they are easy to recognize, to scan for a specific word or general idea, and it also allows for more holistic understanding of the concept. Semantic mapping can be described as a vocabulary technique for graphically displaying words and concepts, which allows learners to learn new words by mapping it with other related words similar in meaning to the new word.



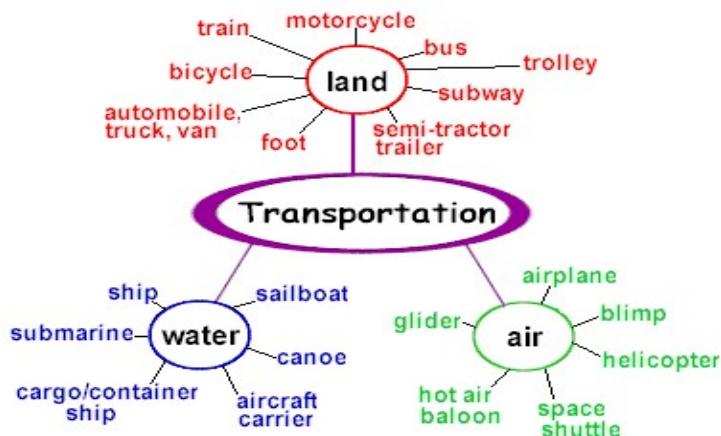
Wikipedia (2024) defines semantic mapping as a technique in which graphical models are used to help learners learn vocabulary. The semantic mapping strategy help readers especially struggling readers to identify, understand and recall the meaning of words they read in the text. It visually displays the meaning-based connections between a word or phrase and a set of related words or concepts (Zorfass, Gray & PowerupWHATWORKS, 2014). Semantic mapping can be applied by the teacher in the classroom to improve students' reading comprehension (Neneng, 2015). Semantic mapping is where meaning is derived from the surrounding environment of a word as they seek for association or relationship with other words. Semantic mapping seeks for relationship with other words that are similar to them. Reading comprehension challenges persist among senior secondary school students in Nigeria, affecting academic performance. Semantic mapping, a strategy connecting concepts visually, shows potential for boosting comprehension.

Types of Semantic Maps

There are different types of semantic maps to help understand new words. The following are some types of semantic maps as described by Georgakopoulos and Polis (2018):

A **descriptive or thematic map** which works well for mapping generic information, but particularly well for mapping hierarchical relationships; **Network map** like a network tree aims to organize a hierarchical set of information, reflecting super ordinate or subordinate elements; **A Spider map** can help with organization when the information relating to a main idea or theme does not fit into a hierarchy; **A problem-solution outline** helps students to compare different solutions to a problem; **A fishbone map** may be particularly useful when cause-effect relationships are complex and non-redundant; **A compare-contrast matrix** can help students to compare concepts' attributes, **A series of events chain** can help students organize information according to various steps or stages.

These maps have a tree structure with one trunk with many branches. As explained by Novak in Rosario (2021), the creation of semantic mapping can be enhanced when learners are able to see and then organize all information they bring to the task of learning in order to build their knowledge actively by adding new lexical items to their maps. Consequently, semantic mapping technique allows the productive and creative use of words. Semantic mapping can be used to pave the way for content contextualization, brainstorming, eliciting, recapping, organizing words and phrases visually, as well as categorizing the information produced and may be considered a useful learning resource due to the fact that it assists learners to visualize, classify and notice how concepts and words are semantically associated to one another because of their interrelating networks or relations between them.



Methodology

Research Design

A quasi-experimental research design was adopted in the study. Two groups were used for the study: the experimental and control groups. While the experimental group was exposed to the treatment, the control group was not. Quasi experimental research design was adopted in this study since scheduling and implementation of experimental treatment conditions or randomizations and



grouping of subjects were not possible (Saxena, Ramesh, Durdella & Carpenter, 2021). There was no randomization of students into the treatment and control groups. This design has been chosen because intact classes was used to avoid disruption of normal classes. Moreover, strict experimental design was not acceptable to secondary school administrators (because of classroom groupings, strict time tabling and school locations).

Area of the Study

The area of the study is Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study was restricted to all the public senior secondary schools in this local government.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all Senior Secondary II (SS2) students in all the seven (7) public secondary schools in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. SS2 students were used because students in this category have spent three years in the Junior Secondary School and have been introduced to deeper English language topics and lessons. Moreover, it is important for students to continue with the mastery of the concept of reading comprehension to enable them do very well in their final examinations.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size for the study consisted one hundred (100) SS 2 students from the two schools randomly selected out of the population of seven (7) public secondary schools through the simple random technique using ballot papers. The two schools are Government Secondary School, Kofar Hausa as the experimental group consisting of six hundred and fourteen (614) SS 2 students and Government Secondary School Keffi South as the control group consisting of five hundred and ninety one (591) SS2 students.

Method of Data Collection

Description of Instrument for Data Collection

The data for the study were collected using the English Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (ERCAT) which was based on one reading passage. The comprehension passage was adopted from WAEC/SSCE (2023) since this is a standardized examination. The same comprehension passage was used for pretest and posttest. The achievement of the students was based on their ability to use semantic mapping to accurately answer literal, inferential and critical comprehension questions in a given passage.

Data Presentation

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Pre-test and Post-test Sub-skills

Sub-skill	Group	Pre-test M (SD)	Post-test M (SD)	Mean Gain
Literal Comprehension	Experimental	1.34 (0.73)	4.98 (1.18)	3.64
	Control	2.42 (0.93)	2.48 (1.17)	0.06
Inferential Comprehension	Experimental	1.26 (0.67)	4.78 (1.02)	3.52
	Control	1.30 (0.72)	2.10 (0.97)	0.80
Critical Comprehension	Experimental	0.66 (0.76)	3.44 (1.18)	2.78
	Control	0.94 (0.86)	1.60 (0.89)	0.66

The Semantic Mapping Strategy enhanced all sub-skills significantly among the Experimental group:

1. Literal comprehension: +3.64
2. Inferential comprehension: +3.52
3. Critical comprehension: +2.78

The control group’s gains were minimal across all areas as indicated:

1. Literal comprehension: +0.06



- 2. Inferential comprehension: +0.08
- 3. Critical comprehension: +0.66

Data Analysis and Results

Research Question 1:

To what extent will SS II students taught reading comprehension using the semantic mapping strategy be able to answer literal comprehension questions?

Table 2: Literal Comprehension

Group	Pre-test Mean (/10)	Post-test Mean (/10)	Mean Gain	% Improvement
Experimental	1.34	4.98	+3.64	271.6%
Control	2.42	2.48	+0.06	2.5%

Table 2 shows that literal comprehension improved very substantially with semantic mapping. The experimental group’s 3.64-point gain (272%) contrasts sharply with the control group’s almost static result (2.5% improvement).

Research Question 2:

To what extent will SS II students taught reading comprehension using semantic mapping strategy be able to answer inferential comprehension questions?

Table 3: Inferential Comprehension

Group	Pre-test Mean (/10)	Post-test Mean (/10)	Mean Gain	% Improvement
Experimental	1.26	4.78	+3.52	279.4%
Control	1.30	2.10	+0.80	61.5%

Table 3 shows that semantic mapping significantly boosted inferential comprehension. Experimental students’ scores rose by 3.52 points (279%), while the control group improved only slightly (0.80 points; 61.5%).

Research Question 4:

To what extent will SS II students taught reading comprehension using the semantic mapping strategy be able to correctly answer critical comprehension questions?

Table 4: Critical Comprehension

Group	Pre-test Mean (/10)	Post-test Mean (/10)	Mean Gain	% Improvement
Experimental	0.66	3.44	+2.78	421.2%
Control	0.94	1.60	+0.66	70.2%

Table 4 shows that semantic mapping enhanced critical comprehension. Although starting from the lowest base, the experimental group recorded the highest percentage improvement (421%), far exceeding the control group’s 70%.



Summary of findings in response to the Research Questions (1–3).

The Semantic Mapping Strategy improved students' reading comprehension to a very large extent across all sub-skills of accurately answering literal, inferential and critical comprehension questions in a given passage.

Discussion

In discussing the results of this study, it is imperative to consider the purpose of the study which is to find out the effects of semantic mapping strategy on reading comprehension ability of SS II students. It is also important to acknowledge certain limitations regarding the size of the sample, the duration of the treatment or instruction and the number of test items selected which calls for caution at generalizing. Nevertheless, it is important to compare the results of the two groups to ascertain the claim of Neneng (2015) that semantic mapping can be applied by the teacher in the classroom to improve students' reading comprehension. In view of this, the experimental group was taught by the researcher using the semantic mapping strategy and this in turn has caused a change in result of the post-test from the pre-test given while the results of the control group remained poor as they were not exposed to the teaching using the semantic mapping strategy.

Following the intervention, the Experimental group, which received instruction using the Semantic Mapping Strategy, saw its average score move up to 9.94, while the Control group, which continued with conventional methods, experienced only a modest increase to 0.80. The most critical observation from this table is the mean gain; the Experimental group improved by an average of 13.20 points, a figure that largely exceeds the Control group's gain of 6.18 points. This substantial difference in improvement strongly suggests that the Semantic Mapping Strategy was far more effective in boosting overall reading comprehension achievement. This proves Brown's (2015) assertion that the semantic mapping strategy is hugely important to students' reading comprehension because its usage, to a large extent, leads to academic success. The semantic mapping strategy can increase the learners' vocabulary, reading comprehension, and make them better readers.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that when reading comprehension using semantic mapping strategy is taught well, it will enhance understanding of reading materials. Although, semantic mapping is one strategy out of many in helping students during reading comprehension lessons, teachers of the English language are encouraged to use the strategy because it is straight forward and it makes it easier for students to comprehend unknown words or concepts. Teachers of English are also encouraged to be more attentive and interested at following how much their students are able to comprehend texts during reading comprehension lessons.

The study has also revealed that it is possible for students to comprehend a reading text if they are given explicit teaching in semantic mapping. And in the researcher's opinion, students should be given enough time during reading comprehension lessons to learn how to use semantic maps to understand meanings of difficult words and be able to also answer other aspects of the reading comprehension like literal, inferential and critical comprehension aspects.

Recommendations

From the outcome of the study, it is evident that reading comprehension is an important and integral aspect of English Language teaching and learning that when properly handled can lead to students' success in their academics. Since semantic mapping has been proven by this study to be one strategy that can be used to improve students' ability in reading comprehension, the following recommendations are made:

Rather than teach contents only, it might appear advantageous for teachers of the English language wishing to enhance their students' reading comprehension, devote part of their instructional time to teach ways on how students can identify and demystify difficult words and or concepts during reading lessons. Furthermore, it is pertinent then for teachers handling reading



comprehension to be knowledgeable in the use of strategies of teaching reading comprehension, especially, using the semantic mapping strategy. However, explicit teaching in such strategy as semantic mapping should be provided by teachers before students embark on reading comprehension exercises. This will make the students build interest in reading rather than getting frustrated because they come in contact with difficult words and concepts in texts and therefore find it difficult to understand reading texts. This in view will also reduce the high rate of failure in reading comprehension aspects of English Language in public examinations since general poor performance is attributed to poor comprehension of concepts in reading texts. Furthermore, an inclusion of strategies for teaching reading, one of which is semantic mapping, in the curriculum of the English language teaching will go a long way in enhancing both teaching and learning, especially in the area of reading comprehension. Deliberate actions should be taken by the English language curriculum planners to improve the teaching and learning during reading comprehension lessons by doing this. In addition, school administrators should make reading a subject thereby giving it a space on the time table. This is in the bid to make students achieve all round success academically. The researchers are of the view that a student's success in reading comprehension will adversely bring about success in other subjects thereby causing an all-round academic success. Moreover, deliberate efforts backed with the necessary action by the government at all levels need to be made to provide teaching and learning materials especially on reading comprehension and strategies to teach it. Finally, the government and private schools owners should design intermittent refreshers training of teachers of the English language on the strategies like semantic mapping and other methods of teaching reading comprehension.

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ELECTORATES' PERCEPTION OF ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN MANIFESTOS AND POST-ELECTION PERFORMANCES OF GOVERNORS IN EKITI STATE FROM 2010-2024

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Abstract

This study examined electorates' perception of electoral campaign manifestos and the post-election performances of governors in Ekiti State from 2010 to 2024. As electoral manifestos serve as key tools for candidates to communicate policy intentions, there is often a gap between campaign promises and actual governance, raising questions about accountability. The study addressed the limited research on how electorates assess the alignment between pre-election pledges and post-election performance across multiple election cycles. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 400 respondents in Ado-Ekiti, the state capital, through structured questionnaires and focus group discussions. Findings reveal a significant relationship between electorates' perceptions of campaign manifestos and their assessment of governors' fulfillment of promises. Post-election performance was largely influenced by the extent of alignment with campaign pledges, while governance effectiveness, transparency, political communication, and socioeconomic conditions emerged as key determinants of voter perceptions. Furthermore, evaluations of manifesto fulfillment significantly influenced future voting behaviour and political participation. The study concludes that bridging the gap between campaign promises and actual governance is critical for enhancing public trust, accountability, and democratic engagement. It recommends that candidates develop realistic, well-structured manifestos and maintain transparent, effective governance to strengthen electorates' confidence and participation in the political process.

Keywords: *Electorates, Perception, Electoral Campaign Manifestos, Post-Election Performances, Governors, Ekiti State*

Introduction

Ekiti State, created on October 1, 1996, carved out of the old Ondo State, has witnessed significant political developments shaped by its historical, socio-political, and economic contexts. The governance landscape in Ekiti State, Nigeria, between 2010 and 2024, is characterized by various political transitions, policy developments, and challenges that reflect broader national trends. The period saw fluctuating public trust in government, shaped by political rhetoric, perceived performance, and the prevailing economic climate. Electoral campaign manifestos of all these governors vis a vis their administrations are crucial statements that outline the policy proposals, promises, and goals of political parties and candidates during elections. These manifestoes serve as a communication tool between political parties and electorates, presenting a comprehensive vision for governance and policy implementation (Netswera, 1995).



Manifestos often cover a wide range of areas, including economic development, social welfare, education, healthcare, infrastructure, and governance reforms (Okolie, Enyiazu & Nnamani, 2021). Electoral campaign manifestos play significant role in informing electorates about the intended actions and initiatives that candidates and parties plan to undertake if elected (Kedar & Soroka, 2015). Therefore, manifestos are not only important for electorates, but they also serve as a platform for political parties and candidates to articulate their policy agenda and differentiate themselves from their opponents.

However, it is important to note that the relationship between electoral manifestoes and subsequent government actions can be complex. While manifestos provide a blueprint for governance, the actual implementation of policies can be influenced by various factors such as political constraints, resource availability, changing circumstances, and coalition dynamics. For instance, Bowler and Farrel (2016) analyzed the relationship between electoral manifestos and policy outcomes and suggested that while governments make an effort to fulfill their manifesto promises, external factors and political constraints often lead to deviations from the original commitments. Electorates form their expectations based on the information provide by political parties and candidates as well as their own values, beliefs and evaluate the performance of elected officials based on the extent to which they fulfilled their campaign promises (Van Aelst & colleagues, 2012).

Ekiti State, a politically active and influential state in Nigeria, has witnessed several gubernatorial elections within the specified timeframe. Electorates in this state often rely on the campaign manifestos of the various candidates to make informed decisions about who to support. However, there are concerns that the post-election performances of the elected governors may not always align with the promises made during the campaign period.

These potential discrepancies between campaign promises and post-election realities raises important questions about the transparency, accountability, and overall integrity of the electoral process in Ekiti State. It is crucial to understand how electorates perceive the significance and reliability of electoral campaign manifestos, as well as their assessment of the governors' performances in fulfilling these promises.

It is also pertinent to address the problem of the factors that shape electorates' perceptions, the extent to which campaign manifestos influence their voting decisions, and the degree to which the elected governors have been able to translate their promises into tangible outcomes for the people of Ekiti State. The findings of this study can inform policy discussions, enhance voter education, and contribute to the improvement of the electoral process in Ekiti State and in extension to other States of Nigeria.

Specific objectives

The specific objectives include to:

1. Discover how electorates perceive the electoral campaign manifestos presented by governors in Ekiti State from 2010-2024,
2. Analyze the extent to which the post-election performances of governors align with the promises made in their campaign manifestos,
3. Examine the factors that contribute to the Electorates' perception of the fulfillment of campaign promises by governors, and
4. Ascertain how the electorates' perceptions of campaign manifestos and post-election performances influence their voting behavior and future political participation.

Literature Review

Electoral campaign manifestos are official documents outlining the policy proposals, promises, and goals of political parties and candidates. These manifestos serve as essential communication tools between political aspirants and electorates, setting expectations for governance (Okolie, Enyiazu & Nnamani, 2021). They play a crucial role in democratic elections by providing electorates with insights into the policy directions and commitments of candidates, thereby shaping electoral decisions and governance expectations (Kedar & Soroka, 2015).



Campaign manifestos serve several critical functions in democratic governance. Firstly, they provide electorates with a clear understanding of what candidates and parties intend to achieve if elected. This transparency fosters an informed electorate, enabling citizens to make rational choices based on policy preferences rather than personal affiliations or populist rhetoric (Bowler & Farrell, 2016). Secondly, manifestos contribute to political accountability by establishing benchmarks against which elected officials can be assessed. When politicians make explicit promises, citizens and civil society organizations can hold them accountable for fulfilling these commitments.

Another significant function of campaign manifestos is their role in political marketing and branding. Most campaign manifestos are structured around key policy areas such as economic development, education, healthcare, security, and foreign policy. A well-crafted manifesto should be evidence-based, realistic, and aligned with the socio-economic needs of the electorates. Overly ambitious or vague promises can lead to disillusionment and a decline in public trust in political institutions.

Research indicates that campaign manifestos significantly influence voters' behaviour. Electorates often use manifestos as heuristic tools to evaluate party policies and determine which candidate aligns best with their interests (Kedar & Soroka, 2015). In proportional representation systems, where coalition governments are common, manifestos can serve as negotiation frameworks for forming government policies. However, voters' reliance on manifestos varies across different political contexts. In some cases, electorates prioritize candidate personality, historical performance, or party loyalty over policy proposals.

Besides, one of the major criticisms of campaign manifestos is the discrepancy between promises made during campaigns and actual policy implementation. Many elected officials fail to deliver on their manifestos commitments due to political, economic, or institutional constraints (Bowler & Farrell, 2016). For example, in Nigeria, successive governments have pledged to eradicate corruption and improve infrastructures, yet progress in these areas has been inconsistent (Okolie et al., 2021).

Also, the failure of politicians to adhere to manifestos promises can erode public trust in the democratic process. When electorates perceive a pattern of broken promises, political cynicism and voters' apathy may increase. This phenomenon is particularly evident in countries with a history of governance failures, where repeated unfulfilled promises contribute to disillusionment with the electoral process. Therefore, campaign manifestos are integral to democratic elections, serving as blueprints for governance and tools for voters' engagement. They influence electoral choices, shape political discourse, and contribute to democratic accountability.

However, the extent to which manifestos translate into actual policy depends on various factors, including economic constraints, political dynamics, and institutional capacity. Enhancing transparency, strengthening policy monitoring mechanisms, and fostering political accountability are essential for bridging the gap between manifesto promises and governance realities.

Empirical Review

Onuoha and Ochulor (2025) carried a pragma-discourse analytical approach in their study of APC 2023 presidential manifestos. Their analysis focused on how language and rhetorical devices were employed to construct favorable images of candidates while strategically framing policy issues. Their study revealed that manifestos often serve not just as policy documents but as tools for political persuasion, which can obscure vague or unrealistic commitments beneath sophisticated language structures. The study established that the APC candidate employed covert and subtle means to brandish his political opponents' limitations and inefficiency. The scholars primarily used a pragma-discourse analytical approach in their study of APC 2023 presidential manifestos but this study is centered on electorates in Ekiti State perceive electoral campaign manifestoes and post-election performances of governors in the state from 2010 to 2024

Kolawole (2023) conducted a more recent analysis of the 2023 presidential election manifestos of major Nigerian political parties, including the All Progressives Congress (APC), People's



Democratic Party (PDP), and Labour Party (LP). This study underscored the persistent challenge of translating political rhetoric into effective governance. While the study focused on analyzing the presidential election manifestoes of major Nigerian political parties, the current study offers an empirical based analysis of the Electorates perception of electoral campaign manifestoes and post-election performances of governors in Ekiti State from 2010 to 2024.

Further enriching the empirical literature, Moghalu and Ude (2023) evaluated the 2023 presidential manifestos of key candidates through a qualitative lens. Their analysis critiqued the manifestos for lacking coherent philosophical underpinnings and concrete economic frameworks. They also pointed out the absence of detailed anti-corruption strategies, which they identified as a critical shortfall in Nigeria's political development discourse. Their work reinforced previous findings by demonstrating that political parties often prioritize appealing slogans over substantive, actionable policy frameworks. A general weakness observed in most of the candidates' policy documents was the omission of a clear philosophical statement or vision on which their plans are anchored. The failure to anchor economic policy in Nigeria on a philosophical foundation is a major reason for inconsistency of policy and thus the inability to achieve, let alone sustain, long-term success in economic growth that lifts millions out of poverty. Economies that are clearly philosophically anchored, while retaining an element of pragmatism, tend to achieve structural economic transformation better and faster. Rising Asia and the economically advanced western countries offer helpful examples. Economics alone is inadequate to develop any society. Other factors such as values, belief systems (worldviews) matter, and influence the societies and their governments' broader approach to governance that includes how the economy is managed. This study explored the 2023 presidential manifestos of key candidates through a qualitative lens, this current work addressed the Electorates perception of electoral campaign manifestoes and post-election performances of governors in Ekiti State from 2010 to 2024

Solt and Johnson (2018) investigated the relationship between government performance and citizen satisfaction with democracy across various countries. Their cross-national analysis aims to elucidate how perceptions of government effectiveness influence public satisfaction with democratic systems. Utilizing a wide-ranging dataset, the study compares satisfaction levels across different political and cultural contexts. This comparative approach allows for insights into how varying governance structures impact public perceptions globally. The findings suggest a strong correlation between positive evaluations of government performance and higher levels of satisfaction with democracy. The authors argue that effective governance is crucial for maintaining democratic legitimacy and public trust. The authors employed rigorous statistical methods to analyze the data, ensuring the reliability of their findings. By examining a diverse range of countries, the study provides a comprehensive view of the factors affecting citizen satisfaction with democracy. While the quantitative analysis is strong, the paper could benefit from a deeper qualitative exploration of the specific factors that influence perceptions of government performance in different cultural contexts. The study largely emphasizes correlation, which may overlook the complexities of causation between government performance and citizen satisfaction. Solt and Johnson's article makes a valuable contribution to the literature on public administration and democratic satisfaction. By highlighting the critical link between government performance and citizen perceptions, the authors underscore the importance of effective governance in fostering democratic legitimacy. However, the current study focuses on how Electorates perceive the campaign manifestoes and post-election performances of governors in Ekiti State.

World Bank (2017) report explored the intricate relationship between governance frameworks and legal systems across various countries. The document emphasized the essential role that sound governance plays in fostering economic development, reducing poverty, and enhancing social equity. The report outlined how the rule of law is fundamental to effective governance and discussed the importance of legal frameworks in ensuring accountability, transparency, and justice. The authors analyzed how governance quality influences development outcomes, highlighting that weak governance and legal systems can hinder economic growth and exacerbate inequality. The report includes multiple case studies that illustrate successful governance reforms and their positive



impacts on development, and these examples provide practical insights into effective strategies for enhancing governance. The World Bank offers recommendations for policymakers to strengthen governance and legal institutions, emphasizing the need for inclusive participation, capacity building, and the integration of local contexts. The report provides a thorough examination of the connections between governance and law, making it a valuable resource for policymakers and scholars. The inclusion of case studies offers real-world examples of governance challenges and solutions, enhancing the report's applicability. While the report presents valuable insights, some findings may be context-specific and not universally applicable across different countries or regions. This report focused on the intricate relationship between governance frameworks and legal systems across various countries, while the current study is centered on Electorates' perception of campaign manifestoes and post-election performances of Governors in Ekiti State.

Theoretical Framework

Correspondence Theory of Truth

The Correspondence Theory of Truth is one of the earliest and most influential theories of truth, rooted in classical philosophy and later developed within modern analytic philosophy. The central claim of the theory is that a statement is true if it corresponds to objective reality—that is, if what is asserted matches the actual state of affairs in the world (David, 2023).

Gottlob Frege's contributions to logic and the philosophy of language, particularly his distinction between sense (Sinn) and reference (Bedeutung), provided an important conceptual foundation for correspondence-based accounts of truth. In his seminal essay "On Sense and Reference", Frege (1892) argues that linguistic expressions convey meaning at two levels: the sense, which represents the mode of presentation or conceptual content of an expression, and the reference, which denotes the actual object or state of affairs in the world. For Frege, the truth value of a statement depends on its reference; a statement is true if it successfully refers to a fact in objective reality and false if it does not (Frege, 1892).

This conception of truth emphasizes the relationship between language and reality, suggesting that truth is not merely a matter of belief or coherence but is grounded in factual correspondence. Frege's analysis influenced later philosophers such as Russell (1912), who further defended the idea that truth consists in a correspondence between propositions and facts, and Tarski (1944), who formalized the correspondence conception within a semantic framework. Together, these contributions strengthened the theoretical basis of the Correspondence Theory of Truth and clarified its relevance to empirical and evaluative inquiries.

The Correspondence Theory of Truth provides a useful analytical framework for examining the relationship between electorates' perceptions of electoral campaign manifestos and the post-election performances of governors in Ekiti State, Nigeria. In the context of electoral politics, campaign manifestos represent statements of intent, policy commitments, and governance promises made by political candidates to the electorate. According to the Correspondence Theory, such statements can be regarded as true only if they correspond to the objective reality of governance outcomes after the election.

Electorates' perceptions of campaign manifestos play a critical role in shaping voting behavior, as voters generally expect that promises made during campaigns will be reflected in actual policy actions and performance once candidates assume office. When a governor's post-election performance aligns with the commitments outlined in the campaign manifesto—such as the implementation of promised policies or completion of pledged projects—there is correspondence between political representation and objective reality. In such cases, the governor's governance can be considered a truthful representation of the electoral promises made to the electorate.

Conversely, when post-election performance fails to reflect campaign promises, a disconnect emerges between political claims and governance reality. This lack of correspondence undermines the truth value of campaign statements and reinforces public perceptions of deception or insincerity in political communication. Applying the Correspondence Theory of Truth to the



study of electoral manifestos and governance performance in Ekiti State therefore enables a systematic assessment of the extent to which political promises translate into concrete outcomes. By examining the degree of alignment between campaign manifestos and post-election performance, this study contributes to broader discussions on democratic accountability, electoral integrity, and the credibility of political representation. The Correspondence Theory of Truth thus offers a relevant theoretical lens for evaluating whether political actors fulfill their obligations to the electorate in a manner consistent with the realities of governance.

Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach involving both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. The survey method (quantitative research technique) involved the selection of a sample of respondents from a population, administering a standardized questionnaire to them, and thereafter generalizing the result to the whole population. The area of the study is Ado-Ekiti, the capital city of Ekiti State, Nigeria. Ado-Ekiti was selected because it serves as the administrative and political centre of the state and hosts the highest concentration of electorates, particularly civil servants working in various ministries, departments, and agencies. These individuals represent electorates drawn from all sixteen (16) local government areas of the state. The research adopted a statistical model initiated by Taro Yamane to determine the sample size of this study which gave a calculation stated below: sample size of 392 with the calculation state below;

$$\begin{aligned}
n &= \frac{N}{(1+N [e]^2)} \\
&= \frac{20,212}{(1+20,212 (0.05)^2)} \\
&= \frac{20,212}{1+20212 (0.0025)} \\
&= \frac{20,212}{1+ (20212 \times 0.0025)} \\
&= \frac{20,212}{1+50.53} \\
&= 51.53 \\
&= \frac{20,212}{51.53} \\
&= 392.237532 \approx 392
\end{aligned}$$

When sample size,
N= population;
E=sampling Error, while
I=constant

This figure was rounded off to 400. Proportionate sampling was adopted in this. This means that the sample of Civil servants from each ministry were drawn according their population. At the Ministry level, the researcher selected three major departments purposive sampling technique, as these three departments are represented in all the ministries and they are all headed by Directors or Heads of departments. They include: Administration Department, Accounts Department, And Planning, Research and Statistics Department (PRS). At this level, accidental sampling technique was used to sampling only the civil servants who were on duty and met on the spot.

In addition to Survey, Focus Group Discussion was also employed and the Focus Group Guide served as the research instrument. Focus group sessions were held in Ado-Ekiti, among the few civil servants in the selected Ministries such that both male and female staff who were knowledgeable about electoral campaign manifestoes participated. The groups comprise of twelve (12) civil servants employed in the Ekiti State civil service and fall within the age bracket of 25-55. The participants shared the following characteristics in common: communication background and



average exposure to electoral campaign manifestoes. The discussion was recorded with an audio midget and later transcribed into written text. The data gotten were thematically analyzed.

Results

Table 1: Perception of Electorates on Campaign Manifestos

S/N	How Electorates Perceive Electoral Campaign Manifestos	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Interpretation
1	The party's policy proposals are clearly outlined in the manifesto.	150 (37.5%)	120 (30%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	2.96	Agreed
2	The manifesto provides a detailed breakdown of the party's spending plans and budget proposals.	130 (32.5%)	140 (35%)	75 (18.75%)	55 (13.75%)	2.84	Agreed
3	The language used in the manifesto is accessible and understandable.	160 (40%)	120 (30%)	70 (17.5%)	50 (12.5%)	3.00	Agreed
4	The party's key campaign promises are prominently featured.	145 (36.25%)	130 (32.5%)	75 (18.75%)	50 (12.5%)	2.97	Agreed
5	The manifesto clearly articulates how the party plans to fund its programs.	155 (38.75%)	125 (31.25%)	70 (17.5%)	50 (12.5%)	2.96	Agreed
Grand Mean					2.95	Agreed	

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2025

The table provides an insightful examination of how Electorates perceive electoral campaign manifestos based on five key indicators. The mean scores were calculated to interpret the general perception of each statement, with a grand mean of 2.95, indicating that the majority of respondents agree with the statements provided.

The first item assesses whether political parties clearly outline their policy proposals in their manifestos. With 37.5% strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing, the majority of electorates believe that parties present their policies in a structured manner. However, 32.5% (D + SD) of the respondents express skepticism, suggesting that a significant portion of the electorates finds the proposals vague or inadequate. The mean score of 2.96 reflects a generally positive but not overwhelming agreement.

The second indicator evaluates whether the manifesto includes a detailed financial plan. 32.5% of respondents strongly agree, while 35% agree, suggesting that most electorates acknowledge the presence of budget-related information. However, a combined 32.5% disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that many electorates remain unconvinced about the depth or transparency of these financial breakdowns. The mean score of 2.84, the lowest among the five indicators, highlights concerns about the sufficiency of budgetary details in campaign manifestos.

A crucial aspect of an effective manifesto is the simplicity and clarity of its language. This statement received the highest level of agreement, with 40% strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing, leading to the highest mean score of 3.00. This suggests that most electorates find campaign manifestos linguistically accessible, which is essential for engaging a broad electorates. However, 30% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that some electorates still struggle with the technicalities or complexity of political language.



Political parties must highlight their core promises to attract voter confidence. Here, 36.25% strongly agree and 32.5% agree, while 31.25% disagree or strongly disagree. The mean score of 2.97 suggests that Electorates generally recognize key campaign promises in manifestos. However, the notable percentage of dissenters raises questions about whether these promises are vague, inconsistent, or overshadowed by less relevant content.

The fifth statement assesses whether political parties explain how they intend to finance their proposed programs. A mean score of 2.96 suggests that electorates acknowledge some level of financial transparency, with 38.75% strongly agreeing and 31.25% agreeing. However, 30% (D + SD) of electorates remain unconvinced, which could indicate skepticism regarding the feasibility or realism of proposed funding strategies.

The grand mean of 2.95 suggests an overall agreement among respondents that electoral campaign manifestos present policy proposals, key promises, and financial details in a somewhat clear and accessible manner. However, the scores are not overwhelmingly high, signaling that while electorates perceive campaign manifestos as informative, they also recognize certain deficiencies particularly in budgetary transparency and the prominence of key promises.

The relatively high agreement levels indicate that most electorates find manifestos to be structured and readable. However, the disagreement levels (averaging around 30%) suggest that a considerable segment of the Electorates struggles with clarity, accessibility, or credibility of the content. The lowest mean score (2.84) for budget breakdowns suggests that electorates are particularly skeptical about financial details in manifestos. This reflects a broader concern about the feasibility and accountability of campaign promises.

The highest mean score (3.00) for language accessibility implies that political parties are making efforts to use simplified, voter-friendly language. However, some electorates still find certain terminologies too complex or ambiguous. The fact that none of the mean scores exceed 3.00 suggests a cautious agreement rather than full confidence in campaign manifestos. This could be attributed to previous experiences with unfulfilled promises, generic language, or a lack of specific, actionable plans.

Table 2: Fulfillment of Promises

S/N	Fulfillment of Promises	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Interpretation
6	The party has delivered on key promises.	140 (35%)	130 (32.5%)	75 (18.75%)	55 (13.75%)	3.03	Agreed
7	The party has been transparent about progress.	170 (42.5%)	140 (35%)	60 (15%)	30 (7.5%)	3.44	Agreed
8	The party has explained unfulfilled promises.	160 (40%)	135 (33.75%)	65 (16.25%)	40 (10%)	3.29	Agreed
9	The party has shown genuine commitment.	100 (25%)	110 (27.5%)	90 (22.5%)	100 (25%)	2.16	Disagreed
10	The party's performance aligns with its manifesto.	130 (32.5%)	140 (35%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	2.87	Agreed



Grand
Mean

2.96

Agreed

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

The table presents an analysis of electorates' perceptions regarding the fulfillment of electoral promises by political parties.

The first indicator examines whether political parties have delivered on key promises. 35% of respondents strongly agree, while 32.5% agree, leading to a mean score of 3.03. This suggests that a majority of electorates believe some campaign promises have been met. However, a notable 32.5% (D + SD) disagree, indicating skepticism among a significant portion of the electorates regarding the extent to which promises have been honored.

Transparency in political governance is crucial for maintaining voter trust. The second indicator, which assesses whether political parties have been transparent about their progress, received the highest level of agreement, with 42.5% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing. With a mean score of 3.44, this is the highest-rated statement, suggesting that electorates generally perceive parties as providing updates on their performance. However, 22.5% of respondents still disagree or strongly disagree, implying that some believe transparency efforts are insufficient or selective.

A key issue in electoral politics is whether parties provide explanations for unfulfilled promises. This statement garnered 40% strong agreement and 33.75% agreement, resulting in a mean score of 3.29. The relatively high agreement suggests that electorates acknowledge efforts made by political parties to justify unaccomplished promises. However, 26.25% of respondents remain dissatisfied, which could indicate that explanations are either inadequate, insincere, or do not justify the perceived failures.

Commitment to electoral promises is a fundamental expectation from political leaders. The fourth statement, assessing whether political parties have shown genuine commitment, stands out with a mean score of 2.16, which falls into the "Disagreed" category. This indicates that electorates largely believe that political parties lack true dedication to fulfilling their promises. The relatively high percentage of disagreement (47.5% D + SD) highlights a serious concern regarding political accountability and consistency.

The final statement evaluates whether the party's performance aligns with its manifesto. With 32.5% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing, the mean score of 2.87 suggests that while many electorates perceive a correlation between manifestos and actual performance, a significant 32.5% (D + SD) believe there is a disconnect between campaign promises and governance. This discrepancy underscores the persistent issue of political parties making ambitious commitments that may not be fully realized in practice.

The grand mean of 2.96 suggests that, overall, electorates acknowledge some degree of fulfillment of electoral promises. However, the variations in mean scores reveal important nuances. While political parties are perceived as being relatively transparent (3.44) and providing explanations for unfulfilled promises (3.29), their actual commitment to promises (2.16) is widely questioned. This gap suggests that while communication efforts may be effective, substantive action remains a major issue.

The relatively positive perception of transparency and explanation efforts could indicate that political parties are becoming more aware of the importance of public accountability. However, the low score on commitment suggests that these efforts may be more rhetorical than practical. Electorates appear to appreciate updates and justifications but remain skeptical about whether these translate into tangible outcomes.

While electorates generally agree that political parties have delivered on some promises and maintained transparency, the perception of genuine commitment remains low. This suggests a need for political parties to not only communicate their progress effectively but also take concrete steps to fulfill promises in ways that electorates can clearly recognize and validate. Addressing this gap between rhetoric and action could enhance public trust and improve the credibility of political leadership.



Table 3: Post-Election Performance

S/N	Post-Election Performance	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Interpretation
11	The party has demonstrated effective leadership.	155 (38.75%)	130 (32.5%)	70 (17.5%)	45 (11.25%)	3.32	Agreed
12	The party has made progress on key policies.	150 (37.5%)	135 (33.75%)	75 (18.75%)	40 (10%)	3.25	Agreed
13	The party collaborates with opposition & stakeholders.	180 (45%)	140 (35%)	50 (12.5%)	30 (7.5%)	3.53	Agreed
14	The party has shown sound financial management.	145 (36.25%)	130 (32.5%)	75 (18.75%)	50 (12.5%)	3.15	Agreed
15	The party's decisions align with its manifesto.	100 (25%)	110 (27.5%)	90 (22.5%)	100 (25%)	2.34	Disagreed
Grand Mean					3.12	Agreed	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

The table presents an analysis of electorates' perceptions regarding the post-election performance of political parties. The mean scores were calculated to interpret general perceptions, and the grand mean of 3.12 suggests an overall agreement that political parties have performed reasonably well after elections.

The first indicator evaluates whether the party has demonstrated effective leadership. With 38.75% of respondents strongly agreeing and 32.5% agreeing, the mean score of 3.32 indicates that a majority of electorates perceive the party's leadership as competent and decisive. However, 28.75% of respondents (D + SD) express disagreement, suggesting that while many approve of the leadership, a significant minority remain dissatisfied with its effectiveness.

The second statement assesses whether the party has made progress on key policies. A combined 71.25% (SA + A) of respondents agree, leading to a mean score of 3.25. This suggests that electorates generally acknowledge some advancements in policy implementation. However, 28.75% disagree, which implies that some citizens either do not see tangible progress or believe the pace of implementation is insufficient.

Collaboration with opposition parties and key stakeholders is crucial for effective governance. The third statement received the highest level of agreement, with 45% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing, resulting in a mean score of 3.53. This suggests that electorates perceive the ruling party as engaging in dialogue and cooperation with various political actors. The relatively low 20% disagreement (D + SD) further reinforces this positive perception, indicating that political inclusiveness is relatively well-practised.

Financial management is a critical aspect of governance, and the fourth statement evaluates whether the party has demonstrated sound fiscal responsibility. With 36.25% strongly agreeing and 32.5% agreeing, the mean score of 3.15 suggests that electorates generally perceive the party as managing resources responsibly. However, 31.25% (D + SD) of respondents express doubts, indicating that concerns about financial accountability still exist. This suggests that while financial



management may be perceived as adequate, improvements are necessary to increase public confidence.

The final statement assesses whether the party’s decisions align with its manifesto. This received the lowest level of agreement, with a mean score of 2.34, falling into the “Disagreed” category. 25% of respondents strongly agree and 27.5% agree, but an equal 47.5% (D + SD) disagree, highlighting a major concern regarding political consistency. This suggests that while the party has made some progress in leadership and policy, there is a widespread perception that its governance does not fully reflect the commitments made during the campaign.

The grand mean of 3.12 suggests that, overall, electorates have a positive perception of post-election performance. However, key insights emerge from the variations in mean scores. While leadership effectiveness (3.32), policy progress (3.25), stakeholder collaboration (3.53), and financial management (3.15) are generally well-rated, the lack of alignment between decisions and campaign manifestos (2.34) raises concerns about political accountability and trustworthiness. This discrepancy suggests that while electorates acknowledge governance efforts, they remain skeptical about whether campaign promises translate into real policy actions. Political parties may need to enhance their commitment to campaign promises and improve communication on policy alignment to bridge this gap.

While post-election performance is generally viewed positively, the significant concern regarding manifesto alignment suggests that political parties must work harder to ensure that their governance reflects their electoral commitments. Strengthening policy transparency and ensuring tangible implementation of campaign pledges could help improve public trust and long-term electoral credibility.

Table 4: Factors that Contribute to the Electorates' Perception of the Fulfillment of Campaign Promises by Governors

S/N	Factors	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Interpretation
16	Governance effectiveness significantly contributes to the Electorates' assessment of the fulfillment of campaign promises.	140 (35%)	130 (32.5%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	2.84	Agreed
17	Transparency significantly contributes to the Electorates' assessment of the fulfillment of campaign promises.	130 (32.5%)	125 (31.25%)	85 (21.25%)	60 (15%)	2.70	Agreed
18	Communication significantly contributes to the Electorates' assessment of the fulfillment of campaign promises.	140 (35%)	135 (33.75%)	75 (18.75%)	50 (12.5%)	2.83	Agreed
19	Socioeconomic conditions significantly contribute to the	120 (30%)	110 (27.5%)	90 (22.5%)	80 (20%)	2.52	Agreed



20	Electoralates' assessment of the fulfillment of campaign promises. Empathy with the masses significantly contributes to the Electoralates' assessment of the fulfillment of campaign promises.	160 (40%)	130 (32.5%)	70 (17.5%)	40 (10%)	3.18	Agreed
Grand Mean					2.81	Agreed	

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2025

The table presents an analysis of factors that influence electoralates’ perception of the fulfillment of campaign promises by governors. The mean scores were calculated to interpret general perceptions, and the grand mean of 2.81 suggests that electoralates generally agree that multiple factors shape their assessment of governors’ fulfillment of campaign promises. However, differences in individual mean scores reveal the relative significance of each factor.

The first factor, governance effectiveness, received 35% strong agreement and 32.5% agreement, resulting in a mean score of 2.84. This suggests that electoralates consider the overall performance of a governor’s administration a key determinant in evaluating whether campaign promises have been fulfilled. However, 32.5% (D + SD) of respondents express disagreement, indicating that while governance effectiveness is crucial, other factors may also shape public perception.

Transparency, as the second factor, received a mean score of 2.70, with 32.5% strongly agreeing and 31.25% agreeing. This suggests that Electoralates value openness in governance and see it as a significant determinant in assessing a leader’s commitment to campaign promises. However, 36.25% (D + SD) of respondents express doubts about the extent to which transparency influences their perceptions, indicating that while it is important, other contextual factors may also play a role.

The role of communication in shaping voter perception scored 2.83, with 35% strong agreement and 33.75% agreement. This indicates that electoralates believe that effective communication from governors about policy progress and challenges significantly influences their judgment. However, 31.25% (D + SD) of respondents disagree, suggesting that communication alone may not be sufficient to convince the electoralates that promises have been fulfilled.

The fourth factor, socioeconomic conditions, received the lowest mean score of 2.52, with 30% strong agreement and 27.5% agreement. This suggests that while electoralates acknowledge that economic and social realities influence their perception of government performance, this factor may not be as influential as governance effectiveness, transparency, or communication. The relatively high 42.5% (D + SD) disagreement indicates that many electoralates may evaluate campaign promise fulfillment independently of broader socioeconomic challenges.

Empathy with the masses, the final factor, received the highest mean score of 3.18, with 40% strong agreement and 32.5% agreement. This suggests that electoralates highly value leaders who demonstrate concern for the struggles of ordinary citizens. The relatively lower 27.5% (D + SD) disagreement further reinforces the notion that emotional connection and responsiveness to public concerns play a crucial role in shaping voter perceptions.

The grand mean of 2.81 indicates that, on average, electoralates agree that governance effectiveness, transparency, communication, socioeconomic conditions, and empathy all contribute to their perception of campaign promise fulfillment. However, the variations in individual mean



scores suggest that some factors such as empathy (3.18) and communication (2.83) are perceived as more influential than others, such as socioeconomic conditions (2.52).

The findings highlight that while governance effectiveness and policy outcomes are important, electorates also place significant emphasis on how leaders engage with the public, communicate progress, and demonstrate empathy. Political leaders aiming to strengthen public trust should prioritize transparency, maintain open communication channels, and ensure that their actions reflect genuine concern for the well-being of the electorates.

Table 5: Influence of Campaign Manifestos and Post-Election Performance on Voting Behavior and Future Political Participation

S/N	Influence on Voting Behavior and Participation	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Interpretation
21	The party's performance in office has influenced my likelihood of voting for them in future elections.	170 (42.5%)	140 (35%)	60 (15%)	30 (7.5%)	3.64	Agreed
22	The party's manifesto and campaign promises have had a significant impact on my voting decisions.	160 (40%)	145 (36.25%)	65 (16.25%)	30 (7.5%)	3.59	Agreed
23	I feel more engaged and motivated to participate in the political process as a result of the party's actions in office.	155 (38.75%)	140 (35%)	75 (18.75%)	30 (7.5%)	3.56	Agreed
24	The party's transparency and accountability have influenced my trust in the political system.	165 (41.25%)	140 (35%)	65 (16.25%)	30 (7.5%)	3.61	Agreed
25	I am more likely to	150 (37.5%)	135 (33.75%)	70 (17.5%)	45 (11.25%)	3.36	Agreed



actively participate in future elections (e.g., volunteering, campaigning, voting) due to the party's performance.

Grand Mean	3.55	Agreed
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Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2025

Table 5 examines the influence of campaign manifestos and post-election performance on voting behavior and future political participation. The grand mean of 3.55 suggests a general agreement among respondents that both campaign promises and post-election performance significantly impact their voting behavior and political engagement.

The first statement, assessing whether a party’s performance in office influences the likelihood of electorates supporting them in future elections, received 42.5% strong agreement and 35% agreement, resulting in a mean score of 3.64. This indicates that a party’s governance record plays a major role in shaping voter preferences for subsequent elections. Only 22.5% (D + SD) of respondents expressed disagreement, suggesting that most electorates make future electoral choices based on a party’s ability to fulfill its promises.

The second statement focuses on the impact of campaign manifestos and promises on voting decisions, with 40% strongly agreeing and 36.25% agreeing, leading to a mean score of 3.59. This suggests that electorates consider pre-election commitments when making electoral decisions, emphasizing the importance of well-crafted and credible manifestos. The 23.75% (D + SD) disagreement suggests that while manifestos are influential, some electorates prioritize other factors, such as candidate appeal or party reputation.

The third statement examines whether the party’s actions in office have led to greater political engagement and motivation among electorates. With 38.75% strong agreement and 35% agreement, this factor has a mean score of 3.56, indicating that governance outcomes significantly influence political participation. However, 26.25% (D + SD) of respondents do not feel more engaged, suggesting that for some electorates, political apathy persists despite government performance.

The fourth statement assesses whether the party’s transparency and accountability have influenced trust in the political system, with 41.25% strong agreement and 35% agreement, leading to a mean score of 3.61. This suggests that openness and honesty in governance positively impact public trust. However, 23.75% (D + SD) disagreement highlights that a segment of the electorates remains skeptical of political transparency efforts.

The final statement explores whether the party’s performance has made electorates more likely to actively participate in future elections, including volunteering, campaigning, and voting. With 37.5% strong agreement and 33.75% agreement, the mean score of 3.36 suggests that governance outcomes influence political activism. However, 28.75% (D + SD) of respondents remain indifferent or disengaged, indicating that performance alone may not be sufficient to drive higher electoral participation.

The grand mean of 3.55 confirms that electorates generally agree that campaign manifestos and post-election governance significantly shape their political behavior and participation. However, differences in individual mean scores suggest that performance in office (3.64) and transparency/accountability (3.61) have a slightly stronger impact on voter engagement than campaign manifestos (3.59) or general political participation (3.36).



The findings highlight that political parties must not only make compelling campaign promises but also deliver on them transparently to maintain voter support. Effective governance, trust-building, and accountability remain crucial in shaping future voting behavior and enhancing political participation.

Analysis of Findings from Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussion was conducted among twelve (12) civil servants. In addition to the survey findings, the focus group discussion provided diversified perspectives as follows:

1. Widespread Skepticism toward Campaign Promises

One of the most prominent findings is the deep-rooted skepticism among electorates regarding campaign promises. Participants consistently viewed campaign manifestos as rhetorical instruments aimed primarily at winning elections rather than as sincere policy commitments.

2. Repetition of Unfulfilled Promises across Electoral Cycles

The FGD revealed that many campaign promises are recycled from one election cycle to another with little evidence of progress or completion. Participants emphasized that core development issues such as employment creation, infrastructure development, improved healthcare, education, and economic empowerment remain persistent campaign themes without corresponding long-term outcomes.

3. Manifestos Perceived as Unrealistic and Economically Unviable

Another major finding is the perception that many campaign promises are economically unrealistic. Participants questioned the feasibility of pledges such as free education, free healthcare, and mass employment without clearly articulated funding strategies.

4. Weak Accountability and Absence of Consequences for Non-Performance

The FGD strongly indicates that the lack of accountability mechanisms is a central factor undermining trust in campaign promises. Participants consistently noted that politicians face no meaningful consequences for failing to fulfill their pledges.

5. Mixed Record of Post-Election Performance

The data reveal a nuanced assessment of post-election performance. Participants acknowledged that some governors fulfilled certain campaign promises, particularly in areas such as infrastructure development and social welfare policies in education. These achievements were seen as tangible, visible, and impactful, demonstrating that manifesto-driven governance is possible.

6. Persistence of Unfulfilled Commitments in Critical Sectors

Despite isolated achievements, participants identified several key areas where campaign promises remained unfulfilled. These include irregular salary payments to civil servants, abandonment of projects initiated by previous administrations, inadequate job creation, and weak youth empowerment initiatives.

7. Lack of Policy Continuity across Administrations

A major structural finding from the FGD is the tendency for successive administrations to abandon projects initiated by their predecessors. Participants viewed this practice as wasteful and politically motivated, prioritizing personal or party recognition over long-term development.

8. Economic Conditions as the Primary Measure of Governance Performance

The findings show that economic realities strongly shape how electorates assess promise fulfillment. Participants consistently evaluated government performance based on their ability to meet basic needs, secure stable income, and cope with rising living costs.

9. Media Influence and Distorted Perceptions of Performance

The FGD highlights the influential role of the media in shaping perceptions of campaign promise fulfillment. Participants noted that media coverage is often polarized, with outlets emphasizing either successes or failures depending on political alignment.

10. Transparency Deficits and Poor Government Communication



Another key finding is that limited transparency in governance fuels public suspicion. Participants argued that when government actions, budgets, and project progress are not openly communicated, electorates assume non-performance.

11. Decline in Trust in the Political System

The cumulative effect of broken promises, weak accountability, and economic hardship is a significant decline in trust in political institutions. Participants expressed a growing belief that politicians prioritize personal interests over public welfare.

12. Shift in Voting Behavior toward Performance-Based Evaluation

Despite declining trust, the findings indicate an emerging shift toward more pragmatic voting behaviour. Participants reported increased reliance on candidates' past performance, credibility, and integrity rather than campaign rhetoric or party loyalty.

13. Rising Voter Apathy and Political Disengagement

One of the most concerning findings is the rise in voter apathy. Many participants reported disengagement from voting due to the belief that elections do not lead to meaningful change.

14. Strong Demand for Institutional and Structural Reforms

The FGD data reveal strong public demand for reforms aimed at restoring trust and accountability. Participants emphasized the need for mechanisms to track campaign promises, strengthen electoral regulations, enhance civic education, and introduce legal consequences for deliberate misinformation.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed persistent skepticism among electorates regarding the feasibility and implementability of campaign promises, particularly in relation to budgetary clarity and project timelines. This aligns with research showing that political manifestos in emerging democracies frequently suffer from issue ambiguity and personality-driven campaigning rather than clear policy platforms, a pattern that weakens post-election accountability mechanisms (Okolie, Enyiazu, & Nnamani, 2021).

With respect to the alignment between manifesto promises and post-election performance, respondents expressed mixed perceptions. While some governors were acknowledged for fulfilling specific commitments, particularly in infrastructural development—significant shortcomings persisted, including irregular salary payments and abandoned projects. These findings resonate with broader analyses of Nigerian electoral politics that highlight the dominance of vote-seeking over issue-based campaigning and the failure of elected officials to translate party manifestos into concrete governance outcomes (Okolie et al., 2021).

Several factors were found to shape voter perceptions of promise fulfillment. Empathy and perceived responsiveness emerged as important influences, suggesting that electorates value leaders who demonstrate attentiveness to citizen welfare. This finding is consistent with studies indicating that political communication and campaign messaging significantly shape voter expectations and retrospective evaluations of governance performance in Nigerian elections (Bratton, 2008).

Economic conditions also emerged as a critical determinant of voter perception, with financial hardship frequently overshadowing developmental achievements and leading to negative evaluations of governance performance. Empirical studies have shown that in contexts of economic strain, voters are more likely to base political judgments on material conditions and immediate welfare outcomes rather than abstract policy commitments (Lewis & Bratton, 2000; Bratton, Mattes, & Gyimah-Boadi, 2005).

Media influence played a significant role in shaping public perceptions of governance performance. Politically aligned media coverage contributed to polarized interpretations of political outcomes, while misinformation complicated voters' assessments of political promises and delivery. Research on media framing and political communication in Nigerian electoral contexts supports the conclusion that media representations significantly influence public perceptions of political actors and governance credibility (Oso, 2012).



Transparency and accountability were identified as essential for fostering trust between political leaders and the electorate. Participants emphasized that open communication regarding governance challenges enhances public confidence, whereas opacity reinforces suspicion and perceptions of unfulfilled pledges. Related literature on democratic accountability in Nigeria similarly underscores the centrality of transparency and institutional accountability in building public trust in governance and electoral processes (Okibe, 2020).

An emerging pattern identified in the study is the growing prioritization of performance outcomes over manifesto content in voter decision-making. Repeated unmet expectations were found to contribute to voter cynicism and political disengagement. Empirical work on accountability and governance suggests that when electorates perceive a persistent gap between political rhetoric and tangible outcomes, trust in democratic institutions declines and citizen participation diminishes (Schedler, 1999).

Despite widespread skepticism, manifesto documents were found to retain some relevance, particularly among voters seeking policy clarity or political change. However, electoral decisions were increasingly shaped by candidate credibility, past performance, and party identity rather than detailed manifesto provisions. This finding aligns with existing scholarship indicating that Nigerian voting behaviour often reflects personalistic, ethnic, and identity-based considerations over issue-based voting (Lewis, 2007; Bratton, Bhavnani, & Chen, 2012).

The cumulative effect of unfulfilled promises and weak accountability mechanisms has adversely affected citizen engagement, contributing to voter apathy and posing challenges to democratic legitimacy. Consistent with recommendations in political science literature on democratic governance in Nigeria, strengthened accountability frameworks, such as transparent tracking of political promises and enhanced civic education are necessary to restore public trust and reinforce democratic participation (Diamond, 2008; Norris, 2011).

Conclusion

The study concludes that there is a significant positive relationship between electorates' assessment of gubernatorial campaign manifestos and the fulfillment of the promises therein. Post-election performance of governors in Ekiti State is strongly linked to the fulfillment of their campaign promises. Additionally, governance effectiveness, transparency, communication, and socioeconomic conditions significantly influence electorates' evaluation of promise fulfillment. Strengthening accountability mechanisms, promoting transparency, and enhancing civic education are essential for restoring public trust and improving the credibility of electoral manifestos.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- i. Political candidates should develop manifestos that are realistic, achievable, and grounded in clear policy frameworks. Manifestos should align with the state's economic and governance realities to ensure that campaign promises are practical and can be effectively implemented.
- ii. Politicians and policymakers should regularly update citizens on the progress of campaign promises through public engagements, media briefings, and digital platforms. Consistent communication helps manage public expectations and facilitates constructive feedback from electorates.
- iii. Civil society organizations and electoral bodies should intensify voter education programs to enable citizens to critically evaluate campaign manifestos and make informed electoral choices.
- iv. Electorates should place greater emphasis on policy proposals, governance track records, and candidates' demonstrated performance rather than relying solely on party affiliations or short-term material incentives.
- v. Civil society groups should collaborate with the media to fact-check campaign promises, monitor government performance, and report findings to the public.



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EFFECT OF BLENDED TEACHING APPROACH ON GENDER ACHIEVEMENT IN COMPOSITION WRITING IN STATE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN NORTH CENTRAL, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The importance of effective writing in academics, professional and daily interactions cannot be over emphasised. Thus, the need to ensure that composition writing skills are appropriately and comprehensively taught to teacher trainees, especially as the teaching and learning method had remained traditional. This study investigates the effect of blended teaching approach on gender achievement in composition writing in state Colleges of Education in North Central, Nigeria. It is guided by five research questions and five hypotheses. Using a quasi-experimental design, 75 teacher trainees (38 male and 37 female) who took part in the blended teaching intervention were assessed through pre-tests and post-tests composition writing Assessment Test (WAT, with a validated rubric ($\alpha = 0.85$)). Data collection involved scripts from experimental group only. Data analysis used ANOVA and t-tests to compare mean scores. Results reveal significant improvement in writing skills of male taught via blended approach compared to their female classmate. The findings suggest adopting blended teaching to enhance composition writing outcomes for both gender.

Keywords: blended teaching, composition writing, achievement, gender

Background to the Study

Writing is the most complex of all the language skills as it involves translating thoughts, ideas, and feelings effectively into written language with acceptable signs, symbols and images. It remains fundamental medium to acquiring education and the gateway to human development across the world as knowledge is constructed, communicated, and evaluated in formal learning environments. Globally, composition writing achievement is commonly evaluated through four specific indices that capture the multidimensional nature of writing. These indices include content development, organization of ideas, expression, and mechanical accuracy. Content development reflects the depth, relevance, and adequacy of ideas presented in a composition, while organization of ideas refers to logical sequencing, coherence, and paragraph unity. Expression encompass vocabulary choice, sentence variety, tone, and fluency, whereas mechanical accuracy relates to



correctness in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. These indices are widely adopted in international assessment frameworks and writing and scoring rubrics because together they provide a holistic measure of writing quality (Hyland, 2019).

Composition writing is a complex cognitive activity that require higher-order thinking skills such as planning, analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information encouraging critical thinking, creativity, and metacognitive control. To ensure this skill is appropriately and effectively acquired and enable trainees develop the ability to generate ideas, develop arguments, reflect critically on diverse topics, and support claims with evidence in higher education and graduate students who are able to produce coherent, meaningful, and accurate written texts as evidence of learning and intellectual maturity.

According to Hyland (2019), instead of the traditional teaching methods, the blended teaching has emerged as a dominant pedagogical response to the limitations of purely face-to-face or fully online instruction. This digital transformation reshapes educational delivery worldwide and is broadly defined as the purposeful integration of traditional classroom interaction with digital and online learning experiences, is rooted in constructivist and multimedial theories of learning.

Global research has revealed that blended teaching environments promote deeper learning, interactions and engagement, improves learners' writing performance, extended practice, and individualized feedback, these are all contributory to the development of writing skills (Graham, 2021). Students of college of education need blended teaching method to enable them overcome some significant weaknesses noticed in their writing skills. Some of which include: poor punctuation and expression, misuse of tenses, inability to logically organize ideas and outline a story plot sequentially. Many empirical review has revealed that the use of blended teaching approaches improves achievement across all indices of composition writing.

Gender differences in academic achievement have also attracted scholarly attention in language education. Some studies suggest that female students tend to outperform male students in writing tasks, particularly in expression and mechanical accuracy, while others report negligible differences when instructional conditions are optimized. Blended teaching, with its emphasis on learner autonomy and flexible pacing, has been argued to reduce gender-based disparities by providing equal access to learning resources and feedback (Graham & Harris, 2021). Examining how blended teaching influences composition writing achievement across gender therefore remains a relevant concern.

Objectives of the study

- i. To determine the difference in overall composition writing achievement between male and female students taught using the blended teaching approach in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria,
- ii. To compare the effect of the blended teaching approach on expression in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria,
- iii. To examine the difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on organization of ideas in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria,
- iv. To determine the difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on mechanical accuracy in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.
- v. To compare the effect of the blended teaching approach on content development in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.



Research questions:

- i. What difference exists in overall composition writing achievement between male and female students taught using the blended teaching approach in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?
- ii. What is the difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on content development in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?
- iii. What is the difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on expression in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?
- iv. What is the difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on organization of ideas in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?
- v. What is the difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on mechanical accuracy in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant difference in overall composition writing achievement between male and female students taught using the blended teaching approach in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on expression in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on organization of ideas in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Ho4: There is no significant difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on mechanical accuracy in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Ho5: There is no significant difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on content development in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Literature review

In order to further reduce the existing distance of females with regard to ICT and learning, there is need to facilitate the application of technology and related tools to bridge the gap in instruction. Gender-sensitive instructional methods should enable exchange of experiences and the formation of information networks (Wiepcke, 2007). E-learning is a significant advancement in the field of education that leverages digital technology. This blended learning approach aims to introduce innovation and shift the prevailing learning paradigm (Nurpianti, et al., 2018). As a combination of different media and methods is realised, blended learning is no longer characterised by mere technology. The integration of group work and in-class phases as well as teletutoring facilitates the "de-technization" of computer application. The identification of female abilities (creativity, ability to communicate, and teamwork) is enhanced by the combination of the learning scenarios, fears of contact are reduced by group dynamics and teletutoring. Thus, the acceptance of this teaching method increases women's difficulties with regard to technology can be better coped with, which results in an increase of motivation (Liening et al., 2007).

The integration of in-class phases facilitates an introduction and an overview of the topic, they motivate to learn, provide the opportunity to get to know each other as well as to form a group.



Thus, the feeling of social isolation can be minimised. The advantages of in-class phases can be enriched with the help of blogs, discussion forums and wikis. The community of learners develops into a community of practice, so that the desired communication and informal exchange are encouraged. Kaismini, et al (2024) investigate the impact of a gender mainstreaming-based blended learning flipped classroom model on the solidarity values and problem-solving abilities of students. This research aims to develop a model for developing a blended learning flipped class based on gender mainstreaming to increase students' solidarity values and problem-solving abilities. The results showed that the developed learning model created more meaningful learning experiences. Solidarity values and problem-solving abilities of students increased when taught with the learning model.

Methodology

This study adopted a quasi-experimental research design, specifically the pre-test, post-test control group design. The population comprised of all NCE II students in state Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria. This population was considered appropriate because NCE II students had progressed beyond foundational composition and were being assessed on extended essay writing in General English, making them suitable for evaluating gains in composition. A multi-stage sampling method was used for the study. First, a lucky-dip procedure was applied to select two state Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria: College of Education, Akwanga (Nasarawa State) and FCT College of Education, Zuba (Abuja). Within each college, the Department of English was purposively chosen because it directly teaches and assesses composition writing. From the NCE II English classes, 158 students were randomly selected and assigned into two groups: 75 in the experimental group and 83 in the control group. However, only the 75 participants in the experimental group were used for this investigation (38 female and 37 male) Data for the study were collected in three systematic phases to ensure that the impact of the intervention was properly evaluated. In the pre-test phase, the experimental group wrote a Writing Achievement Test (WAT). The purpose of this phase was to establish a baseline measure of the students' writing performance before any instructional treatment was administered. The pre-test essays provided insight into the participants' initial competence in areas such as expression, mechanical accuracy, organization, and content development. This stage was essential for comparing progress and determining the extent of improvement after the intervention. The intervention phase was carried out over a period of six weeks. During this period, the experimental group received instruction through a blended learning approach that combined online modules, digital writing tools, and face-to-face classroom guidance. The students' scripts from the post-test were evaluated using the Writing Skills Assessment Rubric (WSAR), which measured writing competence across the four key components: content, organisation, expression and mechanical accuracy to marking rubrics:20:20: 40: 20 respectively. This comparison of pre-test and post-test scores provided empirical evidence on the effectiveness of the blended learning strategy in enhancing writing performance. The data collected for this study were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, such as the mean and standard deviation, were employed to summarize and describe the distribution of students' scores between the male and female in the experimental group at the pre-test and post-test stages. Inferential statistics (ANCOVA) were also used to test the hypotheses and determine the significance of observed differences. Specifically, a paired sample t-test was used to examine differences between pre-test and post-test scores.



Presentation of findings

Objective 1 — Differential effects by gender (experimental group)

Research question 1: Is there a significant difference in composition achievement of male and female students taught using blended learning?

Hypothesis H01: No significant difference between male and female students (Post_Total).

Results — descriptive & tests

Experimental group (Zuba) post-test totals:

- female: M = 43.892, n = 37
- male: M = 41.763, n = 38

Levene's $p = 0.173 \rightarrow$ variances not significantly different.

Independent-samples t-test (Post_Total: Male and Female)

$t = 1.016, p = 0.313$ (two-tailed)

Cohen's d (pooled) = 0.235 (small effect, female > male)

Table 1 : ANCOVA (Experimental group): Post_Total ~ Pre_Total + Gender

Source	F	p	Partial η^2 (approx.)
Gender	1.0936	0.2992	0.015
Pre_Total (covariate)	4.8578	0.0307	0.063

Table 1 focuses on gender differences within the experimental (blended) group for overall post-test totals, showing means for males and females, the t-test and the ANCOVA controlling for pre-test totals. The t-test shows no significant difference between males and females on the post-test ($p = 0.313$) and the ANCOVA likewise finds no significant Gender effect while Pre_Total remains a significant covariate. This implies that male and female students improved similarly under blended learning and that any small difference in post scores can largely be explained by their pre-test scores.

(Objective 1 / H01)

- There is no statistically significant difference between male and female students in their post-test composition totals after the blended learning intervention (both t-test and ANCOVA agree). H01 cannot be rejected.
- The observed effect size is small ($d \approx 0.24$). Pre-test performance explains part of post-test differences (Pre_Total significant in ANCOVA).

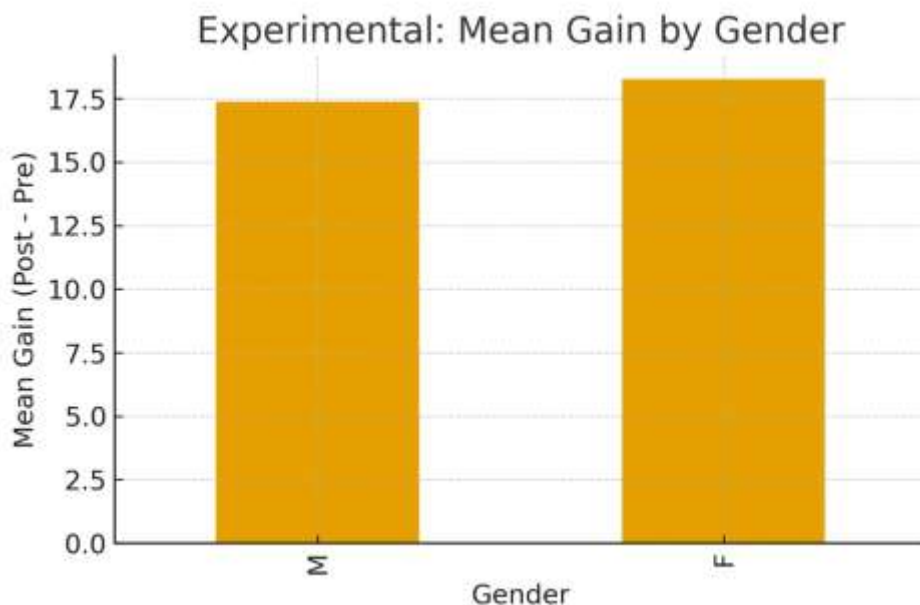




Figure 1

Figure 1 shows the mean gain scores by gender in the experimental group. Again the two bars are similar in height, reflecting small differences in gain between males and females. The visual message is that both genders benefited from blended learning to a similar extent, which directly addresses Objective 1 and supports the decision to fail to reject HO1.

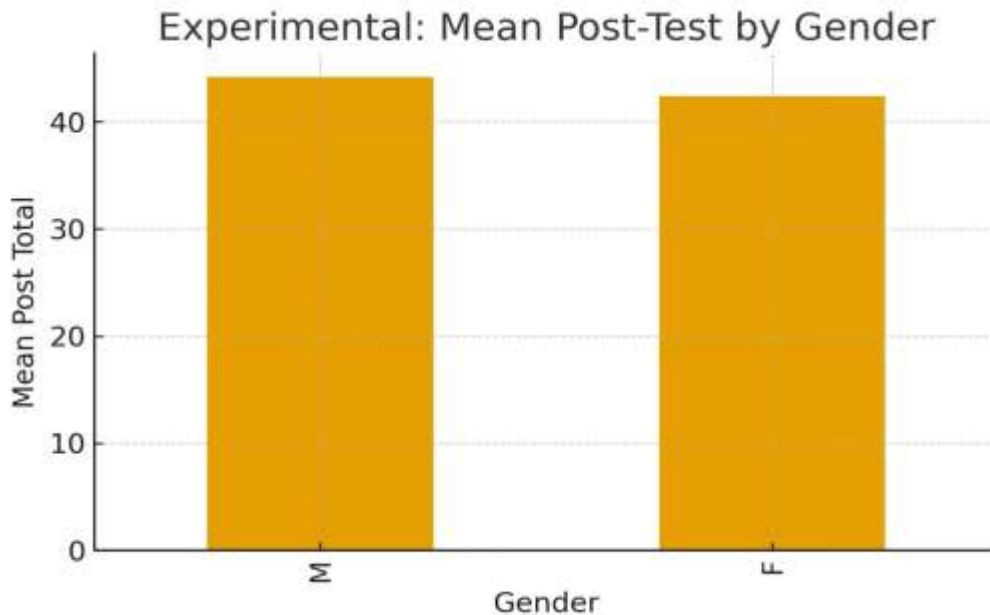


Figure 2

Figure 2 compares post-test totals by gender within the experimental group. The bars or markers for males and females are close to each other, indicating there is no meaningful difference between genders in post-test outcome under blended learning. This picture supports the findings in Table 1 and helps to quickly see that gender did not drive the outcome of the intervention.

Research Question 2: What is the difference in the effect of blended learning on Expression between male and female students?

Table 2.1: Descriptive Statistics for Expression Gain Scores by Gender

Gender	N	Mean Gain	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Female	38	9.35	4.23	0.69	7.96	10.75
Male	37	9.22	4.45	0.73	7.73	10.70

Table 2.1 summarizes the mean performance of students in a blended learning classroom based on gender. The result shows that the mean gain for females is 9.35 as against 9.22 for males. This shows a negligible increase for females. Thus, females seem to perform better in expression when exposed to blended learning.

Table 2.2: Independent Samples t- Test for Expression Gain Score by Gender

Test	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Levene's Test	0.19	0.67	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
t-test	—	—	0.14	73	0.89	0.14	0.98	-1.82	2.09

No significant gender difference was observed.

Table 2.2 presents the summary of the Levene’s test as well as the t-test. The result shows that the probability value(p-value) is .89. Since $p > .05$, the result is statistically not significant. Hence, there is no significant difference in the effect of blended teaching approach on expression in



composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Research Question 3: What is the difference in the effect of blended learning on the Organisation of Ideas between male and female students?

Table 3.1: Descriptive Statistics for Organisation Gain Scores by Gender

Gender	N	Mean Gain	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Female	38	4.42	2.45	0.40	3.62	5.23
Male	37	4.32	2.38	0.39	3.53	5.12

Table 3.1 summarizes the effect of blended intervention on organizational ideas by gender. The result reveals a mean gain of 4.42 for females and 4.32 for males. This indicates a marginal performance of females over male students.

Table 3.2: Independent Samples t- Test for Organisation Gain Score by Gender

Test	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Levene's Test	0.03	0.86	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
t-test	—	—	0.19	73	0.85	0.10	0.52	-0.94	1.13

No significant gender difference was found.

Table 3.2 presents the summary of the t-test for effect of blended learning on the organisation of Ideas between male and female students. The result shows that the p-value is .86. Since the $p > .05$, the result is statistically not significant. Thus, there is no significant difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on organization of ideas in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Research Question 4: What is the difference in the effect of blended learning on Mechanical Accuracy between male and female students?

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics for Mechanical Accuracy Gain Scores by Gender

Gender	N	Mean Gain	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Female	38	0.97	1.23	0.20	0.57	1.38
Male	37	0.95	1.18	0.19	0.55	1.34

Table 4.1 summarizes the performance of students in a blended classroom teaching mechanical accuracy based on gender. The result reveals a mean gain of 0.97 for females and 0.95 for males. This indicates a marginal performance of females over male students. The difference is almost negligible.

Table 4.2: Independent Samples t- Test for Mechanical Accuracy Gain Score by Gender

Test	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Levene's Test	0.09	0.76	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
t-test	—	—	0.15	73	0.88	0.03	0.18	-0.34	0.39

No significant gender difference was observed.

Table 4.2 presents the summary of the t-test for effect of blended learning on the mechanical accuracy between male and female students. The result shows that the p-value is .76. Since the $p > .05$, the result is statistically not significant. Thus, there is no significant difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on mechanical accuracy in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Research Question 5: What is the difference in the effect of blended learning on Content Development between male and female students?



Table 5.1: Descriptive Statistics for Content Gain Scores by Gender

Gender	N	Mean Gain	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Female	38	4.84	2.12	0.34	4.14	5.54
Male	37	4.70	2.23	0.37	3.96	5.45

Table 5.1 summarizes the effect of blended on Content Development by gender. The result reveals a mean gain of 4.84 for females and 4.70 for males. This indicates a marginal performance of females over male students in Content Development when taught using blended learning.

Table 5.2: Independent Samples t- Test for Content Gain Score by Gender

Test	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Levene's Test	0.22	0.64	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
t-test	—	—	0.29	73	0.77	0.14	0.48	-0.81	1.09

No significant gender difference was found.

Table 5.2 presents the summary of the t-test for effect of blended learning on the mechanical accuracy between male and female students. The result shows that the p-value is .64. Since the $p > .05$, the result is statistically not significant. Thus, there is no significant difference in the effect of the blended teaching approach on content development in composition writing between male and female students in State Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study reveals that students’ performance was enhanced when taught using blended learning. It was also established that there was no significant difference in the performance of students in composition writing based on gender. This implies that male and female students’ performance were not different, but were actually enhanced with positive mean gains and similar increase. This buttresses the point that a good and effective instructional strategy should not segregate students’ performance based on personal characteristics especially gender. This finding is in tandem with Kaismini, *et al* (2024) whose findings revealed that the use of blended learning created more meaningful learning experiences. Blended learning was also found to support the acquisition of problem-solving abilities of students.

Conclusion

The study empirically investigated how blended learning impacts on performance of students based on gender in an English language composition class. The outcome of the study concludes that blended learning has a positive effect on students’ performance, while helping students develop key soft skills such as problem-solving and initiative taking skills. Blended learning also has a positive effect on students’ performance based on gender, with both male and female students performing well in blended learning environment, with no significant difference in their performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

1. Teachers should apply blended learning instructional strategy for teaching English language in tertiary institutions.
2. Teachers should consider the use of flipped classrooms in instruction in classrooms.
3. The school administration should provide support in the form of equipment, machine and learning spaces that support digital enabled classrooms.
4. Periodic training should be provided for the teaching staff on emerging digital applications for instruction and professional development.



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ỤMUỌKPỤ IGBO: O DOZI KA Ọ BỤ Ọ DỌGHA OBODO?

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Abstract

There is no gainsaying the fact that issues concerning the culture, tradition and values of the Igbo are male-centered. Meanwhile, women are inevitable factor in discussing peace, unity and progress of any people. Some comments against the daughters of Igbo (ụmuọkpụ Igbo) show that there are some level of disconnect and misunderstanding about the position of these daughters and their duties, for the good of the families and the communities in general. This research is part of the ongoing efforts to redeem the good image of Igbo daughters by exposing and bringing to limelight the duties of ụmuọkpụ to the Igbo communities. This research which took a survey approach, got its authority from structural functionalism theory, to look into the position and activities of Igbo daughters in the five Igbo states, and through a critical analytical discuss, the research stands bold to say that the duties of ụmuọkpụ as builders cannot be rivaled nor contested in all facets of life. This research which will benefit those who ab-initio misunderstood the position of ụmuọkpụ, researchers, and the entire Igbo, gave recommendations for progressive future.

Keywords: Ụmuọkpụ, Family, Community, Peace, Progress.

ỤMỊ EDEMEDE

Ọ bụ eziokwu na okwu banyere omenala na ọdịbendị ndị Igbo kacha metụta ndị nwoke mana ụmụnwanyị bụ e jewe a ghaghị n'okwu ndị banyere udo, ịdịnotu na ọganiihu obodo ọ bụla. Ụfọdu okwu ndị a na-ekwu megide ụmuọkpụ na-egosi na e nwere ọtụtụ nghọtahie banyere ọnođụ ha nakwa ọrụ ndị ha na-arụ maka ọdịmma ezinụlọ nakwa obodo n'ozuzu oke. Nchọcha a so na mbọ na-aga n'ihu iji kwụsị aha ọjọọ a na-akpọ ụmuọkpụ site n'igba n'anwu, uru ndị ahụ ụmuọkpụ na-abara obodo. Nchọcha a, nke gbasooro usoro sovee gbagidekwara ụkwụ n'atụtụ nchọcha structural Functionalism Theory, wee leba anya n'ọnođụ ụmuọkpụ n'ime steeti ise dị n'ala Igbo, wee sitekwa



na ntucha na ntuchazi ihe ndi a huru wee kwusie ya ike na oru umuokpu dika ndi odozi obodo, e nweghi atu na ngalaba niile nke ndu. Nchocha a nke bu maka odimma ndi naara enwe nghotahie banyere onodu umuokpu n'ala Igbo, ndi na-eme nchocha nakwa umuafu Igbo niile, nyekwara ezi ntuziaka ndi a ga-agbaso maka odiniihu.

Okpurukpu okwu: Umuokpu, Ezinulo, Obodo, Udo, Oganiihu

Ndubata

Umuokpu putara mbiakota onu nke nwa nwaanyi o bula a muru n'ezinulo ndi Igbo. E nwere ike kpo ha Umumgboto ma o bukwanu umuada. Ihe o putara bu na nwaanyi o bula bu onye Igbo bu nwanyi okpu ma o bu nwa ada n'obodo n'ezinulo nakwa n'obodo ahụ a muru ya. Mgbe umunwanyị ndi a sitere n'otu onumara, otu ogbe, otu ime obodo, ma o bukwa otu steeti biakotara onu n'okpuru otu otu, o bu ha ka a na-akpo umuokpu nke ebe ndi ahụ a kporo aha.

N'okwu Ene, (2007:20)

“O bu oke ruuru umunwanyị niile a muru n'otu onumara ma o bu obodo isonye n'otu umuokpu. O bu otu siri ezigbo ike n'okwu ochichi na mmekorita mmadu na ibe ya, n'obodo. O burugodu na nwanyi a luru di na mba ozo o ka bukwa Ada/Nwanyi okpu n'obodo nna ya. Nke a mere, nwanyi o bula na-esoghi n'otu a ga-aburiji, elemanya onye sitere na mba ozo ma o bukwanu onye a mapuru n'iwu maka itinye aka n'aru.

Nwanyi anaghi echefu ebe a muru ya n'agbanyeghi ebe o lupuru di.

Ubesie, (1978:84) kwuru,

E mewe nwanyi ihe ojoo n'ebe o luru di o na-agbara oso lokwute nna ya. O bu ihe doru nwanyi obula anya na n'ulo nna ha ka ha nwere ike igbalata mgbe oso na-achu ha. Mgbe ha sitere ebe di iche iche a na-alu ha lota, ha na-ehiwe otu umuokpu a, were ya na-emezi ala nna ha nke o ga-abu ha gaa ebe a luru ha, ha ewere ebe a muru ha na-eme onu na –anarakwa ugwu na nsopuru ndi so ya.

O naghị adichara umunwanyị Igbo mfe n'iputa na-amanye onu n'okwu banyere ihe ndi na-eme n'obodo dika otu mmadu n'ih i onodu ha hutara onwe ha n'omenala Igbo, mana o buru na ha jikoo onwe ha onu n'okpuru otu umuokpu a na-enye ha ohere ikwu uche ha banyere onodu obodo a muru ha, ma tunyekwa oke nke ha maka odimma nke obodo ahụ. Nke a mekwara umunwanyị ndi lutara di ji asopuru umuokpu otu ahụ ha si asopuru ndi di ha.

N'okwu nke ya n'isiokwu a, Ubesie, (1978:84) siri,

O naghị adi mfe nwanyi iru nwoke uka n'ihu n'omenala Igbo, mana o buru na umuokpu ekwuo okwu, o dighi nwoke ma o bu nwanyi ga-esi agugo n'ih i na o nweghi onye ga-achọ ka ha goọ ya ofo, n'ih i na ha kwenyere na ofo umuokpu na-ere ire, ebe o bu na ha kwenyekwara na ndi otu ha ndi nke nwuru anwu na-enye ha nkwado.

A na-agbanarikari onodu o bula nwere ike ime ka iwe wee umuokpu n'ih i na o buru na ha ewere iwe na ikwa akwa turu onwe ha n'ala ma o bu kwaa ngwongwo ahijia ma o bu were agalaba osisi kwuchiere mmadu n'onu uzọ ulọ ya, ezigbo nsogbu adila n'ih i na ndi Igbo kwere na nke a ga-ebutere onye nwe ulo ahụ abumonu nakwa mkpochu ihu di iche iche. Ha nwekwara ike ikagbu onu o bula ha buru mmadu ma zachasiakwa unyi ndi ha kpokoro n'ulo mmadu ma o buru na e meedaa ha obi ma meekwa ihe ndi ha na-achọ.

Udi omume ndi a Umuokpu na-eme kpatara otutu mmadu ji na-eze ha eze ma na asokwara ha nsọ ha, mana otutu ndi mmadu na-aghotahie omume ndi a wee na-ahuta ya dika mmegbu, iwa anya, anya ukwu, iyi ndu egwu nakwa idogha obodo kama idozi ya edozi. Ndi di otu a elerughi anya nke oma iji choputa na omume ndi a bu usoro nakwa ngwa oru nke ha ji enweta ihe ha na-achọ nke hiwere isi n'udo, oganiihu na ikpe ziri ezi.

N'uche Ajaeree, (2002:98)



“A na-enye ụmuokpu ugwu ka a ga-asị na ha bu egbe a ga-eji agbagbu mmadu. Umuokpu nwere ike igbasa alumdị na nwunye. Imerime ndi ma chi ha na-efe na-agbara ibanye n’otu umuokpu oso. Ha na-eze nnoko ha eze, n’ihi oke ogu na mgba, omume ojoo ha gasi nakwa eriwe afo eju eju na weta ka e rie, di ha n’ahu.

Onye dere ihe a n’elu nwekwara ike soro n’otu n’ime ndi a na-aghotahie oru umuada na-arụ n’obodo, wee na-akpozi ha odogha obodo.

Ogbalu, (1974:89) haziri okwu nke ya n’udi o dabara wee si

Okwu umuokpu anaghi ekwe ikwu ekwu, ha na-edozi edozi, na-emeghasakwa emeghasa. Ihe okwu a na-akowa bu na umuokpu na-akwalite ma na-emekwa udo n’ebe ndi choroo udo di mana ha nwekwara ike itughari ukwu egwu ha n’ebe onye na-achoghi udo di n’ihi na ha nwere evu nweekwa mfu, a naghi eji olu reberebe achu ajo mmuo”.

Atutu Nchocha (Structural Functionalism Theory)

Atutu nchocha a bu maka onodu mmadu na ibe ya. O na-ahu obodo dika usoro sara mbara ma waakwa otutu ngalaba nke akuku na-ejikota aka n’oru iji kwalite idinotu na nkwugidesike. O na-arupagide aka na njikorita nke di n’etiti otu ewumewu di iche iche nke oha mmadu nakwa otu ha si na-atunye oke nke ha n’ihu na obodo n’ozuzu ya na-aga n’ihu ma kwurukwa chim.

Ndi aha ha kacha puta ihe n’ituputa atutu nchocha a gunyere Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons na Robert Merton.

Okpurukpu Isiokwu Nchocha ha

i. Usoro nhazi onodu mmadu na ibe ya

Atutu a lekwasara anya n’usoro onodu mmekorita nke ngalaba di iche iche n’obodo, dika otu ewumewu di iche iche dika ezinulo, mmuta okpukperechi nakwa okwu aku na uba.

ii. Oru Obodo

O kwenyere na ngalaba niile mejuputara obodo nwere oru ha di iche iche, bukwa ndi na-enye aka na nkwudosike nke obodo.

iii. Ndaberikota nke otu ewumewu obodo

A hutara otu ewumewu ndi no n’ime obodo dika ndi dabeere n’ibe ha iji ruo oru otu o kwesiri.

iv. Atutu nchocha a na-akowa na obodo na-aka eguzosiike ma na-arukwa oru nke oma mgbe ngalaba ya niile jikotara aka n’oru iji nwetazuo ochicho ndi mmadu n’otu n’otu nakwa n’ozuzu ha (Memahon, 2024)

Uzo di Iche Iche Atutu Nchocha a (Structural Functionalism Theory) Siri kwado Oru Umuokpu

Atutu nchocha a na-eleba anya n’uzo ngalaba otu ewumewu di iche iche n’obodo si aru oru iji kwagide nkwusike na ezi mmekorita n’obodo.

E nwere ike iji atutu a tlee ma leba anya n’oru ndi ahu di iche iche Umuokpu na-aru n’ime obodo di iche iche n’ala Igbo dika ihu na ihe gara n’usoro kwesiri ekwesiri n’etiti ndi obodo.

Oru ha n’idozi esemokwu na ikpe ikpe ziri ezi na-eme ka udo na idinotu di n’obodo.

Umuokpu na-akwalite mmekorita n’okwu aku na uba; site n’isonye n’atumatu oru mmepe di iche iche, ma na-agbakwa onya ego, nke na-eme ka okwu aku na uba na odimma ndi obodo gbasie ike.

Ha na-echekwa omenala, wee na-enyefe ya site na ndudugandu wee ruo na ndudugandu. Oru ha n’ikwalite odinala, igba nke ma hukwa na ndi mmadu kpara agwa oma n’oha, ikuziri nakwa inye umuagboghho ndumodu, bucha oru di mkpa n’inyefe ihe ndi ahu ndi Igbo kporo ihe baara ya uru, site n’otu ogbo wee ruo n’ogbo ndi nke n’abia n’ihu.



Ụmụọkpụ Na Ọrụ Ha Dị Iche Ichi N'ala Igbo

Ụmụmgboto Igbo dīcha ka ụmụnwanyị ndị ozo, kama ha nwere odidi puru iche nke mere ha jiri buru ọpuruiche. Otutu n'ime ha mara mma nwanji a na-alu alu. O na-adiri umuokpu Igbo mfe inukwata n'ebe o bula ha luru di n'ihu umeala ha, ikwu ezi okwu nakwa mgbasike n'oru ha. A na-ahwakari umuokpu Igbo ama ma ha luo di na mba n'ihu mgbasike n'oru ha. Umukpu Igbo so n'umunwanyị ndi ahụ na-agba mbo soro na-ebu ibu di n'ezinulo, na-azu umuaka ha muru n'eleghi di ha anya n'ihu. Ha esoghi n'umunwanyị ndi ahụ na-afanye aka n'ukwu na-aza "weta ka e rie". O di mkpa ka a rutu aka n'ebe a na umeala umuokpu Igbo nwere e gbochighi ha ikwuputa uche obi ha n'oge niile.

Mgbe Ogbalu (1974:89) kwuru, "okwu umuokpu adighi ekwe okwukwu, ha na-edozi edozi, o kariha ha na-ekposakwa ekposa', ihe o na-achọ ikowa bu na umuokpu Igbo bu ndi umeala, mana ihe e ji ike na nchakasi anya eme puta, ha nokwa kwusie ike, n'ihu na eze ndi ahụ ha ji achi ochi ka ha jikwa na-ata aru. Ezinulo umuokpu Igbo bi n'ime ya na-aga nke oma makana ha na-enweta ezigbo ozuzu banyere nlekota ezinulo. A na-amu ha ka nwa na-ele ha anya n'ihu n'ihu na ha na-ere ure, o kachasi ma ha gaa n'obodo ha, ebe umunna ha di. Ndi ogo choro ibia luru nwaokpu o bula ga-enye umuokpu oke nke ha, iji nweta nkwardo ha n'alumalu ahụ.

Umuafo Igbo n'onwe ha na-eji umuokpu ha eme onu n'ihu mbo ha nakwa igba ha na-eti.

Oru Umukpu N'Okwu Aku na Uba

Umukpu na-aru oru di mkpa n'okwu nkwalite aku na uba nke ezinulo ha di iche iche, nakwa n'obodo ha n'ozuzu oke. O buru na anyi eleba anya n'oru ugbo, o doro anyi anya na nkume ji isi ulo aku na uba ndi Igbo bu oru ugbo, na o bukwanu umunwanyi bu ya n'isi. N'okwu Afigbo, (2010:190)

O noghi na mgbagha bu okwu a na-ekwu na umunwanyi bu isi ehi nke a naghị achọ achọ n'ite n'okwu aku na uba mba Afirika tupu obibia ndi ocha. Na ngalaba niile bu e jewe aghaghị n'okwu aku na uba, oru ugbo, azumahia na mmeputa ihe, umunwanyi ruru oru puru iche. N'oru ugbo, ha weere ubara onuogugu ha ruo ihe a huru anya.

Umukpu Igbo ketara oke na nkowa a e nyere n'elu ebe a. Ha maara na oru ndi dika ibo ahijia, iko ihe akuku ndi dika ede, oka, akwukwo nri dgz dara ha n'ukwu, ha na-eke onwe ha n'otu n'otu iji hu na ha nyeere umunna ha aka n'oru, n'otu aka ahụ kwa ka ha ji enye aka n'oru n'ebe ndi a luru ha. Otu a kwa ka ha si agba mbo iji hu na umunna ha nwetara ezigbo aburu ihe akuku ndi na-eru ihe n'ubi ha.

Umukpu Na Azumahia

Site n'ilupu di na mba, umuokpu na-eweta njiko na ezi mmekorita n'etiti umunna ha na ebe ndi di ha. Nke a ga-eme ka azumahia n'etiti obodo abuo ndi a na-aga were were.

N'okwu Afigbo (2010:10)

"N'udi obodo ndi di otu a ndi na-azu ahia na ndi na-aga njem uzọ di anya na-echekwa onwe ha site n'aka ndi na-ana ha utu aghara aghara n'uzo nakwa ndi omekome, site n'iluru nwanji n'ezinulo ndi nwere agba ndi bi n'okporo uzọ ahu ha na-esi aga ahia. Ulo ogo ha nwoke na-aburu ha ebe nlaba nakwa ebe nchekwa ngwa ahia na ngwongwo ha, ndi ahia ha na-abiakwa na-akwu ugwo ndi ha ji ma burukwa ngwa ahia ndi ohuu.

Ihe a e deputara n'elu bu ihe mere eme, n'ebe umuokpu Igbo di. O bu site n'alumdi ha ka e si waa okpo nzurita ahia nakwa itu mgbere di iche iche. Tupu obibia ndi ocha o buladi mgbe ha biara, umunwanyi buru isi a huru kwawa okpu na ngalaba ufodu nke ndu nke ime obodo, ma norokwa n'isi ufodu arusi. Umunwanyi na-ana ugwu n'obodo site n'ibu onye tiri igba n'azumahia, oru ugbo, ide uri na ikwe akwa (Personal Communication, Owerri, 2025).



Ụmụọkpụ na Okwu Ọchịchị Obodo

Ụmụọkpụ Igbo amalitelarij itinye ọnu n'okwu banyere ọchịchị obodo, ọ bụladị tupu ọbibia ndi mbiarachịwa (ndi ọcha). Ike ụmụọkpụ kpara n'Ogidi n'afọ otu puku nari itoli na iri na anọ (1914) mgbe ụmụnwanyi ndi na-azụ ahia mere njeghari iwe, nakwa njeghari iwe ndi ọzọ yiri ya, na-egosi ụzọ ụmụọkpụ Igbo siri gboo mkpa okwu ọchịchị ndi dijiri ha.

Afigbo (1972) dika o deputara ya n'Onyesoh, (2021:3)

... e nwere ihe ndekota site kamgbe gboo n'oge ọchịchị mbiarachịwa banyere otu ụmụnwanyi siri jikọọ aka ọnu n'uzọ udo wee megide omume ikpa oke, mmegbu na tigbuo zogbuo. Njeghari iwe iji megide ọchịchị nchigbu nke ndi mbiarachịwa nke ụmụnwanyi mere n'Aba n'afọ 1929 bu ihe aka ebe nyere amamihe na ike ụmụnwanyi n'okwu ọchịchị n'ala Igbo.

Ụmụọkpụ bu otu n'ime otu ụmụnwanyi a haziri ahazi nke ka di ezigbo ire. N'ih i mgbako aka ha ka ha ji nwee ezigbo ugwu na nsopuru n'okwu ọchịchị. Ha na-eso n'idozi esemokwu nakwa ihazighari ihe n'ime ezinulo nakwa obodo. Ndi nwoke na-akwanyekwara ha ugwu nke mere ha ji etinye odimma ụmụnwanyi mgbe ha na-atu atumatu o bula.

Ufodu esemokwu ndi ụmụọkpụ Igbo na-edozi gnyere:

i. Esemokwu n'etiti obodo abuo

Akugbo, kowara na mgbe e nwere esemokwu di n'etiti otu obodo na ibe ya, dika okè ala, iyi (mmiri) ikwaso umuagboghọ iko n'ike, dgz, o bu oru dijiri umuokpu idozi okwu ahụ tupu ya amubaa. Otu n'ime ihe ndi o jiri di mkpa idozi okwu ahụ ngwangwa bu na ndi so n'otu umuokpu nwere ike burukwa ndi luru di n'obodo ndi ahụ na-esesi ha okwu, n'ih i ya ha agaghi achọ ka ọgu daa n'etiti umunna ha na ndi di ha. N'onodu a umuokpu ga-aru oru ndi odozi esemokwu nakwa ndi na-egbo ọgu. (Akagbo 20th August 2025. Personal Communication)

Afigbo, (2010:89) wee kwado akuko a,

... otu n'ime otu ụmụnwanyi umuokpu dika ufodu ndi Igbo si akpa ha, gbasiri ezigbo ike ma dikwa mkpa. Ma ndi nwoke ma ndi nwanyi naara atu ha ujo ma na-asopuru ha. Ha na-agbata n'okwu ndi daputara n'ebe a muru ha, oge o bula ha batara n'okwu, a ga-enwe mkpebi. O bughị naani na ha na-edozi okwu ndi daputara n'ebe a muru ha kama ha na-akwusi ọgu nakwa esemokwu n'ebe ha luru di.

Site n'ih e deputara n'elu, o doola anya na umuokpu chorọ udo na ezi mmekorita kariya mmadu niile makana o buru na ọgu daa, o ga-aka emetuta umuokpu n'uzo abuo, n'ebe a muru ha na ebe ha lupuru di, n'ih i ya ha na-agba ezigbo mbọ iji hu na e nwere udo na ezi mmekorita n'obodo.

ii. Esemokwu n'etiti Umunna

Ichie Nwankwo, otu n'ime ndi a gbara ajuju ọnu na nchocha a, kwuru na mgbe esemokwu daputara n'etiti umunna, oha umunna ga-ebu uzọ nwaa ike ha n'idozi ya bu okwu. O buru na okwu ahụ nyi ha, iji gbochie iburikota nsi na aja, ha na-akpoku umuokpu ka ha bia gbaa ndi ahu na-ese okwu ndu. Umuokpu ga-aza oku a ma meekwa ka udo di n'ih i na o dighi onye na-agbagha okwu ha n'ih e ha kpebiri n'ala nna ha (Ichie Nwankwo: 20th August, 2025, Personal Communications).

iii. Esemokwu banyere ala

Okwu banyere ala a bugh i agwo a na-eji ikpo mma egbu. Oge ufodu okwu ala na-esite n'aka nna nna were fere n'aka nna, ma sitekwa n'aka nna wee ruo n'umu. O buru na e meghi ngwangwa iji meghara odachi sitere n'ikpe ala o nwere ike iri isi ndi mmadu.

Oku a na-akpo Umuokpu n'ebe a abugh i ibia kpee ikpe a n'ih i na okwu ala dijiri nwoke kama, ihe ha na-abia itinye n'oru bu ihe ahụ umunna ha kpebiri, maka na oge ufodu e bie ikpe, ufodu na-anabata ya, ufodu anaghi anabata. (Ugwumba, August 15, 2025: Personal Communication)

iv. Esemokwu N'etiti Di na Nwunye

N'ala Igbo, o bu eziokwu na a na-ahapuru di na nwunye ka ha dozie okwu dijiri ha mana o buru na okwu kariya n'udi iji ndu egwu egwu, ndi no n'akuku ga-abatazi n'ih i na imi bewe anya ebewe.



N'oge ụfọdu, ụmụna na-ata okwu ata n'ihu na ha agaghi achọ ịta nwa nna ha ụta n'ihu nwunye ya. O bụrụ na onodu di otu a Ụmuokpu na-abata n'okwu ahụ, taa ukwa jaa eze, onye ikpe mara a taa ya ụta na-eleghi mmadu anya n'ihu. Ụmuokpu bie ikpe, mgbagha adighi ya. (Emenike, August 2025; Personal Communication)

v. **Esemokwu N'etiti Ụmụ nwunye Abu**

O bụrụ na ụmụnwunye abuo enwee esemokwu, ndi di ha ga-agbagodu mbọ imezi ya bu okwu, mana o buri na o dabaghi, a ga-akpozi umuokpu. Chetakwa na onye na-akpo umuokpu n'onodu a ga-adi njikere iweta ihe ndi ha ga-eri na nke ha ga-anu o buladi ndi ha ga-ebu ala, tinyekwara ego ugbo ha.

Dika Emenike (onye a gbara ajuju onu) siri kwuo, o naara abu onye chechaa ihe ga-efu ya n'aka umuokpu ma ha bira ya ikpe, ha adi na mbu gbanaha okwu na uka. O buri na ha bia tinye okwu ahụ onu, o nweghi ihe ozo onye o bula puru ime nabughi iwere ihe ha kpere n'ihu na mgbagha adighi ya. (Emenike 12th August, 2025)

N'agbanyeghi oru ndi a a kporo aha, Ụmuokpu na-aru ha ka nwekwara oru ndi ozo ha na-aruru ndi obodo maka ezi mmekorita mmadu na ibe ya. Oru ndi a gunyere:

i. **Ụmuokpu na-agba ihe ojoo oto**

Ụmuokpu bu ndi a ma ama n'igba ama ihe ojoo a na-ezo ezo n'ala Igbo. O buri na umuokpu choputa na e nwere onye ma o bu ndi bu agada gbachiri uzo, ndi ji ikikere ogwu ojoo na otu nzuzo na-emegide ndi mmadu, elemanya ndi obodo ga na-atu ujo ikwu, iji gbanari onwu, umuokpu ga-agbakota, o bughu naani na ha ga-atu onye di otu a njo ya n'anya kama ha ga-emeru ogwu ya. Mgbe ufodu ha ga-anyukota mmamiri ha onu wee kwutosia okwu ojoo n'isi onye di otu ahụ. Ha zochaa ebe ahụ mpiata mpija ha alaa, o dighi ihe onye ahụ puru ime (Oguzie Personal Communication July 20, 2025).

ii. Ụmuokpu Igbo na-akwado ihe o bula ga-abu odimma umunna ha. Iji maa atụ, o buri na umuokpu e zute nwunye nwanne ha nwoke n'uzo, n'ahia ma o bu ebe a na-eme mmemme, o buri na ejiji ya adighi ha mma ma o bukwanu otu o di adighi ha mma, ha ga-ezute nwanne ha nwoke nye ya nkocha otu o kwesiri nke ga-eme ka uche ya diri ya n'ilekota nwunye ya otu o kwesiri. N'otu aka ahukwa ka ha ga-eji baara nwunye nwanne ha nwoke mba ma o buri na ha zute nwanne ha nwoke n'udi na-adighi mma n'anya, ebe o yi efe ruru unyi, di nkikara ma dikwa ka onye agu na-anyu anya. Ha ga-aju nwanyi ahụ ma o bu o hughu di ya anya n'ulo tupu ya adiri otu ahụ puwa ama. Nwanyi di otu a na-arijo umuokpu mgbaghara ma kwe ha nkwa na ihe di otu ahụ agaghi emekwa ozo. (Okere, C. Personal Communication, July 19th 2025).

iii. Ụmuokpu na-abata n'okwu metutara onye otu ha

Ụmuokpu anaghi ekwe ka a na-emegide onye otu ha n'ebe ndi di ha, o kachasi ndi nke di ha nwurula anwu, umunne di ha wee na-achozu imegbu ha. Ụmuokpu na-agba mbọ n'ihu na a naraghi onye otu ha ala ya, nkwa na ukwa ihe ndi ozo o kwesiri iji lekota onwe ya na umu ya. Otutu oge, ha na-enye aka meziere onye otu ha ulo ya o kachakwa ndi nke ulo ha na-ehi mmiri, ma o bu ndi nke choro idakposi adakposi.

iv. Ụmuokpu Igbo na-esonyere umunne ha ndi nwoke mgbe ha na-aga iluta nwanyi. Dika Adaobi siri kowaa, naani mgbe obi ga-esi nwanyi na-abia di ike na ndi di ya nabatara ya bu mgbe o huru umuokpu ndi so bia ikporo ya. Nke ka nke bu na nwafo Igbo o bula na-aga iluta nwanyi ga-achoriri ka umunne ya ndi nwanyi sonyere ya. Onodu umuokpu n'emume di otu a ga-enye nwoke ahụ ezigbo mmasiobi ike (Adaobi, Opara, Personal Communication, July 24th 2025)

Otu a kwa ka umuokpu Igbo ji enyere umunna ha aka ka ha too ma kwurukwa n'ukwu ha n'okwu aku na uba. N'oge ufodu ha na-akponara umunwanne ha olemole na-azu ha n'akwukwo, ziga ndi ufodu ebe ha ga-amu azumahia ma o bukwanu oru aka ga-abara ha uru. Mgbe ufodu o buri umuokpu ndi di ha bu akajiaku, ha na-ayo ya ka o gbazinye nwanne ha nwoke ego iji kwado azumahia nke ya, ma o bukwanu idi na-ebunye ya ngwaahia, e rechaa a kwunye ugwo. O bughu ihe ohuru na umuokpu na-akwado ndi di ha ka ha bia wuo ulo nwere agba n'ezinulo a muru ha, iji megbaa umunne ha ihu, o kachasi ndi nke aka na-esighi ike iruta ezigbo ulo n'onwe ha (Okere C. Personal Communication, July 30th 2025).



v. Umuokpu Igbo na-agba ama ndi bara uru

Ha na-atupenye umunna ha azu banyere otu onodu siri di, o kachasi n'oge obodo na ibe ha na-alu ogu. Umuokpu ndi lupuru di na mba aghaghi igbara umunne ha ama banyere nkata o bula a na-akpa iji megide ha. Nke a ga-emezi ka, umunna ha were ututu chowa ewu ojii. Iji chekwaa onwe ha ma gbochikwa ihe ojojo kaara idakwasị ha n'ih na agha e yiri eyi anaghi eri ngworo.

v. Onodu Umuokpu N'oge Akwamozu

Umuokpu na-egosi uru ha bara n'uzo puru iche mgbe o bula a na-eme akwamozu nwanne ha nwoke ma o bu onye o bula n'umunna ha. Malite mgbe ha natara ozi banyere onwu nwanne ha, ruo mgbe a ga-eli ya, ha na-eweputa oge na-aga inonyere ezinulo ahụ mmadu nwunahuru, na-akasi ha obi ma na-esigakwara ha erimeri. O na-abukari ha na-aga zigara ada onye ahụ nwuru anwu ozi n'ebe o bula a luru ya iji gwa ya na nne ya ma o bu nna ya ahapula.

Umuokpu Igbo na-anọ na mbuuzo n'idozi esemokwu o bula daputara n'ebe mmadu nwuru, mana nke ahụ egbochighi ha ibu agha e jiri mara ha. Mgbe ha choputara na elemanya na nwanne ha tara ahuhu nleda na elekotaghi nke oma, site n'aka nwunye ya na umu ya. Ha ga-akpo ndi di otu a gbaa ha ajuju onu otu o kwesiri, o buru na ha asataghi onu ha, Umuokpu ga-ada ha nha gbara okpurukpu nakwa ahuhu kwesiri ha iji gbochie udi ihe ahụ ime ozo. Umuokpu anaghi ala azu, n'isoro gaa juo ase ma o bu mee nchocha ihe kpatara onwu nwanne ha. (Ogbalu, F.N. n.d: 28)

Ndi mere nchocha na-eche na o bu n'ebe a ka ufodu ndi na-aghotahie oru umuokpu na-aru dika odozi obodo, si na-ahutazi ha ka odogha obodo. Ihe ndi di otu a ga-aghota bu na anaghi eji anya reberebe achu ajo mmuo, ozokwa a hapu aru ya gbaa afọ o buruzie omenala. Ihe o bula umuokpu mere, ma ha ji ike ike ma ha ji nwayo nwayo bu maka odimma umunna ha, na mgbatikwu ndi di ha nakwa ndi Igbo n'ozuzuke.

Osuagwu (nd:132) wee kwuo

O bu eziokwu na umuokpu na-eme ka udele ozu daara, ma ha na-eme ka ebe mmadu nwuru na ekpo oku. Ha na-agu egwu di iche iche na-etukwa ozu ahụ aha n'egwu. Ha nwere ike iji aha ya roputa ufodu egwu ha a na-agu na-ekwukwe n'ihe ndi o mere. Ha na-arokwa uka ochi di iche iche.

Ihe ndi a umuokpu na-eme mere ka ndi mmadu chefutụ onodu ojojo ha no n'ime ya site n'ibelatatu iru uju di ha n'obi. Ha ga-anonyegidere ezinulo ahụ mmadu nwunahuru wee ruo mgbe e lifechara mmadu, tupu ha alaa ebe ndi di ha.

Umuokpu N'Ikwado Atumatu Oru Mmeppe Obodo

Umuokpu Igbo na-akwado atumatu oru mmeppe ndi a n'oru n'obodo a muru ha dika Anozie (2003:125) siri kwaa.

Ha na-enwere onwe ha nzuko kwa mgbe kwa mgbe. Ha na-atukotara onwe ha ego mgbe onye otu ha na-akwado ilu di. O nweghi ihe gbochiri ha ibagide oru mmeppe n'obodo ha iji gosiputa ihunanya ha nwere n'obodo.

Umuokpu Igbo na-ehiwegasị ogige ebe a na-amu aka oru di iche iche, dika ikwa akwa, ikpa isi, ijikwa ebe a na-eme emume, na isi udi erimeri di iche ihe.

Mgbe ufodu umuokpu na-abagide atumatu oru igwuru umunna ha olulu mmiri onunu. Ha na-aruzikwa ulokwukwo na ulogwu. Mgbe o bula ndi obodo na-agba onya ego, maka oru mmeppe, umuada na-akporo ndi di ha na umu ha bia kwado umunna ha. Ha na-etinyekwa ego nke ha n'otu n'otu nakwa nke ha tukotara.

Nwachukwu (2006:206) wee kwuo

... ndi otu a gbasiri ezigbo ike, ha zukwara ka e mee... ndi ufodu weere ha dika ndi na-ehekwa odinala obodo. Ha na-etinye uchu ma na-egosiputa mmetuta n'okwu banyere mmeppe obodo ha. Ha na-etinye onu n'okwu mgbe o bula a dara iwu obodo. Ha na-ada ndi dara iwu nha ruuru ha...



Ụmuokpu na-egosiputa amamihe ha otu o kwesiri n'ime obodo di iche iche. O bughị naani na ha na-edozi esemokwu nke ndi nwoke na-apughị idozite, ha na-etinye aka ihu na e nwere udo na ida juu n'ime ahia. Ha nwere otu otawaike nke ha, bukwa ndi ha na-eji akpata ugwo ma na-anata ndi dara iwu nha.

Onodu Umuokpu N'ala Igbo ka O di Ugbu a

O nwebeghi ihe e wepuru n'ime ugwu na nsopuru, o buladi n'anya a na-aso umuokpu n'ala Igbo. E chefukwala na otutu umuokpu Igbo na-agba mbo dara uda na ngalaba oru ha niile ma n'obodo Najirija nakwa na mba ofesi. Otutu n'ime ha jicha okwa di elu n'ochichi goomentị. Nchocha a chetara umuokpu Igbo ndi dika, odz. Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, Odz. Obiageli Ezekwesili, Odz. Kema Chikwe, Nwd. Chimamanda Adichie, Odz. Bianca Ojukwu, obuladi Odz. Dora Akunyili (nke larala mmuo), a ga-akpokwanu ole hara ibe ha. Ndi a bucha umuokpu ndi Igbo ji eme onu. A na-enyeha ugwu na nsopuru ma na-etinyekwa ha n'ihe ndi a na-eme maka odimma ala Igbo (Ahumaraeze, personal communication, August 3rd, 2025).

The offsprings of umuokpu also enjoy much regards and respect from the mother's kinsmen. Different communities in Igbo land call them different names like umu nwa nwa, nwadiala, okele, dgz.

N'ala Igbo a naghị egosi Nwadiala oji ma ya gaa ibe nne ya n'ihina e kwesighi ihuta ya dika obia. O buru na e gosi ya oji, o nwere ike werechaa oji niile ahụ tinye n'akpa ya ma laakwa, uta adighiri ya. Osuagwu, (nd 3) wee kwuo...

“... n'ebe ufodu ogo ma o bu nwadiala (okene) anaghị awa oji”.

A na-asopuru umu nwa nwa site n'iwepuru ha olu anu ndi e gburu n'ibe nne ha, maka na o bu oke ruuru ha, a naghị agbagha ya agbagha. Umụ nwadiala na-emesara ahu rie ihe o bula ha choro iri na-atughị egwu nsi na aja ma o bu ihe ojoo o bula n'ihina ndi Igbo anaghị emegide umu nwa nwa ha iji gbanari umunne na iwe ndichie, ndi okpu na ndi egede. O na-abu umudiala huta onwe ha n'onodu ize ndu ha na-agbapu oso ndu gaa n'ibe nne ha iji zere ndu.

Achebe, (1958:20) wee kwuo

Okonkwo akwaa ngwongwo kporo ndi nwunye ya na umuaka gbapu n'Umofia wee gbagaa ibe nne ya bu Mbanta iji gaa koo mmapu a mapuru ya n'iwu afọ asaa maka igbu nwa Ezeudu gbara afọ iri na isii n'oge akwamozu enyi ya nwoke. Dika nwadiala ha, ndi obodo Mbanta enweghi ihe ozo ha puru ime karija inabata Okonkwo na ndi ezinulo ya niile ka ha bie afọ asaa. N'otu aka ahukwa, ndi Mbanta jikwara onu nyere ezinulo Okonkwo aka mgbe ha na-alaghachi Umofia mgbe ha nochara afọ asaa ha gbara oso ochu.

O bu nke a kpatara ndi Igbo ji atu ilu si, oso chüwa nwanwa, ya agbagaa ibe nne ya. Mgbe o bula nwa nwa (nwadiala) toruru ihe e ji mmadu eme nwuru, a ga-aga kporuru ndi nna ya ochie (umunna nne ya), o bu ha ga-abia were mbazu igwe maa n'ala ebe ha choro ka e lie nwa nwa ha, tupu ndi ga-egwu ala ili amalite gwuwe, ma o bughị otu ahü, o dighi ihe ga-enwe isi. Nkwanye ugwu a bukwa uzọ iji hu na e liri nwa nwa ha n'ebe o kwesiri ga-abukwanu maka odimma ezinulo ya ndi o hapuru laa mmuo.

Nwokpu n'onwe ya nwuo, ndi di ya ga-aga kwanyere umunna ya ugwu dika omenala Igbo siri di.

Osuagwu (nd:131) kwuru,

Site n'abali ubochi ahü o nwuru ndi umuokpu ibe ya ga-abia ura ozu (ikwa abali, iche abali, nche abali). Ha ga-esi mba di iche iche ha luru di bia. Nwada o bula nuru na ibe ya nwuru na-ahapu ihe o bula o ji n'aka jee ebe ahü... Ha nwere ike jide ndi nwunye nwa ya si na ha ga-etigbu ha n'ihina o bu na ha eletaghi nne di ha anya mere o jiri nwuo. Ha nwere ike kporuta umu ya ndi nwoke ndi ntakiri ma o buru



umu umu ya si na ha juru ikwachiri ya ulo mere mmiri jiri higbuo nwanne ha nwaanyi.

Otu tu mgbe, o buru na ndi Igbo choputa na e lezighi nwaokpu ha anya, ma o bukwanu na e tinyere ya n'oke mkgpagbu nke kpatara onwu ya, ha na-azoro egwu aworo (egwu agha) kporo ndi dimkpa gbasiriike gaa buru ozu nwanne ha nwan yi lie ya n'ala nna ya. O doro anya na oke ihe ufodu ndi Igbo na-ana ndi ogo ha ma nwaokpu ha nwuo, dika ehi, mmanya, ji, akwa dgz bu iji tie onwe ha aka n'obi otu ha nwere ike n'ih i oke ihe funahuru ha (nwaokpu).

Otuosiladi, e nwere aka mgba chere ha n'ihu n'ala Igbo. Nke mbu bu n'ebe ndi na-aghotahie oru ndi ha na-aru dika odozi-obodo. Ha wee na-ako asiri di iche iche ma na-emebikwa mmuo ndi mmadu n'ebe umuokpu di, nke na-emezi ka ndi mmadu nwunahuru na-adi mbu were iwe na onuma chebiri umuokpu ma na-eme ha, nkita tagburu enwe, enwe tagburu nkita.

N'agbanyeghi udi mmeso a, umuokpu na-enwetakwa oke ruuru ha n'ih i na o dighi onye gach o inara abumonu ha (Nnedozie, N. 19th August 2025, Personal Communication).

Onodu ojo ozo metutara onodu umuokpu nke metutakwara ndi Igbo niile n'oge e mere nchocha a bu enweghi nchekwa ndu na akunuba nakwa oke iyi ndu egwu na chi bo o a nu ozo nke a na-ahuta n'ala Igbo taa. Ka o di n'oge nchoputa a, ndi o bu egbe ma ndi ntor i na-awakpo ndi mmadu aghara aghara na-aturu ndi a na-aturu, na-egbu ndi a na-egbu ma na-anarakwa ndi a na-anara ukwu ego iji gbara onwe ha.

Otu tu obodo di n'ala Igbo a gbaala oso ndu hapu obodo ha gbagaa uzo ije, iji zere ndu. Ufodu obodo n'ala Igbo na-emezi akwamozu na olili ozu umunna ha na mba (uzo ije) iji gbanari mwakpo nke ndi obu egbe.

Onodu ojo o di otu a na-emetuta umuokpu Igbo n'ih i na ha enweghizi ike ilaru n'obodo a muru ha kama, umunna ha na-agbata oso ndu n'ebe a luru ha, ebe ndi na-enweghi nsogbu mwakpo ndi egbu ara obara.

Mmechi na Ntuziaka

Nchocha a a gbaala ya n'anwu ihe kpatara umuokpu Igbo jiri buru odozi obodo, na-abughi odogha obodo. Oru oma ha iji kwalite udo na oganiihu nke obodo a muru ha bu uru diiri ezinulo ebe a muru ha nakwa oha obodo ah u n'ozuzu oke.

Iji kwado otu oganiihu a idi na-aga n'ihu, nchocha a na-enye ntuziaka ndi a:

- i. Ohanaeze ga-aturu anya ha ala wee huta oru oma ndi ah u umuokpu na-ar u n'obodo, iji tugharia uche ha ma kwusikwa nkato na nkocha ha na-akocha umuokpu, nke ihe kpatara ya bu nghotahie.
- ii. Nwan yi o bula a muru n'ala Igbo nwere ebe o bu nwokpu, n'ih i ya o kwesiri iga sonyere ibe ya n'otu umuokpu iji tunye oke nke ya n'oru idoz i obodo.
- iii. Ndi isi ochichi na goomenti ga-agba mb o weghachite nchekwa ndu na akunuba na mpaghara ala Igbo. Ha ga-akwusiriiri ndi o ji egbe ndi a na-awakpo ndi Igbo n'ubi ha, na-akwaso umunwan yi iko n'ike ma na-egbukwa ndi ha na-egbu. O buru na ala dere duu, udo loghachite, umuokpu ga-eji obi ruru ala na-alota n'ala a muru ha iji na-enye aka n'idozi obodo.
- iv. Ndi obodo niile di n'ala Igbo ga na-anabata umuokpu ha na-akwanyere ha ugwu na oke ruuru ha, nke a ga-eme ka ha jiri ezi obi ha na-ar u oru ndi ha na-ar u maka odimma obodo ebe a muru ha.

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A METALEXICOGRAPHIC EXAMINATION OF PARTS OF SPEECH (POS) TREATMENT IN SELECTED IGBO DICTIONARIES

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Abstract

Lexicography is a dynamic field concerned with the theoretical and practical dimensions of dictionary compilation. As languages undergo constant change, new lexical entries are introduced daily, necessitating systematic documentation to provide writers and speakers with a robust choice of expressions. This study provides a metalexico-graphic examination of the treatment of Parts of Speech (PoS) within the content forms; nouns, verbs, adjectivals, and adverbials across seven selected Igbo-English bilingual dictionaries published between 1972 and 2014. Adopting a descriptive qualitative methodology, the research assesses how these dictionaries handle morphological and syntactic information, such as classification of qualificative nouns, transitivity, and verbal derivatives. Findings reveal significant structural inconsistencies and a lack of uniformity in PoS tagging across the selected dictionaries. While Williamson (2013) and Akponye (2014) provide robust morphological data and usage examples Nnaji (1985) and Eke (2001) function primarily as bilingual wordlists with minimal grammatical guidance. Identified discrepancies however are attributable to lack of specialized lexicographic training and unresolved debates within Igbo linguistic theory. In conclusion, for future Igbo dictionaries to meet international standards and effectively serve for pedagogical purposes; this study recommends that there is an urgent need for standardized PoS labeling, mandatory inclusion of contextual usage examples, and closer collaboration between lexicographers and theoretical linguists.

Introduction

Lexicography is a steady activity as it concerns with the theory and practice of compiling dictionaries. Languages undergo changes on daily basis; as a result new lexical entries are constantly introduced. To ensure proper capturing of new items, there is need for proper documentation. With the record of lexical items, Igbo users would have wider choice of words and expressions which will be a boom to Igbo writers. The art of dictionary writing does not only entail collection of word list, or having the knowledge of the language as a native speaker, it also requires linguistic training to understand the use of the language. Constructive and creative ideas are crucial in handling every lexical item appropriately. Hence, the knowledge of linguistic research method is vital as well as the skill to apply the methodology to the analysis of the language.

This study examines the Parts of Speech (PoS) as it is treated by various compilers of seven selected existing Igbo dictionaries within the content forms, specifically nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbials. The Igbo language belongs to the Igboid subgroup of West Benue Congo classification of languages. It is spoken by over 40 millions of people who are located in the South Eastern geo-political zone of Nigeria. Other speakers are located in the neighbouring states of Delta, Rivers, Benue, Cross River and Akwa Ibom (Williamson & Blench 2000). Within these areas mentioned there are several speech communities with scores of regional dialects; ranging from Ònichà (Onitsha) in Anambra state to Òlù and Owere in Imo state, Nsùka in Enugu, Omaahia (Umuaahia) in Abia, IkaUkwuanì and Enuanì in Delta state as well as Etchie and Ikwere (Ikwerre) in Rivers state. These dialects being derived from proto-Igbo language share features in common. Some of the dictionaries consulted for this study were based on some dialects of Igbo, this include Williamson (2013) 'Dictionary of Ònichà Igbo' which is based on Ònichà dialect. These dialects used by some of the compilers are mutually intelligible; hence their ability to share some lexical



items (Emenanjo 2015). The Igbo language is an agglutinating language, rich in derivational and extensional morphology, relatively poor in inflection but has lots of verb serialization (Uwalaka, 1982; Nwachukwu, 1983; Emenanjo 2015).

Beyond all these dialects, Igbo still has the standard variety that is developed for educational and literary purposes. It uses a Latin-based alphabet structure for writing system which was introduced during the colonial era by Christian missionaries in the 19th century hence influencing its orthography. The writing system uses a mix of consonant vowel (CV) or consonant vowel consonant (CVC) syllable structure which represents a single unit of meaning. The Igbo language is tonal, hence the meaning of words are altered by the tones.

Igbo has a relatively simple system of noun classes when compared to languages such as Swahili. The verbs often include pre-verbal markers that show aspect, tense, and mood. It basically employs affixation processes to form derived words. This study is necessitated because PoS serve as a critical bridge between grammar and lexis hence providing users with the morphological and systematic frameworks to use words correctly.

The PoS in the Igbo language is subdivided into two forms; the content forms and the function forms. The content forms include the nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectivals, adverbials, holophrases, and ideophones whereas the function forms are constituent markers of prepositional notions, markers of deixis, conjunctions, affixes and clitics (Emenanjo 2015). Our area of concentration is on the content forms with our focus on the verbs, nouns, adjectivals and the adverbials as they are treated in the selected existing Igbo dictionaries.

Review of Related Literature

Lexicography entails the art and science of compiling a dictionary. It involves the principles guiding dictionary making. Hence, simply put it the practice and study of compiling, editing and writing of dictionaries. Producing dictionaries involves systematic collection, organization and presentation of words, their meanings, and other linguistic information for the purpose of reference and communication (Jackson 2002; Crystal, 2008; Oweleke 2017). Therefore the primary objective of lexicography is to create accurate, comprehensive and user-friendly dictionaries that serve as reliable language resources for various users, including learners, researchers, translators and language professionals.

A close examination of some related works in lexicography that supports this study are shown below.

PoS in Lexicographic work

The primary obligation of lexicography is to meet the needs of intended users comprising both the native speakers to language learners, therefore adequate PoS presentation is essential for lexical reasoning. Sevénson (2009) maintains that a dictionary should not only provide meanings but also describe the headword's syntagmatic characteristics as well as provide illustrative sentence examples. To buttress this further, Apresjan's (1974) systematic principle reiterates that words should not be listed as having random, disconnected meaning but rather analysed for their lexicographic types. Therefore all salient lexical classes should be described uniformly according to their linguistic relevant properties. This does not imply that PoS is bound to universal features because grammatical distinctions vary significantly across languages (Sauri, et al 2018:175). They suggest that PoS should be categorized by appealing to basic configurational properties. This includes what the lexical units combine with to form complex units (phrases) as well as the roles they play in the grammatical organization of the sentence morphologically, what type of inflection process they undergo and so on. Hence, in the Igbo language, lexicography should specify sub-classes that are relevant for grammatical distinctions for instance nouns should have; proper, common, qualificative, adverbial nouns all geared to guide user comprehension.

Lexicology explores the structure of the vocabulary of a language; this includes the examination of the internal semantic structure of the individual words, their relationships, syntagmatic regularities and syntactic projections. The syntactic information which a dictionary



headword provides should incorporate its syntagmatic characteristics. This embraces the information about the PoS. To this end, in lexicography, the dictionary treatment of a word should not solely target the meanings of the word but also describe in a way that meets the needs of the dictionary users. This entails citing sentences and derivatives that could emerge from the headwords. Lexicographic processes are demanding and require high linguistic knowledge and awareness. Two stages are usually involved in this process; the analysis and the synthesis state. The analysis stage demands high linguistic knowledge because of its systematicity in handling words, for proper identification of the various senses of the headword which might invariably result into different PoS. To achieve this all relevant syntactic facts about a headword are recorded for proper analysis. Hence, syntactic constructions in which a given headword occurs with adequate details and linguistic expertise, backed up with examples are required for dictionary compilation. This involves using “integrated linguistic descriptions, with perfectly coordinated dictionary and grammar (Sevensén 2009: 205).

PoS classification is usually based on the morphosyntactic distinctions that seem relevant in each specific language. For instance, in English, the most common way for sub-classification of verbs is to distinguish between the lexical and the auxiliary verbs; while for the Romance languages, the distinction is between the structure which is transitive and intransitive. In Russia, verbs are sub-classified into perfective and imperfective. This shows that PoS cannot be bound to a universal grammatical feature, because to achieve that each PoS would divide into the various sub-classification that are found around the different languages of the world. As a result PoS would become less manageable due to several levels of information that apply. Another case is that of English where nouns are categorized according to their type (common, proper, countability (mass, countable), whereas in Spanish verbs can simultaneously feature according to their sub-categorization and pronominal properties.

Secondly, redundant features would be introduced given that many features are shared across the PoS classes. Attempting to adopt PoS terminology for each language is sure to raise issues which are feature redundancy and concept conflation. Feature redundancy results when a classification has different terms for the same lexical entry (notion) as a result of adopting what is operational in other languages. Concept conflation happens when the same term is applied to two different concepts because different languages’ descriptions use it in different ways.

Function, Position and Form of PoS

Indicating the PoS membership provides information about the grammatical properties of the headword. It is a call on the user’s knowledge of regularities in the grammar of the language concerned. The position of the PoS in the dictionary entry should be clearly stated in the introductory notes. If a word belongs to more than one PoS because of its usage, the lexicographer ought to specify which PoS is being presented at the start of each section for clarity. The structure indicators used for PoS should also vary such as the font (could be italicized, ordinary or small type) indicating alternative or deviation from the norm. Non-typographical structure could also be used as an indicator for example an adjective could be presented thus <Adj> Sevensén (2009).

Types of Information

Information about the PoS, not minding how simple the word might seem generally conveys details about the headword. For example; book *n.*, from the notion used in the dictionary, *n* in this position shows that the word is a noun because it does not have any contradictory statement after it. There could also be a preceding article (*definite or indefinite*), should have a regular formed plural (*a book, the book, books, the books*). The possessive form of the word should also be shown (*the book’s cover*). Determiners such as possessive pronouns and demonstrative adjectives could also be stated (*my book, this book*). It can also serve as the subject or object of the sentence (*a book needs proper care, I have bought a book*). In languages where nouns are gender marked, such as French, it should also be indicated where feminine *f* or masculine *m.* as in ‘livre *m*’, fille *f* because it also helps in determining the predicative modifier of the noun (Sevensén 2009).



For the Igbo language where noun is not inflected for number, gender, person or case, it should be worthwhile to state the sub-class of the noun; *proper noun*, *common noun*, *qualificative noun* or *adverbial noun*. This classification guides the user to understand the different usages of any given noun (Emenajo, 2015).

Verbs are usually designated with *verb*, *vb.*, and *v.* additional information can be added to the PoS to indicate its usages such as *v.i* (intransitive verb), which some authors might indicate as *with obj.* and *no obj* because of confusion that usually arise from the use of transitivity. Phrasal verbs are also usually labeled as *phr.v.*, while some other dictionary would present same as look carefully *v adv*; look into *v prep*; look forward to *v adv prep*.

In most dictionaries, adverbs are marked with *adv.* and there may be some sub-classifications such as *sentence adverb* (fortunately, regrettable) and *sub-modifier adverb* (altogether, simply) Svensén (2009).

Implication of PoS Variability

A major challenge facing contemporary lexicography is handling words undergoing grammatical and lexicalization. PoS tagging has vital implication on the users of dictionary because it aids in the lexicographic reasoning. The different forms which a headword undergoes should be properly addressed. Approach to PoS usage affects the whole structure of a dictionary starting with the number and the organization of entries. Hence, Paulsen et al (2019) suggest that for such transitional forms, the base word class should remain fixed or the questionable form should be a sub-entry rather than an independent head word.

Most lexicographers still believe that it is an acceptable phenomenon for a headword to have two PoS tags. In such cases, the dictionary should reflect the actual usages with adequate examples shown to clarify the different constructions typical of such PoS presentation. This will facilitate the comprehension of the users especially the language learners who will learn the possibilities of the word usage rather than having to create examples to make their own inferences.

Igbo Lexicographers: An Overview

Dictionary is an integral part of any language pedagogy, one of the sole responsibilities of the Igbo lexicographers should be to produce works that are in agreement to the grammatical tradition of the Igbo language. The question then is,

- i) How many Igbo dictionary compilers are trained lexicographers and linguists?
- ii) Do Igbo lexicographers access the linguistic insights during the compilation of the existing dictionaries?
- iii) Are the linguistic descriptions in the Igbo language thoroughly presented and accessible to the normal dictionary user?

Methodology

This paper employs a descriptive approach to analyse seven (7) bilingual (Igbo-English) dictionaries currently used in academic and digital spaces. The analysis focuses on how these texts handle the content forms of the Igbo language against the backdrop of contemporary linguistic theory.



Data Presentation and Analysis

The presented data used for the study is randomly selected from the dictionaries and analysed as below:

Author (Year)	PoS Treatment	Usage Examples	Derivative/Infinitives
Nnaji (1985)	<p><i>go</i> (v.) - iga</p> <p><i>eat</i> (v.) - iri</p> <p><i>small</i> (adj.) - obere</p>	<p>o gara n'ahja he/she went to the market</p> <p>anyi riri nri abali - we ate dinner</p> <p>o nwere obere nwa – he/she has a small child</p>	-
Igwe (1999)	<p><i>abọ</i> (n) – cane basket with long rectangular base</p> <p><i>àbọ</i> (n) – a) piece of communal land, fallow land b) land recently farmed c) plantain, grove (e.g. of oil, palm, cassava, raffia palm)</p> <p><i>àbò</i> – numeral; ordinal; second</p>	<p><i>ikpa abọ</i> - to make a basket</p> <p><i>onye mbụ na onye abọ</i> - first person and second person</p>	<p><i>abọ aja</i> – basket of sacrificial offerings</p> <p><i>àbọ jigbọ</i> - cassava, plantain gove</p> <p><i>ununabọ</i> - both of you, the pair of you</p>
	<p><i>abụ</i> (n.) – church or christian songs; hymn; anthem;</p> <p><i>lụ</i> (v.t.) – marry, wed (inf. Simple <i>ilụ</i> ger. Inf. <i>ilulụ</i>)</p>	<p><i>ilụ di</i> – to marry a husband <i>ilụ nwunyè</i> – to marry a wife</p>	<p><i>abụ akwa</i> – funeral song, hymn, dirge (lit. Crying, mourning, song) <i>abụ mbido/mmalite</i> – opening hymn; introit <i>abụ mgbasa</i> – closing hymn, dismissing hymn, recessional hymn;</p> <p><i>ilujọ</i> - to marry badly, not to take proper care of as wife or husband</p>
Eke (2001)	<p>Accept (v.t) <i>inara</i></p> <p>Carefully (adv. m) – <i>nwayọọ</i></p>	<p><i>o naara onyinye ahụ</i> - he accepted the gift</p> <p><i>Jiri nwayọọ guo</i></p>	-



	<p>Cold (adj./n) – <i>oyi</i></p> <p>Beauty (n.u.) - <i>mma</i></p>	<p><i>ya</i> – read it carefully</p> <p><i>Mmiri a dī oyi.</i> – This water is cold</p> <p><i>Mma nwaanyi ahụ n'atụ n'anya.</i> – The beauty of that woman is striking</p>	
Echeruo (2001)	<p><i>abü</i> (n) [HL] (Önica) - hymn, psalm, song of joy, especially one associated with religious</p> <p><i>afö</i> (n) [HH] –</p> <p>1) belly; stomach; abdomen; entrails; intestines; also womb</p> <p>2) <i>afö</i> (n) [HH] - womb</p> <p>3) <i>afö</i> (n) [HH] tube; tyre; any inner tubing made from rubber or similar material-tube;</p>	<p><i>afö na-agba ya</i> - he has a running stomach.</p> <p><i>nwa afö ya</i> - a child of her womb;</p>	<p><i>Abüöma</i> - [Book of] Psalms;</p> <p><i>ndiabü</i> - singers; musicians; choristers.</p> <p><i>afö ukwu</i> - pot-belly; <i>afö anu</i> - entrails ora slaughtered animal;</p> <p><i>afö ime</i> – pregnancy</p> <p><i>afö moto</i> - motortyres; <i>afö taya</i> - tyre tube. *A meaning derived by analogy with "afo" = stomach, intestines.</p>
Williamson 1972 (2013)	<p><i>be</i> (n.) – home; dwelling;</p> <p><i>be</i> (v.) – cry out</p> <p><i>be</i> (v.) – stop (on reaching sufficiency)</p>	<p><i>ọ nò nà be yā</i> – he is at home, he is in</p> <p><i>ọ nà-èbe kà ewu</i> - He is crying like a goat</p> <p><i>kà o be nọọfụ!</i> – That is enough!</p> <p><i>ọ bụ etu a ka o</i></p>	<p><i>ndi be</i> - household; people of the house; fellow-townfolk</p> <p><i>obube</i> – crying</p>



		<i>belu?</i> – Is it only this? Is this all?	<i>òbùbè</i> – ending; stopping
	<i>be</i> (v.) – cut; stop		
Akponye (2014)	<i>ìba</i> (v.) – to enter	<i>ọ banyare n'ụlọ</i> - he entered the house	<i>ìbata</i> – to enter towards the speaker
	<i>akwa</i> (n.) – cry/ crying	<i>nwata nà-ebe akwa</i> – the child is crying	
	<i>akwà</i> (n.) - egg	<i>ọkụkọ tiri àkwa n'upà</i> – the hen laid an egg in the nest	

Table 1

Findings

From the data above as presented in Table 1, there is a lack of uniformity in the treatment of PoS in the selected dictionaries. Williamson (2013) is considered an advancement of the (1972) edition. PoS are well presented with various extensive usage examples. Williamson (1972) does not include PoS, therefore presenting difficult for new users especially to master the usage of the words. Though the dictionary has a couple of examples included for the headwords, while listing some derivatives from the verb roots.

Nnaji (1985) offers meanings of headword in both English and Igbo for a very wide selection of English headwords essentially translating to standard dictionary definitions of headwords in Igbo. There are few usage examples of the words included with derivatives/infinitives. Hence, it becomes very hard for users to apply adequate use of words.

Igwe (1999) presents the most detailed morphological analysis by including derivatives from verb roots as well as the infinitive forms of some of the derivatives but there were limited usage examples included in the text. However, he classifies some entries as adjectives that other compilers treat as noun such as *enyùnyò* (capable of being peered into).

Eke (2001) only lists the abbreviations of the PoS used in his text while there were no introductory grammar on conventions and guides to the use of the dictionary. There are few usage examples provided for the headwords list and no derivatives/infinitives added. This method limits the user's ability to distinguish between a standard subject/object noun and one serving as adverbial or qualificative function.

Echeruo (2001) attempts having a comprehensive reference material for the Igbo language. Various forms of different dialects were used with occasional example sentences where he deemed necessary. The headwords were with free-form words or noun/verb phrases. PoS were indicated in italics immediately after the headword. Qualificative nouns were identified to function as adjectives without morphological change (e.g. *ogologo*), which is typically marked by a preceding *dị* verb.

Finally, Akponye (2014) has lists of abbreviations used, includes PoS of the headwords with usage examples and also shows derivatives of some of the treated verb roots.

Lexicographic Inconsistency and Challenges in Selected Dictionaries

From the above analysis there is a significant lack of uniformity in the treatment of Parts of Speech (PoS) across the seven selected dictionaries. This inconsistency is not just a matter of stylistic preference but is rooted in several systemic challenges within the field of Igbo lexicography this include:



- i) *Lack of Specialized Lexicographic Training*
Scarcity of trained lexicographers is the primary factor that contributes to the discrepancies noted in the selected texts. Though most of the compilers are native speakers, the art of dictionary writing requires specialized linguistic training in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice. This is evident in the selected dictionaries as most function as bilingual word lists rather than comprehensive linguistic tools as the works strive for translation equivalents in English without adequately addressing the unique grammatical tradition of Igbo.

- ii) *Theoretical gaps in Igbo Morphology and syntax*
The labeling inconsistencies of the headwords especially over the size of the adjectives stems from unresolved issues in Igbo linguistic analysis. Words undergoing functional shifts were poorly addressed while some dictionaries failed to use sub-entries or fixed base-classes to clarify the transitions. Reliance on dialectal variety to create dictionaries can limit the universal applicability of the PoS labels across the standard variety.

- iii) *Pedagogical implication and user experience*
Lack of standardized PoS presentation has direct consequences for the end-user, particularly the language learners. Dictionaries that omit examples such as Nnaji (1985) and Eke (2001) force users to make their own inferences which of course could lead to syntactic errors. Secondly, omitting introductory grammar notes or clear guides to abbreviations leaves users without the necessary framework to interpret PoS tags effectively. Improper PoS tagging with illustrative sentences expose user to the difficulty of mastering the usage of words that can occur in different constructions.

Summary

The PoS treatment in the Igbo dictionaries studied is not without their shortcomings. PoS presentation is critical for the headwords entries in the dictionary as they facilitate the user's understanding of the headword. Proper PoS tagging for the headwords helps to disambiguate the dictionary entries with adequate examples cited. It equally guides new users to generate their own sentences based on the entries. This metalexigraphic study shows that the dictionary compilers do not have sufficient knowledge of lexicography as some of the dictionaries could easily pass as word lists. The dictionaries studied are bilingual dictionaries which one could classify as general dictionary. The compilers strive to provide headwords with their corresponding meanings in the English language. PoS of some of the headwords were presented while others were not. Some of the headwords as discovered were not universally labeled. Adopting same Coding systems for the PoS, however is universal for all the dictionaries.

Conclusion

This study has examined the representation of PoS in Igbo lexicography, specifically focusing on the inconsistencies and structural challenges present in the contemporary works. The analysis reveals that while efforts to compile Igbo dictionaries have spanned over a century, there remains a significant gap between traditional lexicographic labels and the actual morphosyntactic behaviour of the language. The findings suggest that the lack of standardized PoS labeling often stems from a reliance on Eurocentric grammatical models that do not fully account for the agglutinating nature and tonal complexities of Igbo.

Ultimately, the objective of evaluating these dictionaries was to determine their efficacy for both learners and professional linguists. The results indicate that current entries often lack the grammatical clarity required for deep linguistic engagement, particularly regarding the fluid boundaries between nouns and stative verbs. By bridging the gap between recent linguistic research and lexicographic practice, we can move toward a more 'natural choice' for language description, one where the dictionary reflects the internal logic of Igbo grammar. This research concludes that a



standard user-friendly Igbo dictionary is achievable only through a deliberate, research-led synchronization of PoS labels across the discipline.

Recommendations

To address the irregularities identified in this study and elevate Igbo lexicography to international standards, the following strategic recommendations are proposed:

i. Professionalization

There is urgent need for Igbo dictionary compilers to be trained lexicographers, by this they must undergo formal training in lexicographic theory and practice as this will move them beyond the production of simple wordlists. They should collaborate with theoretical linguists to ensure that recent research findings in Igbo morphology and syntax are accurately reflected in dictionary entries.

ii. Structural and grammatical standardization

Future dictionaries should target perfect coordination between the dictionary and grammar. They should ensure that PoS tagging is supported by an introductory grammar guide. Use of standardized labels for word classes must be ensured to reduce the current discrepancies found across the selected works.

iii. Pedagogical enhancement

Lexicographic reasoning will be facilitated if every headword entry is accompanied by empirical sentence examples which will clarify its syntactic behaviour and PoS membership. For the verb entries, there should be an explicit indication of transitivity and clear labels for phrasal verbs in order to assist users both advanced and learners. Leveraging projects like the Igbo Archival project can provide a rich database of dialectal and standard data to ensure dictionaries are comprehensive and representative

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List of Abbreviations

Adv. - Adverb

f. - feminine

n. - Noun

prep - Preposition

phr v - phrasal verb

vi - intransitive verb

Adj - Adjective

m. - masculine

obj - Object

PoS - Parts of Speech

v. - Verb



GLOBALIZATION AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH: BENEFITS AND MAJOR SETBACKS

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Abstract

This study explored the multifaceted impact of globalization on development trajectories in the Global South. The ripple effects of globalization have become a source of concern, with particular worry on how it reshapes economies, political systems, and cultures across the global south, thus necessitating this study which employed a comparative case study approach and thematic analysis to examine how these impacts vary across regions. Dependency Theory pioneered by scholars like Raúl Prebisch in 1950 served as the theoretical framework. The study revealed a varied economic impact, with some countries achieving growth and others struggling with dependence on commodities. To maximize benefits and mitigate negative consequences, the study recommendations targeted state policies, culturally sensitive development, and strengthened international agreements.

Keywords: Globalization, Global South, Global Benefits, Global Setbacks, Southern Development

1.0 Introduction

Globalization is a double-edged sword with different kinds of impacts (Okeke, 2022). Fueled by advancements in trade, technology, and communication, it has fundamentally altered the landscape of the international system and fosters a more integrated global economy (Rodrik, 2011). It produces multiform effects on the regions in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania which generally share lower levels of industrialization, economic development, and human well-being compared to their counterparts in the "Global North" (Dados & Connell, 2012). Despite their rich cultural heritages, unique histories, and varying economic statuses, these countries face common challenges in achieving sustainable development, reducing poverty, and integrating into the global economic system.

The impact of globalization on the Global South (a group of developing countries in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania generally characterized by lower levels of industrialization, economic development, and multiform varieties of development challenges) presents a complex paradox. On the one hand, it has undeniably facilitated economic growth in some regions. Foreign investment is attracted by lower production costs, creating jobs and fostering access to new technologies and markets (Bhagwati, 2004). This is exemplified by the rapid economic



development and poverty reduction witnessed in countries like China and India following their embrace of global integration (Stiglitz, 2002). Additionally, globalization has fostered cultural exchange, breaking down barriers and promoting a more interconnected world. It has also, in some cases, improved access to education and healthcare for communities in the Global South. However, the narrative is not without its darker side. Globalization has also exacerbated economic disparities, leading to a wider gap between the rich and poor, both within and among countries (Piketty, 2014).

Many nations in the Global South find themselves overly reliant on developed countries, becoming vulnerable to economic fluctuations and susceptible to exploitative labor practices. For instance, the balance of trade between China and Nigeria favors the former and notably, Chinese have been accused of not having an interest to develop Nigeria in the same way that they developed China but are primarily in Nigeria to do business and take care of the Chinese people (Okeke, 2021).

The environmental cost is another major concern. Rapid industrialization and deforestation raise serious questions about sustainability and long-term economic health (Martinez-Alier, 2002). Furthermore, the homogenizing influence of global culture can threaten the rich tapestry of local traditions and languages, posing a risk to cultural diversity. While globalization offers undeniable benefits, the concerns raised regarding economic disparity, environmental degradation, and cultural homogenization highlight the need for more research to ensure a more equitable and sustainable future, particularly for the Global South. There is, therefore, a need for more comprehensive and comparative studies that look at the heterogeneous impacts of globalization across different regions within the Global South. Current literature often focuses on success stories or extreme cases, potentially overlooking moderate or mixed experiences. Additionally, there is limited research on the long-term socio-cultural impacts of globalization, particularly concerning the preservation of indigenous cultures and languages. Another significant gap is the exploration of effective policy frameworks that can mitigate the negative consequences of globalization while maximizing its benefits. Finally, the intersection of globalization, climate change, and sustainable development in the Global South is an area that requires further investigation, particularly in terms of how international policies and agreements can support local sustainability efforts.

This research delves into this complex interplay of forces, examining the dual impact of globalization on the Global South. By meticulously analyzing historical context, economic data, case studies, and policy responses, we aim to develop a clear understanding of how globalization shapes and challenges development trajectories in these countries. The ultimate goal is to contribute to the ongoing dialogue on how nations in the Global South can navigate the complexities of globalization to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth, fostering a future that benefits all.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Globalization and its Components

Globalization refers to the increasing interconnectedness and interdependence among countries worldwide, often evaluated through various economic and technological metrics including Trade Flows, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and International Financial Flows. International trade flows, encompassing the volume of imported and exported goods and services, play a significant role in shaping economic growth. As Krugman (1991) posits, trade can enhance economic efficiency and foster growth through the principle of comparative advantage. This theory suggests that nations benefit by specializing in producing goods and services for which they possess a relative cost advantage, ultimately leading to increased global output.

Trade integration, facilitated by trade flows, further stimulates economic prosperity by promoting increased productivity, enhanced innovation and expanded consumer choice. However, Emmanuel (1972) raises a critical counterpoint, highlighting the potential for unequal trade relationships to create dependency and hinder development. This scenario often involves developing countries exporting raw materials with relatively low value-added, while importing finished goods with higher profit margins. This dynamic can lead to unfavorable terms of trade for developing nations, hindering their ability to accumulate capital and diversify their economies. While trade flows can undoubtedly drive economic growth by providing access to export markets and a wider range of



goods and services, as evidenced by the substantial economic advances of China and India following trade liberalization, the potential for unequal power dynamics cannot be ignored. Reliance on primary commodity exports can render developing economies vulnerable to price fluctuations in international markets, contributing to economic instability.

FDI refers to investment from one country into businesses or assets in another country, often by multinational companies. Borensztein, De Gregorio, and Lee (1998) argue that FDI can stimulate economic growth by facilitating technology transfer, increasing capital stock, and creating employment opportunities. For example, technology and managerial know-how flow from more developed regions to less developed regions, aiding local firms in enhancing productivity. Critics like Jensen (2003) highlight that FDI can lead to the exploitation of local resources and workforce, where foreign companies may not reinvest profits locally and may prioritize their home countries. This phenomenon can result in limited benefits for the host country. FDI has been crucial for infrastructure development, job creation, and economic diversification in many Global South countries. For instance, nations like Vietnam and Mexico have seen transformative industrial growth due to FDI. There are concerns about profit repatriation and limited local investment, where significant portions of the income generated by foreign investments are sent back to the investor's home country, reducing the net economic benefit to the host economy. In particular, there is a widespread belief that some multinational firms, as agents of globalization, effectively utilize the instrument of politics to penetrate and dominate the market space against national interest (Okeke & Adamu, 2024).

International financial flows encompass the movement of money across borders, including foreign aid, investments, and remittances. Agénor (2004) posits that international financial flows, especially remittances, have been significant in supporting household incomes, fostering entrepreneurial activities, and reducing poverty in many developing countries. Remittances, in particular, provide stable financial support that can be pivotal for local economies. Moyo (2009) asserts that dependence on foreign aid can be detrimental, potentially creating a cycle of dependency which undermines local governance and discourages self-sufficient economic policies. Additionally, volatile financial flows such as speculative investments can lead to financial instability. Remittances and other financial flows serve as critical sources of foreign exchange, enabling higher consumption, savings, and investment in recipient countries. They often play a role in funding education, healthcare, and infrastructure projects which are vital for development. Over-reliance on foreign aid can lead to a lack of incentives for developing effective local economic policies. Additionally, the volatility of financial markets can result in economic instability and crises, as seen in various financial downturns in the Global South.

2.1.1 Globalisation, Cross-border Movement of People and Communication Technologies

The cross-border movement of people refers to the number of tourists, international students, and migrant workers traveling between countries. Docquier (2018) argues that migration and mobility can lead to cultural exchange, skill transfer, and economic benefits through remittances. Migrant workers often send money back to their home countries, which can support local development. Bhagwati and Hamada (1974) highlight the issue of brain drain, where skilled individuals migrate from developing to developed countries, depleting the human resource base crucial for local development. The cross-border movement of people can contribute to the growth of the service sector, such as tourism and international education, in the Global South. Remittances from migrant workers also provide a crucial source of income for families and support domestic economies. Brain drain can stifle local innovation and capacity building, impeding long-term development efforts in the Global South. The loss of skilled professionals can undermine the ability of these countries to address their development challenges.

Global communication technologies refer to the use of the internet, social media, and telecommunication technologies to connect people and information across borders. Norris (2001) argues that digital technologies have democratized information, empowered civic engagement, and opened up new economic opportunities. The internet and social media have enabled greater access



to knowledge, markets, and global networks. Hilbert (2011) highlights the issue of the digital divide, where unequal access to technology can exacerbate existing socio-economic disparities within and between countries in the Global South. Global communication technologies have the potential to enhance access to information, facilitate knowledge sharing, and create new economic opportunities for individuals and businesses in the Global South. This can lead to improved education, healthcare, and entrepreneurial activities. The digital divide, where some populations in the Global South lack access to digital technologies, can perpetuate existing inequalities and limit the developmental benefits of these technologies. Ensuring equitable access to communication technologies is crucial for inclusive growth.

2.1.2 Globalization and its Multiform Impacts

A substantial body of literature addresses various perspectives on globalization and its diverse impacts. Proponents argue that globalization fosters economic growth by encouraging foreign direct investment, promoting technological transfer, and opening up export markets. Bhagwati (2004) emphasizes that globalization can lead to heightened economic opportunities and improved living standards by integrating economies into global production networks, as evidenced by the rapid development in countries like China and India (Dollar & Kraay, 2002). However, critics point out that these benefits are unevenly distributed. Piketty (2014) and Stiglitz (2002) argue that globalization exacerbates income inequality and creates dependencies that can hinder long-term economic stability. The social and cultural impacts of globalization are also well-documented. Authors like Appadurai (1996) and Tomlinson (1999) discuss how globalization fosters cultural exchange and cosmopolitanism, often leading to greater mutual understanding and hybrid cultural forms. On the flip side, scholars such as Nederveen Pieterse (2009) argue that globalization can contribute to cultural homogenization, threatening local cultures and traditions. There is also substantial evidence that the benefits of social globalization—such as improved access to education and healthcare are often overshadowed by the challenges posed by social fragmentation and loss of social cohesion (Castells, 2010).

Environmental impacts are another critical area of scholarly focus. Shiva (2000) and Martinez-Alier (2002) address the environmental degradation associated with globalization, particularly in the Global South. They argue that intensive industrial activities, resource extraction, and deforestation linked to global economic processes result in significant ecological damage, disproportionately affecting vulnerable communities. Additionally, there is ongoing debate about how globalization-related policies can be designed to promote sustainable development (Sachs, 2015). Structural and policy-related analyses also constitute a significant portion of the literature on this topic. Rodrik (2011) examines the "globalization paradox," noting that while economic globalization has potential benefits, the absence of robust governance structures often leads to adverse outcomes, such as financial crises and socio-economic instability. Moreover, Chang (2002) criticizes neoliberal policy prescriptions that advocate for market liberalization without adequate protections, arguing that they often fail to produce the promised economic benefits and instead exacerbate development challenges.

2.1.3 Globalisation and the Global South

The term "Global South" encompasses a heterogeneous group of developing countries in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. These nations are generally characterized by lower levels of industrialization, economic development, and face a multitude of shared development challenges. Scholars like Immanuel Wallerstein (1974) and Samir Amin (1976) posit a theory of dependency, arguing that the Global South is structurally disadvantaged within the global capitalist system. This perspective suggests that historical power dynamics and unequal exchange relations perpetuate underdevelopment and dependence on the more industrialized "Global North." However, a counterpoint exists within development economics. Jeffrey Sachs (2005), for instance, emphasizes the potential for the Global South to achieve economic leapfrogging. This theory suggests that developing nations can harness advancements in technology and bypass traditional development



stages, accelerating their economic growth. The Global South is undeniably a region rich in human and natural resources. Strategic engagement with globalization, through trade, foreign direct investment, and technology transfer, offers a pathway for unlocking new avenues of economic growth and social progress. Despite these opportunities, the Global South continues to grapple with persistent challenges. Poverty, income inequality, limited infrastructure, and environmental degradation remain significant obstacles to sustainable development. Addressing these issues requires a multi-pronged approach, with tailored policies and coordinated efforts from both national governments and international institutions. Overcoming these challenges is critical for achieving sustainable and inclusive development in the Global South.

Income inequality, measured by the Gini coefficient or other metrics, remains a significant challenge in many countries of the Global South (World Bank, 2022). Research has shown that high levels of income inequality can hinder economic growth, undermine social cohesion, and perpetuate cycles of poverty (Stiglitz, 2012). Scholars argue that addressing income inequality requires a multifaceted approach, including progressive taxation, investments in education and healthcare, and the promotion of inclusive economic policies (Piketty, 2014). Successful examples of countries in the Global South that have made progress in reducing income inequality include Brazil's Bolsa Família program and South Africa's social grants system (Barrientos & Santibáñez, 2009; Leibbrandt et al., 2012).

Globalization has had a significant impact on job creation in the Global South, with both positive and negative consequences (ILO, 2020). On the one hand, globalization has led to the expansion of export-oriented industries and the growth of the service sector, creating new employment opportunities (Rodrik, 2011). However, the displacement of traditional livelihoods, the rise of precarious work, and the uneven distribution of the benefits of globalization have also contributed to job insecurity and social tensions (Milberg & Winkler, 2013). Example is Nigeria where majority of citizens are today being battered by extreme poverty (Okeke, 2020). Scholars argue that promoting inclusive and sustainable job creation requires a balanced approach that combines investment in human capital, the diversification of economic activities, and the strengthening of labor rights and social protection (ILO, 2020).

Access to quality education and healthcare services remains a significant challenge in many countries of the Global South (World Bank, 2022). Inadequate investment in these sectors, as well as socioeconomic and geographic disparities, have contributed to low enrollment rates, limited availability of healthcare services, and poor health outcomes (Filmer & Pritchett, 1999). Scholars have advocated for the expansion of universal education and healthcare systems, as well as targeted interventions to address the specific needs of marginalized communities (Sachs, 2005). Successful examples of countries in the Global South that have made progress in improving access to education and healthcare include Cuba's comprehensive healthcare system and Costa Rica's investment in public education (Knauth et al., 2012; Trejos, 2014).

Globalization has facilitated the flow of ideas, customs, and media between different cultures, leading to increased cultural exchange and cross-pollination (Appadurai, 1996). This cultural exchange has the potential to promote mutual understanding, creativity, and the sharing of knowledge and practices (Crane, 2002). However, concerns have been raised about the potential for cultural homogenization and the erosion of local cultural identities (Tomlinson, 1999). Scholars argue that preserving and promoting cultural diversity is essential for sustainable development, as it fosters social cohesion, innovation, and the resilience of local communities (UNESCO, 2001). The dominance of global cultural trends and the decline of local cultural practices have been observed in many parts of the Global South (Ritzer, 2004). This process of cultural homogenization can be driven by factors such as the spread of mass media, the influence of multinational corporations, and the adoption of Western-centric development models (Pieterse, 2004). Scholars have raised concerns about the potential negative impacts of cultural homogenization, including the loss of cultural diversity, the undermining of local identities, and the perpetuation of power imbalances (Tomlinson, 1999). Efforts to preserve and revitalize local cultural practices, as well as to promote



intercultural dialogue and exchange, have been identified as important strategies for addressing cultural homogenization (UNESCO, 2001).

Globalization has been associated with the weakening of social bonds and community cohesion in some parts of the Global South (Putnam, 2000). Factors such as urbanization, migration, and the erosion of traditional social structures can contribute to social fragmentation, leading to increased social isolation,

The level of internet penetration, mobile phone use, and access to social media platforms have been transformative in the Global South (World Bank, 2022). Research has shown that increased access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) can contribute to economic development, improved service delivery, and social empowerment (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). However, the digital divide remains a significant challenge, with many communities in the Global South still lacking reliable and affordable access to these technologies (Deen-Swarraj et al., 2013). Scholars argue that bridging the digital divide and promoting digital inclusion are crucial for ensuring that the benefits of technological advancements are equitably distributed (Unwin, 2017).

The Global South is rich in natural resources, such as minerals, timber, and fossil fuels, which have been extensively extracted and exported (Collier, 2010). While resource extraction can generate economic growth and revenue, it has also been associated with environmental degradation, social conflicts, and the "resource curse" phenomenon, where resource-rich countries often experience slower economic development and higher levels of inequality (Sachs & Warner, 1995). Scholars have advocated for more sustainable and equitable approaches to resource extraction, including the implementation of transparent and accountable governance frameworks, the fair distribution of resource revenues, and the diversification of economic activities (Humphreys et al., 2007). Deforestation, driven by activities such as logging, agriculture, and infrastructure development, is a significant challenge in many countries of the Global South (FAO, 2020). The loss of forests not only contributes to biodiversity loss and climate change but also undermines the livelihoods and well-being of local communities that depend on forest resources (Geist & Lambin, 2002). Efforts to address deforestation have included the implementation of policies and programs aimed at sustainable forest management, the promotion of alternative livelihoods, and the strengthening of environmental governance (Lambin & Meyfroidt, 2011). Scholars argue that successful strategies to combat deforestation must involve the participation of local communities, the recognition of indigenous land rights, and the integration of environmental and development objectives (Agrawal et al., 2008).

2.1.4 Globalisation and Challenge of Sustainable Development, Governance Structures and Socio-economic Stability in the Global South

Sustainable development, which aims to meet the economic and social needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, is a critical challenge for the Global South (UN, 2015). Achieving sustainable development requires balancing economic growth, social equity, and environmental protection, which can be particularly challenging in the context of limited resources, high levels of poverty, and the impacts of climate change (Sachs, 2015). Scholars have advocated for the adoption of holistic, integrated approaches to sustainable development, including the implementation of policies that promote renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and inclusive economic models (Raworth, 2017). Successful examples of sustainable development initiatives in the Global South include the expansion of renewable energy in countries like India and the implementation of community-based natural resource management programs in parts of Africa (IRENA, 2019; Roe et al., 2009).

Effective government institutions play a crucial role in promoting economic development, social welfare, and environmental protection in the Global South. Research has shown that countries with strong, accountable, and transparent governance structures tend to experience higher levels of economic growth and social development (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). However, many countries in the Global South face challenges such as corruption, weak rule of law, and lack of institutional capacity, which can hinder their ability to effectively implement policies and programs (Rothstein



& Teorell, 2008). Scholars argue that improving governance structures, such as strengthening democratic institutions, enhancing public sector management, and promoting citizen participation, can lead to more equitable and sustainable development outcomes (Kaufmann et al., 2010).

The Global South has experienced several instances of severe economic downturns caused by financial instability, such as the Latin American debt crisis of the 1980s, the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s, and the global financial crisis of 2008-2009 (Reinhart & Rogoff, 2009). These financial crises have had devastating impacts on the economies and social well-being of countries in the Global South, leading to increased unemployment, poverty, and social unrest (Stiglitz, 2002). Scholars argue that the vulnerability of the Global South to financial crises is often exacerbated by factors such as dependence on foreign capital, weak financial regulation, and limited access to social safety nets (Ocampo & Stiglitz, 2008). Efforts to strengthen financial regulation, promote economic diversification, and build resilient financial systems have been identified as key strategies to mitigate the impact of financial crises in the Global South (Akyüz, 2014). High levels of unemployment, poverty, and social unrest are persistent challenges in many countries of the Global South (World Bank, 2022). For instance, many challenges currently plague Nigeria's federalism (Okeke & Omojuwa, 2022). These socio-economic challenges can be attributed to a range of factors, including unequal distribution of resources, limited access to education and healthcare, and the impact of globalization on local communities (Milanovic, 2016). Scholars argue that addressing socio-economic instability requires a multifaceted approach, including investments in human capital, social protection programs, and inclusive economic policies (Ravallion, 2016). Successful examples of countries in the Global South that have made progress in reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion include Brazil's Bolsa Família program and Costa Rica's universal healthcare system (Barrientos & Santibáñez, 2009).

Governments and international organizations have implemented various policy responses to address the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization in the Global South (Stiglitz, 2002). These policy responses have included trade liberalization, foreign direct investment promotion, and the implementation of structural adjustment programs (Rodrik, 2011). However, the effectiveness of these policies has been debated, with some scholars arguing that they have contributed to increased inequality and social instability in the Global South (Stiglitz, 2002). Alternative policy approaches, such as promoting industrial policies, strengthening social safety nets, and fostering regional economic integration, have been proposed as more effective strategies for addressing the challenges of globalization (Chang, 2002; Ocampo & Stiglitz, 2008).

2.1.5 Gaps in Literature

Previous studies have attempted to provide nuanced insights into how globalization affects different parts of the Global South. For example, Amsden (2001) examines the industrialization paths of East Asian countries, highlighting successful state-led development models that leveraged globalization for economic growth. In contrast, studies on Sub-Saharan Africa by Easterly (2006) and Collier (2007) illustrate the difficulties these countries face, including external debt burdens and fragile governance structures that hinder their ability to benefit from globalization.

Despite extensive research, certain gaps remain. Firstly, there is a need for more comprehensive and comparative studies that look at the heterogeneous impacts of globalization across different regions within the Global South. Current literature often focuses on success stories or extreme cases, potentially overlooking moderate or mixed experiences. Additionally, there is limited research on the long-term socio-cultural impacts of globalization, particularly concerning the preservation of indigenous cultures and languages. Another significant gap is the exploration of effective policy frameworks that can mitigate the negative consequences of globalization while maximizing its benefits. Finally, the intersection of globalization, climate change, and sustainable development in the Global South are areas that require further investigation, particularly in terms of how international policies and agreements can support local sustainability efforts.



2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted Dependency Theory as framework of analysis. The theory which emerged in the mid-20th century posits an inherently unequal global economic system. Pioneered by scholars like Raúl Prebisch (1950), it argues for a "center" of developed nations exploiting the periphery of developing countries. This exploitation occurs through various mechanisms, including unequal trade practices, foreign investment prioritizing short-term gains over long-term development, and burdensome debt. Andre Gunder Frank (1967) and Theotônio dos Santos (1970) further elaborated on this theory.

Central to dependency theory is the notion that the center's development is directly linked to the underdevelopment of the periphery. Resources are extracted from developing countries at low costs, processed in developed countries, and then sold back at inflated prices. This keeps developing countries dependent on the center for manufactured goods and technology, hindering their own industrialization and economic growth. Additionally, foreign investment often prioritizes resource extraction over building local infrastructure or industries, further entrenching the dependency relationship. However, dependency theory is not without its limitations. Critics argue that the theory oversimplifies the global economic system by painting a picture of a purely exploitative relationship, neglecting potential benefits of globalization like access to technology and markets. Lastly, the theory focuses heavily on historical context, potentially overlooking the complexities of the contemporary globalized world, where some developing countries have achieved significant economic growth.

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a comparative case study design. This approach facilitates an in-depth examination of how globalization's impacts vary across different regions within the Global South. Document analysis was the primary method of data collection. A comprehensive review of policy documents, academic articles, development reports, and media coverage was conducted to gather context-specific information on each case. Thematic analysis was used to identify common themes and patterns across the cases.

4.0 Discussion of Findings

Globalization has had varied economic impacts across different regions within the Global South, influenced by factors such as state policies, economic structures, institutional quality, and exposure to global markets. South Korea and Taiwan are exemplary cases where globalization has led to rapid economic growth and industrialization, with strategic government policies, like investment in education, export-oriented industrialization, and state intervention, playing a crucial role (Amsden, 1992; Evans, 1995). Robust economic institutions, adaptive policies, and continuous innovation drove these successes (Woo-Cumings, 1999; Chang, 2002), illustrating how effective state intervention can harness globalization for substantial economic gains. In contrast, many Sub-Saharan African countries have struggled with economic stagnation despite deepened global integration, facing challenges such as dependence on primary commodities, vulnerability to global price fluctuations, and high levels of external debt (Collier & Gunning, 1999). External debt has particularly constrained fiscal capacities, hampering investments in critical sectors such as health and education, and the vicious cycle of debt and underdevelopment continues to hinder sustainable growth (Easterly, 2002). Latin American experiences are more heterogeneous, with countries like Brazil and Mexico seeing economic growth but also struggling with significant social inequalities. Historical inequalities and the uneven benefits of trade agreements have contributed to these outcomes (Klein & Vidal, 2005; Birdsall, de la Torre, & Menezes, 2008), and trade agreements like NAFTA have boosted economic activity but also exacerbated labor market volatility and inequality (Pastor, 2001), underscoring the complexity of balancing growth with social equity.

Globalization has also profoundly influenced indigenous cultures and languages in the Global South, often eroding local identities due to the dominance of global media and cultural



norms (Said, 1978); the proliferation of global cultural products can lead to the loss of indigenous languages and traditions, particularly among younger generations (Sissons, 2005). However, empirical evidence suggests that policies promoting indigenous rights and cultural preservation, such as those implemented in Bolivia, as well as successful bilingual education programs, have helped counteract these trends (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000; Postero, 2007). Effective policies need to promote cultural exchange while preserving local identities, including support for bilingual education, protection of cultural heritage, and promotion of local arts (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000; Hoerig, 2003), as exemplified by government support for indigenous media and local crafts in countries like Mexico and Peru (Hoerig, 2003).

Globalization has also brought about significant environmental challenges in the Global South, necessitating robust policy frameworks and international agreements to ensure sustainable development; adopting climate resilience initiatives, particularly in agriculture, water management, and disaster preparedness, is crucial (Sachs, 2015), and community-based resilience building has shown to be effective in mitigating adverse climate impacts (Adger et al., 2003). Ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources can also prevent environmental degradation and promote economic stability, as evidenced by successful participatory forest management programs in Latin America and Southeast Asia (Angelsen & Kaimowitz, 2001). Regional cooperation and adherence to global environmental agreements, like the Paris Agreement, are essential for collective action against climate change (Keohane & Victor, 2011; Gupta, 2014), and these frameworks can significantly promote sustainable development and climate adaptation in the Global South.

5.0 Conclusion

The economic impact of globalization has been highly uneven across different regions and countries within the Global South. While some countries, such as South Korea and Taiwan, have leveraged globalization to drive rapid industrialization and economic growth through strategic state policies, others, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, have struggled with economic stagnation and dependence on primary commodity exports. The heterogeneous experiences in Latin America further highlight the complex interplay between growth, inequality, and the distribution of the benefits of global integration. The cultural impacts of globalization have often posed challenges to the preservation of indigenous identities, languages, and traditions in the Global South. However, successful policy interventions, such as promoting bilingual education, protecting cultural heritage, and supporting local arts and media, have demonstrated the potential to counteract the erosion of local cultures and foster cultural exchange while preserving diversity. Globalization has also brought significant environmental challenges to the Global South, necessitating robust policy frameworks and international cooperation to ensure sustainable development. Adopting climate resilience initiatives, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources, and adhering to global environmental agreements are crucial for mitigating the adverse environmental impacts of globalization and fostering sustainable development in the Global South. Overall, the experiences of the Global South highlight the complex and multifaceted nature of globalization's impacts, underscoring the importance of context-specific policies, institutional capacities, and collective action at the regional and global levels to harness the benefits of globalization while addressing its challenges. Effective governance, strategic state interventions, and inclusive development approaches are essential for promoting more equitable and sustainable forms of globalization in the Global South.

6.0 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. Countries in the Global South should develop strategic policies based on their specific contexts. Learning from successful cases like South Korea and Taiwan, these policies could include investments in education and infrastructure to build a skilled workforce and attract foreign direct investment. Additionally, focusing on diversification beyond primary commodity exports can lessen vulnerability to price fluctuations.



2. To ensure that globalization fosters cultural exchange while preserving local identities governments and international organizations operating in the Global South should support bilingual education programs, cultural heritage initiatives, and local arts and media. This can be achieved by incorporating indigenous knowledge and practices into sustainable development plans, ensuring a more inclusive approach.
3. To address environmental challenges, regional cooperation and adherence to global agreements like the Paris Agreement are crucial. Developed nations can play a role by providing technological assistance and financial support for climate resilience initiatives in the Global South. This could involve promoting sustainable resource management practices like participatory forest management programs, fostering long-term economic and environmental stability.

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EFFECTS OF BILINGUAL INSTRUCTION ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SOME INTERNALLY DISPLACED PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN BASIC SCIENCE IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF SOKOTO STATE

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Abstract

Effective language planning is crucial to the success of primary education in a multi-lingual setting like Nigeria in which the language of the home – mother tongue is quite often different from that of the school. The mode of instruction used by teachers in teaching seems to be contributory to the performance of pupils in the school. This study investigated the “Effects of Bilingual instruction on the Performance of Internally Displaced Primary school pupils in Basic science in Nigeria” with the view to improving such. The research adopted the pre-test, post-test and post-posttest approach. Subjects for the study were selected to form two groups. Basic science Achievement test was used to collect data. Five hypotheses were tested and data were analysed using inferential statistics of the independent t-test. The result of the study showed that there was significant effect of treatment (Bilingual instruction) on Internally Displaced Primary school pupils’ performance in Basic science. The research, therefore, recommends, among other things that Bilingual education system should be practiced in all the primary schools in the Internally Displaced persons areas to cushion their social predicament in Nigeria particularly beginning at the transitional level (Primary 4) and which would serve a measure of rescuing the deteriorating standard of Primary education for the smooth transition from first language (mother tongue) to second language (official language) thereby enhancing pupils’ academic performance.

Keywords: Primary, Education, Programme, and Displaced Persons

1.1. Background to the Study

Primary education is crucial to the development of education and to national growth and development of any nation. It lays the foundation for successful nation building, security and better standards of living for the citizens. All over the world, primary education has been regarded as the most important as well as the most patronised by people. This perhaps, may be due to the fact that it is the foundation of the whole educational pursuit, which is expected to provide literacy and enlightenment to the citizens. The importance of primary education can therefore be seen in the sense that all beneficiaries of the other levels of education by necessity have to pass through this level (Labo-Popoola et al., 2010).

This phenomenon has very important implications for the education of the young people more particularly, children who have found life to be miserable and whose parents have been displaced as a result of conflict or for one reason or the other. Language serves a very important role. To pass knowledge to the learners, one must understand their first language to introduce the contents of the particular subject to them and later on the second language which is the official language. As Cummins (2000) rightly states, the conceptual knowledge developed in one language helps to make input in the other language(s) comprehensible. If a child understands certain concepts in his language, he could easily label it in the second language, in this instance, English language.

Even Science which seems mysterious and perhaps most difficult for pupils, has its roots from language. There are some scientific concepts which might have different meanings in the real



sense. Therefore, learners need to understand all these terms in their own language (mother tongue) for effective learning to take place. This process therefore calls for Bilingual mode of instruction (teaching strategy) especially at the upper primary school in order to make learning more meaningful to the learners. The situation which internally displaced persons found themselves in calls for the actual practice of bilingual classroom teaching of their children in the primary schools against the imposition of a foreign language (English) which underscores the need for an in-depth investigation, thus, justifying the desire to embark on this research.

In relation to the above, a view endorsed by the Early Grade Reading Assessment, EGRA and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment, (EGMA) in Bauchi and Sokoto States, Nigeria (USAID, 2013a, b , c) indicated the benefits of learning in a first language. The results for reading in the two languages suggested that reading Hausa has an important role to play in learning to read and understand English.

The effects of colonial-era governance and education choices can still be seen in the language attitudes and education choices being made by Nigerian citizens and government today. To a certain extent, Nigeria's current national language policy statements support the value of Nigerian languages for learning; however, this support is not generally being confirmed in the language choices made in classroom practice. Instead, local appropriation of policy i.e. the local beliefs that guide the actions of parents, teachers and local education authorities is considerably strengthening the role of English-medium teaching. The goal of this research is to explore the links between the current Nigerian language policy context and pupils' learning.

1.1.1 Statement of the Problem

Internally displaced primary school pupils face significant challenges, including lack of educational resources like books and classrooms, inadequate infrastructure, discrimination and high fees in host community schools, family poverty forcing child labour or early marriage, insecurity and violence, and psychosocial issues like trauma and stress, all hindering their access to quality education.

Government, religious bodies and non-government organisations especially international humanitarian organizations have made efforts over the years to accommodate and provide primary education to the internally displaced persons who are mostly children. The quality of the primary education provided has been of great concern in terms of implementation. A visit to some of the IDPs camps in the country revealed that internally displaced children between the ages of 6 and 11 years in the IDPs camps seem not to possess literacy and numeracy, effective communication and sound scientific skills which are the goal of primary education.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The study aims at assessing the effects of bilingual instruction on pupils' performance. It was guided by the following objectives: -

- i. to examine the effects of bilingual instruction on the performance of the internally displaced Primary school pupils in basic science;
- ii. to determine the impacts of bilingual instruction on the interest of displaced primary school pupils in learning basic science;
- iii. to investigate whether bilingual instruction improves class participation of pupils

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the specific objectives mentioned above, this study is to answer the following questions:

- i. What are the effects of bilingual instruction on the performance of the internally displaced primary school pupils in learning basic science?
- ii. What are the impacts of bilingual instruction on the interest of internally displaced primary school Pupils in basic science class?
- iii. How does learning of displaced pupils under a formal bilingual instruction influence classroom participation?



1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is aimed at filling up the vacuum other researchers have failed to fill on the effect of bilingual instruction on the performance of Internally Displaced Primary school pupils in learning basic science. It is aimed at examining the relevance or otherwise of bilingual instruction in teaching primary school pupils content subjects with a view to improving standard on the fact that if this method works, it will add to the catalogue of methods already in use. In view of the above, Bialystok (2001), Cummins (2000), and King & Mackey (2007) observe that Children in bilingual education tend to develop better thinking skills compared to their monolingual peers.

The study would be of importance to the policy makers and curriculum developers that are continuously searching for suitable and distinctive techniques to be adopted. To this effect, it would keep teachers abreast on the effects of bilingual instruction and provide them with a variety of teaching methods at their disposal which could be used in improving the academic performance of learners.

To the pupils, the study shall create in them the spirit to develop the right attitude towards learning the various subjects as this will further help their academic performance. As for parents, the study shall be of great importance as to enable them cater for the needs of their children/wards. Nevertheless, the result of the study will provide basis for effective medium of instruction for primary school teachers to modify and reinforce pupils' academic performance.

1.5 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

Primary 5 pupils in the Internally displaced camps in Sokoto state would be used for the study for several obvious reasons. Primary 1-3 classes receive lessons in mother tongue or language of the wider communication which might not necessarily be English and so, were not considered for the study. Primary 5 pupils are rooted and knowledgeable to the use of both English and Hausa media of instruction than Primary 4 pupils. These groups of pupils are already exposed to the use of Hausa and English media for at least two years. Their experience in the use of materials in the study is therefore expected to be fairly good. The pupils in Primary 6 are at the verge of completing their primary education and would soon pass out from school making it difficult for the researcher to get across to them whenever the need arises hence, are not considered.

2.0 Literature Review

The purpose of this review is to assess current literature in the field of study with a view to taking cognisance of the findings and contributions made by fellow researchers. The review is an attempt to secure new ground to discover other variables that remain untapped or have emerged in the course of time. The aspects reviewed include among others, Internally displaced children's access to education, Barriers to education in internal displacement etc.

2.1 Conceptual Framework for the Study

In recent times, Nigeria has been plagued with various economic, political and social challenges. One of these social challenges is the issue of internal displacement. Benin Journal of Educational Studies, Volume 27, Issue 1, 215-225;2021 Wikipedia (2019) defined internal displacement (ID) as a situation whereby a person or groups of persons have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence. This may be particularly because of or to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters but the displaced people have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.

In relation to the above, Bilingual education is a broad term that refers to the presence of two languages in instructional settings. The term is, however, "a simple label for a complex phenomenon". Cazden & Snow (1999) claim that it depends upon many variables, including the native language of the students, the language of instruction and the linguistic goal of the programme to determine which type of bilingual education is used. Students may be native speakers of the majority language or a minority language. The students' native language may or may not be used to



teach content material. Bilingual education programmes can be considered either additive or subtractive in terms of their linguistic goals, depending on whether students are encouraged to add to their linguistic repertoire or to replace their native language with the majority language. *Bilingual education* is used for the purpose of this study to refer to the use of two languages as media of instruction.

It is a known fact that on starting school, children find themselves in a new physical environment. The classroom is new, most of the classmates are strangers, and the center of authority or teacher is a stranger too. If, in addition to these things, there is an abrupt change in the language of interaction, then the situation can get quite complicated and any approach that does not recognise the complementarities of the home, society and the school is bound to fail.

2.2 Internally displaced children's access to education

Evidence from Multi-Sector Needs Assessments (MSNAs) indicates that in several humanitarian crises in 2024, IDP children had significantly less access to formal education than non-displaced children. For example, in Burkina Faso, only 51% of school-aged IDP children were reported to have attended formal school at some point during the 2023-2024 school year – much less than the reported 76% of non-displaced children. In Mali, the difference was even more pronounced as only 36% of IDP children reportedly accessed education compared to 65% of non-displaced children.

In some contexts, MSNA data also suggests that IDP children from households living with host families have better access to education than those living in IDP housing sites or camps. For example, in the DRC, only 37% of site-based IDP children attended formal schooling – less than the reported 64% of IDP children from households living with host families and 75% of non-displaced children. Similarly, in the Central African Republic (CAR), only 70% of site-based IDP children had access to formal schooling, compared to 74% of children living with host families and 80% of non-displaced children. However, in some contexts, IDP children were not found to be worse off in terms of access to education, so it is essential to better account for local contexts and IDP profiles.

2.3 Barriers to education in internal displacement

When children are uprooted from their homes, schools and familiar environments, they are confronted with specific challenges that often affect their education. Some of the most frequently documented barriers to education in internal displacement include distance from school, lack of financial resources, loss of documentation, security risk, and negative repercussions on children's health or psychosocial well-being that make learning more difficult. IDP families often arrive when the school year has already begun or after the enrolment period, which may prevent their children from attending school. Additionally, enrolment in formal education can be hindered by loss of documentation. That, in turn, can impact the ability of IDP children to enroll in higher education later in life should they fail to obtain formal education documentation from earlier years.

Surveys conducted in the context of conflict-related displacement in Colombia and drought-related displacement in Ethiopia highlight physical distance from the nearest school as a key barrier for internally displaced children. When displaced people have to live in informal settlements, on the outskirts of towns or in under-resourced displacement camps, they may be unable to access schools or the transportation means needed to get there. Another potential barrier impacting both boys and girls is physical safety while traveling to and from school. In certain situations, the dangers of getting to school safely may deter attendance.

In some cases, educational facilities are simply not available, destroyed by the disasters or hostilities that prompted the displacement to begin with. The availability of resources, including schools in safe locations, can be drastically impacted in conflict situations. This is the case in Gaza, where the Education Cluster estimates that nearly 90% of all school buildings had been destroyed or damaged as of March 2024. In other contexts, such as Yemen, schools are used as temporary shelters to house displaced people, making it impossible for children to pursue their education free of significant disruption.



Financial difficulties faced by many displaced families, who lost their assets during their flight or can no longer pursue their habitual income generating activities, are another frequent challenge. Even in contexts where access to public schools is free, associated costs, such as school materials, uniforms, transportation or meals, can constitute an obstacle. This was highlighted in the context of drought-related internal displacement in Mogadishu, Somalia, and many other contexts. The reduction of costs to IDP families for school and the creation of scholarships or stipends would be a helpful step toward removing financial barriers.

2.4 Measuring the impact of internal displacement on education

Internal displacement not only affects children’s access to quality education but can have further repercussions on their health, well-being and future livelihoods, impacting their ability to contribute during adulthood and affecting the peace and development of their communities. Addressing barriers to education in internal displacement contexts is therefore particularly important for affected children and society at large. Yet, the data that would allow proper planning and support are lacking. To date, there are no internationally comparable figures on school attendance, completion and learning outcomes of IDP children. Multi-stakeholder initiatives, such as the International Data Alliance for Children on the Move, the Global Education Cluster, and the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies, seek to coordinate data collection efforts better and harmonise definitions and methodologies, but more progress is needed.

Comprehensive and detailed information on how internal displacement impacts children’s education is also lacking in many contexts. One of the reasons is that survey sampling frames are not consistent with the latest population movements and updated population figures. Another reason is the lack of disaggregated displacement status data, including gender, age, and ability. It is, however, crucial to identify and tailor support for groups of children at higher risk of staying out of school. For instance, research has found that in some contexts, internally displaced girls are less able than boys to pursue their education, while in other contexts, boys are more affected. Children with disabilities or from minority groups or poorer families may also require dedicated attention.

Lack of financial resources to address internal displacement, support internally displaced people and conduct the necessary assessments to inform needed interventions remains the most critical issue, more so than methodological, technical, security or accessibility concerns and challenges. Because we have a general understanding of what barriers exist but limited demographic data on children displaced globally, improvements must be made in the collection of regular, relevant, and disaggregated data for factors such as age, disability, sex, and education.

There are several barriers to education faced by IDP children, including interruptions to their education and development, thereby impacting their mental well-being as they try to work through the experiences that led to displacement. Education is a right, and understanding the barriers can help us better develop systems to increase accessibility in displacement situations across the globe.

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study is experimental **Research** in design. It is illustrated thus: -

G1-----R-----O1-----X-----O2-----03
G2-----R-----O4-----X-----O5-----06

Where

G1---is Experimental with randomly selected, pretested, post tested and post-post tested pupils and G2---is Control with randomly selected, pretested, post tested and post-post tested pupils.

Secondly, G1 or Group 1 comprises high, average and low ability pupils and G2 or Group 2 comprises high, average and low ability pupils and each of the groups consists of 100 pupils.

In the design, group G1 would be taught basic science through bilingual method while G2 would be taught the same in English and a post test would be administered to both groups. The purpose of the post-test is to determine the effect bilingual instruction has on the groups in the



understanding of the Subject (Basic Science) taught. In addition, a post-posttest would be given to all the pupils in the two groups.

3.2 Population of the Study

The target population are primary five (5) Pupils in the IDP camps in Sokoto state.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Fraenkel & Wallen (2000) state that a minimum group of 30 participants is ideal for experimental research hence in determining the sample for the study, two hundred (200) pupils were randomly selected. One hundred pupils each formed both the experimental and the control groups.

3.4 Instrumentation

The instrument for the study would be basic science achievement test. An achievement test (AT), according to Okoye (1997), is a test that is based on a course content, which the pupils have been taught. The achievement test is based on the objectives of the topics selected as stated in the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) syllabus (2012). Multiple choice would be used and the purpose of using multiple choice format in addition to others is because it allows for wider coverage of the content taught. It is also bias-free in marking.

3.5 Procedure for Data Collection

To collect data for the study, a written request for permission to conduct a research among four primary schools was sought for by the researcher and the Head of Department, Arts and Social Science Education granted the request. Two research assistants from two of the schools were invited for a meeting with the researcher and were briefed of the intention of the researcher and what the research intends to achieve. In the course of conducting lessons for the subjects, two hours were used for each of the groups, once a week for 15 weeks.

The Treatment involved the use of English and Hausa media for the experimental group. The control group was taught by the use of English medium only. Two teachers from the subject area were employed as assistants in the course of the treatment and were informed on how to handle the instruments with both the experimental and control groups. Treatment for the two groups lasted for fifteen weeks. The researcher made use of Saturdays in conducting the lessons because the normal lessons of pupils could not be tempered with during the normal working days. The lessons were for two hours each Saturday and where necessary, additional five to ten minutes were used.

3.6 Data Analytical Techniques

To analyse the data, the 200 question papers were collected at the end of the test as they were duly completed and returned by the subjects. The quantitative data were subjected to statistical analysis using both descriptive and inferential tools.

Descriptive statistical tools used were simple frequency (f), percentage (%) and mean scores (x). Inferential statistical tools used were t-test (t) for the testing of the null hypothesis. On the other hand, T-test is considered the most appropriate in the study that involves determining significance and mean differences between two (2) groups while Alpha-level was set as 0.05 for the rejection or otherwise of the null hypothesis using one-tail of t-test.

4.0 Data Presentation And Analysis Of Results

The study on Performance of Primary Five Pupils in Basic Science in internally displaced peoples camp in Sokoto State used a total of 200 pupils who were divided into two equal groups of experimental that were exposed to formal bilingual instruction and a control group. The statistical package of Version IBM 23 was used to analyse the data.



4.1 Table 4.1 Summary of Pre-Test, Post-Test and Post-Post Test Scores for Bilingual Instruction

Group/ Data Levels	Pre-Test Scores (%)	Post-Test Scores (%)	Post-Post Test	Types
Averages	No of Pupils (%)	No of Pupils (%)	No of Pupils	
Experimental				
1-22	Low	6 (27.2)	2 (9.1)	3 (13.6)
	Mid	12 (54.5)	12 (54.5)	9 (40.9)
	High	4 (18.2)	8 (36.3)	10 (45.4)
	Sub-Total	22 (33.3)	22 (33.3)	22 (33.3)
23-50	Low	9 (40.9)	1 (4.5)	2 (9.1)
	Mid	14 (63.6)	17 (77.2)	12 (54.5)
	High	5 (22.7)	10 (45.4)	14 (63.6)
	Sub-Total	28 (42.4)	28 (42.3)	28 (42.4)
51-75	Low	6 (27.2)	3 (13.6)	2 (9.1)
	Mid	17 (77.2)	15 (68.1)	11 (54.5)
	High	2 (9.1)	7 (31.9)	12 (59)
	Sub-Total	25 (37.8)	25 (37.8)	25 (37.8)
76-82	Low	1 (4.5)	1 (4.5)	1 (4.5)
	Mid	4 (18.2)	4 (18.2)	2 (9.1)
	High	2 (9.1)	2 (9.1)	4 (22.7)
	Sub-Total	7 (10.6)	7 (10.6)	7 (10.6)
83-100	Low	6 (27.2)	3 (13.6)	3 (13.6)
	Mid	10 (45.4)	9 (40.9)	6 (27.2)
	High	2 (9.1)	6 (27.2)	9 (40.9)
	Sub-Total	18 (27.2)	18 (27.2)	18 (27.3)
Overall				
Averages:				
	Low	28 (25.4)	10 (9.1)	11 (10)
	Mid	57 (51.8)	57 (51.8)	40 (37.2)
	High	15 (13.6)	33 (29.9)	49 (46.3)
	Total	100 (30.3)	100(30.3)	100 (31.2)

Table 4.1 consists of the analysis of pupils' performance in the various tests analysed according to low, mid and high scores including the overall scores. The overall performance scores for the low category at the Pre-Test level is 28(25.4), 10(9.1) Post-Test and 11(10) for Post-post Test. For the mid performance, the scores are 57(51.8) (Pre-Test), 57(51.8) (Post-test) and 40(37.2) (Post-post Test) which is a significant improvement as Pre-Test, Post-Test and Post-post-Test scores for the low and mid categories are compared. In the above instance, only 28 pupil scored low marks against 57 pupils who are in the mid category for the Pre-Test. For the Post-post Test, only 10 pupils scored low against 57 that are in the mid category.

As for the high mark scores for in the various tests conducted to the pupils, the result is 15(13.6) (Pre-Test), 33(29.9) (Post-Test) and 49(46.3) (Post-post Test) respectively. The result shows a tremendous improvement as pupils' continuously keep on improving in their scores to the tests from Pre-Test through Post-Post-Test. The analysis of pupils' performance on Table 4.7 above,



is a clear evidence of the improvement recorded from the various exercises and treatments the pupils were exposed to by the use of bilingual instruction in an effort to determine the effect of the medium of instruction as compared to monolingual instruction.

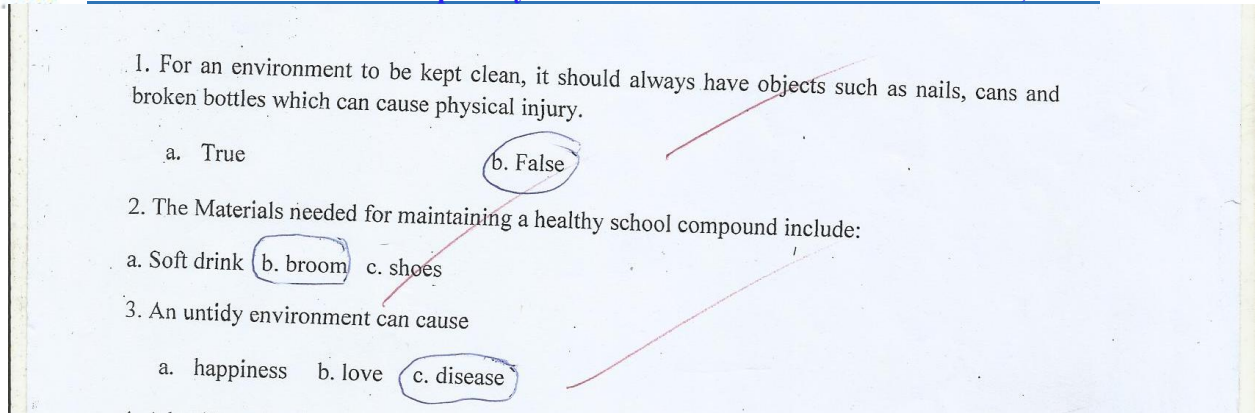
4.2 Analysis of Randomly Selected Pupils Scores

The differences in the performance of selected pupils before and after exposure to the tests are based on the course content (Environmental Quality, The Human Body or The Skeleton and Reproduction in Plants) which the pupils have been taught based on the objectives of the topics selected as stated in the (NERDC) syllabus (2012). The performances are based on low, mid and high levels of the correct and wrong forms randomly sampled from 9 pupils’ tests as provided in Table below.

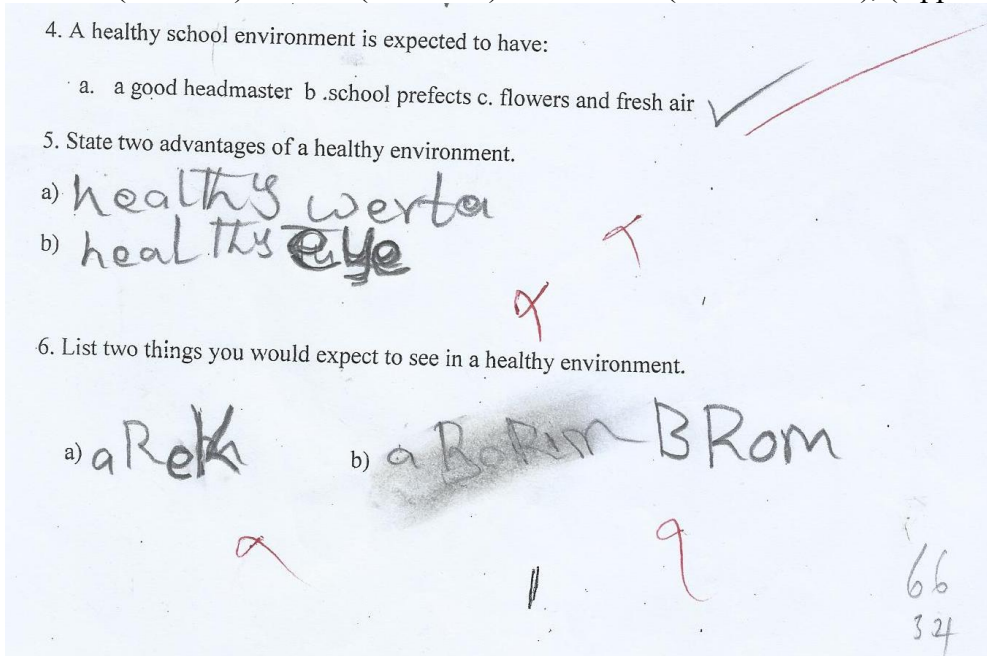
Table 4.2 Pre-Test, Post-Test and Post-Post Test of Selected Pupils Correct and Wrong Responses

Group	Pre-Test Scores		Post-Test Scores		Post-Post-Test Scores	
Experimental Wrong	Correct Scores (%)	Wrong Scores (%)	Correct Scores (%)	Wrong Scores (%)	Correct Scores (%)	
LOW						
PENEG096	05(20)	20(80)	42(84)	08(16)	43(86)	07(14)
PENEG017	06(24)	19(76)	24(48)	26(52)	33(66)	17(33)
PENEG027	06(24)	19(76)	26(52)	24(48)	28(56)	22(44)
Total		17(23)	58(77)	92 (61)	58(39)	104(70)
	46(30)					
MID						
PENEG027	10(40)	15(60)	33(66)	17(34)	35(71)	
15(30)						
PENEG049	11(44)	14(56)	32(64)	18(36)	33(66)	
17(34)						
PENEG100	11(44)	14(56)	14(28)	36(72)	23(46)	
27(54)						
Total		32(43)	43(57)	79(53)	71(47)	91(61)
59(39)						
HIGH						
PENEG001	10(40)	15(60)	44(88)	06(12)	45(90)	
05(10)						
PENEG026	12(48)	13(52)	27(54)	23(46)	29(58)	21(42)
PENEG078	15(60)	10(40)	15(30)	35(70)	34(68)	16(32)
Total		37(49)	38 (51)	86 (57)	64 (43)	108(72)
42(28)						
Grand Total	86(29)	139(46)	257(57)	193(43)	303(68)	147(32)

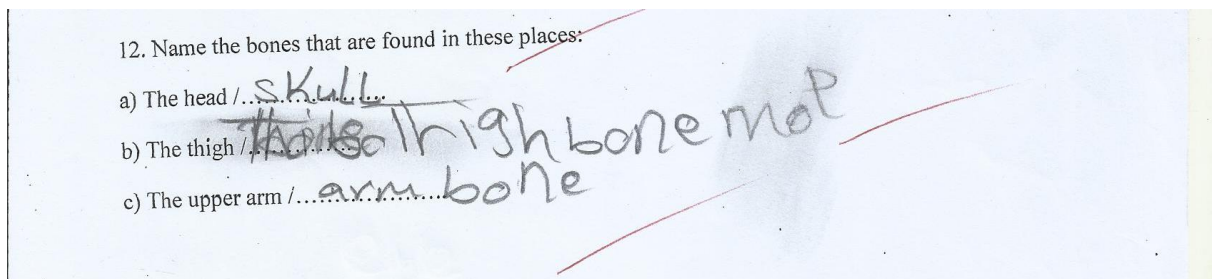
It is clear from Table 4.2 above that for the low performance ,wrong responses decreased after exposure from 77 (Pre-Test) to 39 and the correct responses increased from 23 (Pre-Test) to 61 (Post-Test) and (70) Post-Post Test respectively. In view of the above, some excerpts of the pupils’ actual correct and wrong test responses are shown below.



For the mid performance, wrong scores took Precedence with 57 (Pre-Test) responses which reduced to 47 after exposure and came down to 39 at (Post-Post Test). The correct forms increased from 43 (Pre-Test) to 53 at (Post-Test) and to 61 at (Post-Post Test), (Appendix D (3)).



The trend of performance at the high level is that, the wrong forms were 51 at (Pre-Test) but decreased to 43 at (Post-Test) and went down further to 28 (Post-Post Test) level. However, on the correct forms, the performance was 49 (Pre-Test), 57 and 72 (Post-Test) and Post-Post Test.



The sampled forms above are some of the identified pupils actual wrong and correct answers randomly selected.

The overall performance of the randomly selected Pupils in the various tests kept changing among all the categories of low, mid and high levels with regard to the various exposures as is summarised below.



4.3 Discussion of Findings

The study has been able to establish positive effects of bilingual instruction on the Pupils by the use of experimental analysis. The effects cut across pupils' performance in basic science, their interest, classroom participation, retention of the knowledge gained and the error type responses committed in the various tests conducted to the pupils.

The findings revealed that there is a better performance by the pupils taught Basic Science through Bilingual instruction than those taught through English medium of instruction. This is in agreement with the studies of Suwanarak (2013) in which he supports academic and social advantages of the primary language in bilingual learning settings because it facilitates learning process, decreases frustration, enhances intellectual capacity, and deepens understanding of intricate concepts.

Malekela (2004) contributing on the issue says if learners and even teachers are disabled in the language that is used as a medium of instruction, then the learning process cannot take place effectively. Evidence also shows that English-medium education in African schools with learners whose English language ability is low impedes learning (Macdonald, 1993; Rubagumya, 2003). By contrast bilingual medium education enables teachers to teach and learners to learn more effectively (Heugh, 2006).

The result is also in line with the findings of King & Mackey (2007) who revealed that teaching Basic Science through bilingual instruction increases pupils' academic achievement in school as the pupils not only excelled but also out performed pupils who were taught through English medium of instruction in all primary school subjects.

RTI International (2015) observed that children benefit from learning to read in a language they speak and understand because they can build on their existing oral language and vocabulary skills. UNESCO (2014) said Reading materials in African languages that are appropriate for children in the early grades are critically scarce. This deficit has negative implications for improving the reading skills of children in sub-Saharan Africa, as 50 percent of the children fail to reach minimum learning standards in reading by Primary Grade 4. However, differences and similarities in the two languages spoken by the learner can account for variability in learning. In terms of speech sounds in both languages, research has found that it is easiest to learn a second language when it has sounds that are similar to sounds in the speaker's first language (Antoniou, Liang, Ettliger & Wong, 2015).

One advantage of bilingualism according to (Friesen, Latman, Calvo, & Bialystok, 2015) is that it is associated with increased cognition. Specifically, it has been found that bilingual individuals have increased attention compared to monolingual individuals while other studies have suggested that the advantages may be due to hidden demographic factors and not bilingualism.

5.0 Summary, Conclusion And Recommendations

This section provides an integration of the results from the study as well as the conclusions. This is followed by limitations of the study and recommendations for further research. When one embarks on any kind of research, one has to keep in mind that the research is limited to the variables that one is looking at under limited circumstances.

It is also acknowledged that one may not always discover complete answers as one had anticipated. As Petrie (1981) states, one needs not be investigating absolute truth. However, the process of the research and the sharing of further knowledge make the process valuable. Although the effects of bilingual instruction on the performance of Displaced primary school pupils in basic science have been investigated, there is still a need to look more deeply into the medium of instruction being used in our various educational institutions.

In order to provide answers to the research questions, data were collected using descriptive statistics.

The data included pupils' responses to the instruments and the following are the summary of the findings emanating from the analysis undertaken in chapter four:



- a. Bilingual instruction made learners sufficiently proficient in the language of instruction. It allows them to make suggestions, ask questions, answer questions, create and communicate new knowledge with enthusiasm compared to monolingual instruction, thus, enhancing pupils' performance in basic science.
- b. Bilingual instruction proved to be more beneficial to the primary school pupils in terms of increasing and sustaining their interest in learning as it created a more engaging meaningful environment in which pupils are made to discover the value in what they are learning.

5.1 Conclusion

Findings from the study reveal that learners who were exposed to bilingual instruction performed better than those exposed to monolingual instruction despite the condition of the displaced children. As bilingual instruction was used among the experimental group, it made scientific concepts simple to understand. In such a critical situation like ours where English and Hausa were used as media of instruction, findings revealed that learners became more active in reasoning, participative in the lesson and critical in thinking as one language complements the other.

The study found that bilingual instruction promotes learning more considerably than monolingual instruction. However, there exist the possibility for the teaching and learning of content subjects through the use of bilingual instruction in making learners at the higher level of primary school acquire lifelong skills through the strategy if used appropriately.

5.2 Contribution to Knowledge

The discovery of the effects of bilingual instruction on the performance of displaced primary school pupils as an effective teaching method is not only the contribution of the present study. The study after establishing the effectiveness of bilingual instruction has proved that bilingual instruction can boost pupils' morale to learn content subjects independently in the primary schools.

Another contribution of the study is that bilingual instruction could be a solution to the low performance of pupils in the common entrance examination. The study established that bilingual instruction can assist immensely in the area of teaching and learning of content subjects. This is because the use of pupils' mother tongue along line with English goes a long way in making pupils participate more actively in the lessons and develop higher interest in learning thereby, improving learners' academic performance.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made: -

1. The legal framework for child protection is robust in Nigeria but the enforcement of the laws is challenging because of the plural nature of legislative domestication and to effectively protect the displaced children in Nigeria, child welfare and protection should be placed in the exclusive list – that is, the list of issues that the Nigerian government makes uniform law on. This would make laws on child protection uniform and applicable throughout the nation. It is also important to make children's rights a constitutional matter under the fundamental human rights section of the Nigerian constitution

2. Both pupils and teachers should appreciate the importance of bilingual teaching instruction as a means for developing positive attitude in learning as well as knowing that there are two ways of saying things all of which will lead to higher academic performance.

3. Bilingual instruction policy should be initiated and practiced in all the primary schools in Nigeria Particularly beginning at the transitional level (Primary 4), bilingual instruction should be relevant to a point when pupils are deemed to have acquired sufficient competence to participate fully in the learning process.



4. Varying teaching strategies and materials should be employed by teachers in the use of bilingual instruction with a view to improving pupils' performance in basic science.
5. Primary school curriculum should be schemed keeping cultural and social diversity of the people.

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REDUPLICATION IN OLÙKÙMI AND ÒWÒ DIALECTS OF YORÙBÁ: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

*Reduplication is a morphological process where a part or a whole of the base is copied to derive a new word. The existing research literature reveals that the previous studies on reduplication concentrated on the standard Yorùbá, comparatively there is a dearth of research on Yorùbá dialects in respect to reduplication, particularly the lesser-known dialect like Olùkùmi. Therefore, this study intends to fill the gap by exploring the morpho-semantic properties of reduplicated word in Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects of Yorùbá within the paradigm of Morphological Doubling Theory (MDT) proposed by Inkela and Zoll (2005). The primary aim of this study is to describe and compare reduplication in terms of form and meaning in the two dialects. Data were drawn through observation and interview of the four purposively selected native speakers, each in Olùkùmi spoken in Ugbodu spoken in Delta state and Òwò spoken in Òwò town, Ondo state. The findings reveal that reduplication is a productive morphological process in Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects as shown on its significant roles in language use and communication. Both dialects employ partial and total reduplication to convey varying semantic purposes which include but not limited to lineage, plurality, adjective, adverb, measurement, agent and emphasis. However, it is shown in the study that total reduplication does not perform agent function in Olùkùmi as fisherman is expressed as *enẹ kpeza* instead of *kpezakpeza*. This study not only shed more light on the morpho-semantic properties of reduplication in Olùkùmi and Òwò but also serves as a vehicle of language documentation, preservation and revitalization especially the lesser-known dialect like Olùkùmi.*

Keywords: Partial Reduplication, Full Reduplication, Morphological Doubling Theory, Reduplicant, Copying

1. Introduction

Reduplication, a universal linguistic process enriched with phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic features is attested in Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects of Yorùbá. Reduplication is common morphological process which is achieved by cloning a part or a whole of the base to derive a new word. It is a feature in languages that involves duplication of part of word or the whole word for achieving special meaning (Hurskainen, 2024), In the same vein, Khaled and Amal (2024, p.2) define reduplication as ‘the repetition of a certain component of a morphological base for a certain morphological purpose.’ Reduplication could also be viewed as the partial or total doubling of the same word to lay emphasis on certain position both in verbs and written discourse to derive a complete new form (Imran, et al, 2024). While defining the concept of reduplication, Inkelas and Downig (2018:50) consider reduplication thus:



Reduplication involves the doubling of the same component of a morphological base for some morphological purpose. Unlike other morphemes, reduplicative morphemes depend for their forms on some linguistic property or properties of root, stem or word, which serve as the base of reduplication. The relevant properties can be phonological or morpho-semantics.

It is inferred from the research literature above that reduplication involves copying, doubling, repetition or cloning of the base either partially or completely with linguistic properties such as phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. Different scholars have given different names to reduplication in the existing literature. It could mean repetition, doubling, duplication and cloning. It could also be said that there are two types of reduplication; partial – partial copying of the base and total or complete- total copying of the base. While distinguishing between partial and complete reduplication, Khanjan and Alinezhad (2020) clarify that the whole word is repeated in complete reduplication, whereas, some phonological changes or occurrence of the repetition of few parts of the base word take place in partial reduplication. Also, in full or complete reduplication root is copied whereas in partial only consonantal or vowel alteration is at work in the base form (Rubino, 2005). Added to distinction between partial and full reduplication, yebade (1992) as recorded in Arokoyo (2006:34) remarks that full reduplication involves total copying of the root words without tonal or stress differences while partial reduplication is the repletion of the part of the word or phrase.

Reduplication operates at different linguistic levels. It could occur at word level (lexical), phrases (phrasal), and sentences (syntactic) (Hurch, 2005). Being one of the productive morphological processes, reduplication reflects or implies varied linguistic or grammatical functions depends on the individual languages. Reduplication is mostly employed in varying languages to demonstrate increase in the meaning of the base in terms of quantity or quality (Moravesik, 2013). It performs different functions which include but not limited to emphasis, plurality, distribution, number, attenuation, pejorative, intensity, conditionality, pretence, reciprocity and among others. (Rubino, 2005; Arokoyo, 2006; Downing, 2015; Inkela and Ali, 2020 Imran et al, 2024; Khaled et al, 2024).

The existing research literature reveals that the previous studies on reduplication concentrated on the standard Yorùbá. There is a dearth of research on Yorùbá dialects in respect to reduplication, particularly the lesser-known dialect like Olùkùmi. This study aims to fill the gap as it might be the first work in the research literature that explores comparative study of reduplication in Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects. The ultimate goal of this study is to explore reduplication in Olùkùmi, a lesser-known and sandwiched dialect of Yorùbá spoken in Ugbodu, Aniocha North Local Government Area of Delta state, Nigeria and Òwò dialect spoken in Òwò town, Ondo state. The research paper mainly aims at comparing the processes of reduplication in both Olùkùmi and Òwò to examine their forms, and to compare the functions of reduplicants in the two dialects while the specific objectives are (1) to identify different types of reduplication attested in Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects (ii) to describe and compare the process of reduplication in the two dialects, and (iii) to compare the forms and functions of the reduplicants in Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects. The research will employ both primary and secondary sources of data collection and the data collected will be analyzed within the framework of Morphological Doubling Theory proposed by Inkela (2005).

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Frame Work

Morphological Doubling Theory (MDT) is a Morphological Theory proposed by Inkela and Zoll (2005) to examine reduplication. It is a theory that advocates a partial or total doubling of morpho-semantic properties of the base word in order to generate new words. MDT is a sub-theory of Dual Theory of Reduplication that classifies reduplication into Phonological Doubling and Morphological Doubling. The former entails phonological reduplication in which reduplicated forms are considered as an abstract morphemes while the latter treats reduplicants as doubling of morpho-semantic properties of the base in an attempt to derive new word. MDT is a morpho-



semantic (form and meaning) centred process of reduplication which is a product of a double insertion of a morphological part. In this theory, reduplicated forms and base are both elements of a structure, and this structure also includes shared meanings and patterns (Imran, 2024). This study will adopt MDT where morphological and semantic properties of Olùkùmi and Ọwọ̀ reduplicated forms would be investigated.

2.2. Extant Research Literature on Reduplication

Reduplication being a prevalent productive morphological process across languages, has caught attention of several scholars. Scholarly works are abound in reduplication and these works are varying in their approaches to reduplication as it performs multiple functions in languages. In this section, we will review recent and relevant existing research literature on the morpho-semantic properties of reduplication which is in line with the focus of this study.

Ali, et al. (2024) conduct a comparative study of reduplication in Hunza, Nafar and Yasin dialects of Burushaski with the aim to identifying the nature and function of reduplication in Brushaski, identifying areas of differences and determining the degree of productivity of reduplication in the three speech forms. It is a descriptive synchronic study that employs sampling technique for data collection. The study reveals that Hunza, Nafar and Yasin dialects demonstrate both lexical and morphological reduplication in different forms. Partial reduplication with consonant alteration at nominal level has high level of productivity than the partial reduplication which involves vowel shift in the three dialects as shown in the work.

Hurskain (2024) explores the use of reduplication in Swahili language as to carry out an exhaustive qualitative inquiry into the use of reduplication in the language by comparing how writers employ reduplication in their various works. The percentage of reduplication employed in some particular texts are calculated. The author compares the use of reduplication in thirty-seven books written in Swahili and concludes that reduplication is predominant and productive in the areas of verb and pronoun and Swahili poets make use of reduplication more than other writers.

Another interesting and relevant research literature on reduplication is Safitri, et. al. (2024). The authors describe and compare reduplication in Tagalog and Indonesia languages using qualitative methods to analyze their data. The results of the study reflect some areas of similarities and differences in the reduplicated forms of the two languages. The similarities are obvious in some word-formations, meaning and class while they are different in terms of forms when the base is reduplicated which results into change of meaning. Also, in Tagalog, partial morphological reduplication changes word-formation and meaning which usually results into change of tense of the reduplicant while Indonesia does not exhibit this kind of feature. This work shows how reduplication has diverse functions across the human languages. In short, reduplication could be inflectional or derivational as demonstrated in Tagalog and Indonesia.

Abu-Abas and Alomari (2024) explore reduplication in Jordanian Arabic in terms of form and meaning, The data collected for the study were analyzed within the context of Morphological Doubling Theory proposed by Inkelas and Zoll (2005). The study focuses on the productivity of full reduplication in Jordanian Arabic as the authors showcase multiple communicative functions (continuity, repetition, denoting state or mood, and speed) and pragmatic roles such as violence, annoyance and exaggeration of full reduplicated forms. Added to this is the work of Imran, et. al (2024) which investigates reduplication in Rangri language within the paradigm of Morphological Doubling Theory in order to examine the functions of partial reduplication, full reduplication and non-sensical reduplication. Results showed that the aforementioned varied forms of reduplication are productive in Rangri language as they indicate grammatical categories such as adjective (dholi dholi “white”), adverb (gel-gel “altogether) verb (gha:l gha:l “ full to the brim”), noun (goude goude ‘ till knee’) and verb (tur-tur ‘ nonsense’).

Arokoyo (2006) conducts an examination on a comparative study of reduplication in Hausa and standard Yoruba in order to describe the morpho-semantic insights of the reduplicants in the two languages. Arokoyo (2006:20) identifies two types of reduplication- total reduplication (Yoruba: dádádára ‘ very good’ Hausa: mazamaza ‘quicly’) and partial reduplication (Yoruba: títà ‘act of



selling' Hausa:bubbugu 'bitting') Going by the author, Hausa demonstrates both inflectional and derivational reduplication while Yoruba makes use of the latter. It is evident in the study that some phonological modifications such as vowel alteration, germinate consonant, tone alternation (Hausa) and vowel insertion (Yoruba) are at work in the derivation of reduplicants. Arokoyo also added that reduplication performs inexhaustive grammatical functions which include but not limited to noun formation,, adjectival, intensifier, degree, lineage, plurality, individuality or singleness and agreement. However, she argues that Yoruba reduplicated forms do not express agreement and plurality. We observe that Arokoyo's submission that Yoruba reduplication does not express plurality is oversight. Yoruba total reduplication signals plurality as demonstrated below:

Páálípáálí 'cartons' Mo ra iwè ní páálípáálí ' I bought the book in cartons'

Ílánílá 'big' Mo ra iwè ílánílá ' I bought big books'

Páálípáálí and **ílánílá** express plurality in the examples above and therefore proves Arokoyo's (2006) assertion that full reduplicated forms do not mark plurality wrong. This reveals that reduplication is one of the strategies Yoruba employs for marking plurality.

Khaleed, M. (2020) carries out an investigation on semantics of reduplication in English and Arabic. It is a descriptive study that describes and compares the functions of reduplication in the two languages. Arabic and English do not only attest partial/total, free/bound and continuous/discontinuous forms of reduplication but also share some semantic features such as repetition, affection, plurality, nonsense, instability, movement, spread out, contrast, continuity, completion and lack of control in common. According to Khaleed, M (2020) , the two speech forms employ reduplication in tongue twisters, nursery rhyme, prayers, lyrics, games, advertisement. , slogan , newspaper , among others. He concludes the semantic similarities between English and Arabic aver the view of universality of semantic features in the languages of the world.

2.3. Extant Works on Olùkùmi and Ọwọ̀

Elesin-Ajikola (2025) explores polar question in Olukumi with a view to examine the process involved in the derivation of polar question, investigating the response to a polar question in Olukumi and analyzing Olukumi polar question derivation within the frame work of minimalist theory. The study finds out that Olùkùmi employs high tone morph that takes the last volcanic anchor of an affirmative sentence as a polar marker. The work also reveals that the response to polar question could be either be *héhéhé/báà ni* 'Yes/ it is or *hèhè/èè ghò/báà* 'No/it is not so' Eleshin Ajikobi (2025) concludes that forms and derivation patterns of the Olùkùmi polar system varies from standard Yoruba.

Kareem (2025) explores a syntactic analysis of focus construction in Yoruba Olùkùmi located in Aniocha, Delta State and Yoruba Ìlọ̀rín spoken in Ìlọ̀rín, Kwara State. The paper aims to compare and contrast focusing in the two Yoruba dialects while the main objectives are to: identify focus marker, analyze varied constituents that can be focused in the two speech forms and compare the similarities of Olukumi and Ilorin in terms of focusing. The study analyzes the data collected within the paradigm of Government and Binding Theory. The results of the study reveal that Olùkùmi and Ìlọ̀rín dialects adopt 'ni' as focus marker. Also, it is demonstrated in the study that these dialects' constituent focusing involves the movement of target constituent to the sentence-initial position, on the other hand, sentence focusing signals attachment of particle 'ni' to the sentence final. Furthermore, it is discovered in these dialects that whenever a subject NP is moved for focusing, the extraction site is adjusted with resumptive pronoun 'ó', while the extraction site of the genitival NP is mended with resumptive pronoun 'rè'. The author concludes that there is no difference between Yorùbá Olùkùmi and Yorùbá Ìlọ̀rín in the aspect of focus construction and therefore submits that focusing is one of syntactic evidence that establishes Olùkùmi as a dialect of Yorùbá spoken outside Yorùbá communities within Nigeria. Oshodi (2016) explores focus constructions in Ọwọ̀. He establishes that only nominal and verbal items can be focused in Ọwọ̀. It is said that unlike in standard Yoruba, focus marker does not directly follow focused item in Ọwọ̀, rather, it appears in sentence-final position. The study posits that pronominal, *oun* obligatorily combines together with focus marker to realise focus construction in Ọwọ̀.



3. Methodology

This qualitative-driven study focuses on the forms and functions of the reduplicated forms in Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects of Yorùbá. Olùkùmi and Òwò are chosen for this study not only because they are underexplored but also to reveal the genetic relation of the former, being an isolated and controversial dialect of Yorùbá with Òwò, a well established Yorùbá dialect as to stand on the existing claims by Obisesan (2012), Kareem (2021) and Elesin-Ajikobi (2023) that Olùkùmi is a dialect of Yorùbá spoken outside Yoruba communities in Nigeria.

The study employs both primary and secondary sources of data collection. The study utilized purposive sampling techniques as the data were collected from Olùkùmi spoken in Ugbođu, Delta state and Òwò spoken in Òwò town, Ondo state. The primary source of data collection involves observation and interview. Purposively selected native speakers of the duo dialects were observed during their unconscious conversations and were also interviewed with the aid of the structured items in standard Yorùbá and English languages which the informants were asked to provide responses in their mother tongues (Olùkùmi and Òwò). Related Journal articles, published/unpublished theses, library and Internet were consulted as secondary source of data collection.

The data collected were analyzed in two categories: form and function. The form was categorized into partial and full reduplication. The morphological formation and phonological modifications in the process of the derivation of both partial and full reduplication were duly explored. Function, on the other hand was elicited in terms of their usages in Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects. The functions such as plurality, emphasis, adverb and adjective were analyzed. The data were transcribed and translated into English language for the ease of the readers.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 Partial Reduplication in Olùkùmi and Òwò Dialects

Partial reduplication as one of the morphological processes involves copying or dubbing of part of the root words to form a new word for the purpose of effective communication. Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects employ partial reduplication as a morphological process to create new words. Examples (1&2) demonstrate this.

1. Olùkùmi

- a. yú 'to go' →yyú→yíyu 'act of going'
- b. gho'to come'→ghgho→ghígho 'act of coming'
- c. han'to flow'→hhan→híha 'act of flowing'
- d. gbàzẹ'to take order'→gbgbàzẹ→gbíggbàzẹ 'act of taking order'
- e. tàkàtàkà'to catch fire'→tàkàtàkàtà 'act of catching fire'
- f. taara'straight'→taarata 'straight'

2. Òwò

- a. yú 'to go'→yyú→yíyu 'act of going'
- b. rẹn to walk'→rrẹn→rírẹn 'act of walking'
- c. gbànrẹn 'to go'→gbgbànrẹn→gbíggbànrẹn 'act of going'
- d. sọn 'to sleep'→ssọn→sísọn 'act of sleeping'
- e. rà 'to buy'→rrà→rírà 'act of buying'
- f. geere 'exact' →geerere 'exactly/ accurate'

It is obvious with the given examples that Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects copy or dub part of the root words with some phonological adjustments to derive new words. The phonological rules of the two dialects do not permit consonant clusters and therefore introduce epenthesis V-high tone /i/ .to unbundle the clusters. (1a-d&2a-d) showcase backward reduplication as the parts of the root words



copied to the left before the insertion of the V-high tone. Front reduplication could also be witnessed in (1e&f & 2e&f) where **-ta** and **-re** as parts of the root were copied to the front of the root to form new words. Going by the given data, partial reduplication could be categorized into changing and non-category changing partial reduplications. Examples (1a-d & 2a-e) demonstrate category changing partial reduplication in Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects as their root lexical category(which are verbs/vp) different from the reduplicated forms (which are nouns). (1e&f & 2f) are class maintaining partial reduplications . Both the lexical category of the roots and the reduplicated forms are the same.

4.2 Full Reduplication in Olùkùmi and Òwò Dialects

Olùkùmi and Òwò exhibit full reduplication in creating new words for effective communication. Full reduplication as a systematic copying of a complete root word is productive in the two dialects of Yorùbá. Although it is extensively productive in Òwò than Olùkùmi as demonstrated in (3&4) below:

3. Olùkùmi

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| a. | òwúrò ‘morning’ | →òwúrò-òwúrò | ‘every morning’ |
| b. | òdón ‘year’ | →òdón-òdón | ‘every year’ |
| c. | kpátá ‘whole’ | →kpátákpátá | ‘everything’ |
| d. | óyínyè ‘month’ | →óyínyè-óyínyè | ‘every month’ |
| e. | òkè ‘up’ | →òkè-òkè | ‘up up’ |

4. Òwò

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|--------------|---------------|
| a. | gbóma ‘to carry baby’ | → gbómagbóma | ‘kidnapper’ |
| b. | osin ‘month’ | → ososin | ‘every month’ |
| c. | kpeja ‘to kill fish’ | →kpejakpeja | ‘fisherman’ |
| d. | òdón ‘year’ | → òdòndón | ‘every year’ |
| e. | òkè ‘up’ | → òkè-òkè | ‘ up up’ |

Examples (3&4) reveal that elision as a phonological process (as shown in 4a-d) is at work in the process of forming new word via full reduplication especially in Òwò. This affirms that there is interface between morphology and phonology. It also reveals that phonology is a language specific as elision is obligatory in Òwò but not applicable in Olùkumi despite they are both dialects of Yorùbá. In addition, full reduplication could be class changing (see 4a&c) or class maintaining (3a-d & 4b,d&e).

Going by our observation on the data collected for this study, it is noteworthy to say that Olùkùmi has lost a semantic effect of reduplication like **agent** or **actor** due to distance, time and space. Olùkùmi would rather say **akpeza /eni kpa eza** ‘fisherman’ and **agbóma/eni gbé oma** ‘kidnapper’ than **kpejapeja** ‘fisherman and **gbómagbóma** ‘kidnapper’ as expressed in Òwò and standard Yorùbá.

5. Functions of Reduplication in Olùkùmi and Òwò Dialects

Reduplicated forms exhibit different semantic functions in Olùkùmi and Òwò which include but not limited to plurality, lineage, measurement/ scaling, adjective, adverb and emphasis. Below are the examples:

5a. Degree

Olùkùmi

kéké

lálálá

b. Lineage

oma-oma

Òwò

díedíè

láéláé

omama

‘little by little’

‘never’

‘grandchildren’



c. Measurement

èzi- èzi	méjin méjin	‘in twos’
ègwá-ègwá	mégwà-mégwà	‘in tens’

d. Plural

kpúkpánkpúkpán	kpúkpánkpúkpán	‘reds’
fúfúnfúfún	funfunfun	‘whites’

e Adjective

kpíkpa	fénne fénne	‘red’
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f. Emphasis

taara→ taarata	taara→ taarata	‘straight’
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Contrary to Arokoyo’s (2006) claim that Yorùbá reduplicants do not exhibit plurality as semantic feature, examples (d) demonstrates productivity of plurality in Olùkùmi and Òwò dialects of Yorùbá which is also applicable to standard Yorùbá as it can be shown in the following sentences:

Olùkùmi

Ojó ra atso kpukpan (singular)	‘Ojo bought a red cloth’
Ojó ra atso kpukpa kpukpan (plural)	‘Ojó bought red clothes’

Òwò

Ojó ra atso kpukpa (singular)	‘Ojo bought a red cloth’
Ojó ra atso kpukpa kpukpa (plural)	‘Ojó bought red clothes’

Standard Yorùbá

Ojó ra atso pupa (singular)	‘Ojo bought a red cloth’
Ojó ra atso pupa pupa (plural)	‘Ojó bought red clothes’

6. Conclusion

This study investigated reduplication in Olùkùmi and Òwò in terms of form and function. Reduplication in the duo dialects are productive, serving a various communicative functions. When morphemes are dubbed in Olùkùmi and Òwò , the lexical class of the resultants could change or maintain the lexical class of the root. It is apparent in the study that the two dialects demonstrate partial and full forms of reduplication. However, Olùkùmi has lost agentive reduplication, it could not express agent or occupation via partial reduplication process. This could be as a result of distance , time and the influence of the neighbouring languages. This research is a little efforts towards language preservation , language documentation and Yorùbá dialectology.

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DECOLONIZING THE STAGE: REHEARSAL PRACTICES, INSTITUTIONAL POWER, AND THE POLITICS OF NIGERIAN THEATRE MAKING

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Abstract

This article examines the rehearsal process as a critical yet under-theorized site of decolonial intervention in Nigerian theatre making. While scholarship on African theatre has extensively addressed questions of content, text, and representation, the rehearsal space where embodied practices, power relations, and aesthetic values are negotiated remains largely unexamined. Drawing on Samuel Ravengai's concept of "Afroscenology" (2024) and ethnographic research with theatre practitioners in Nigeria, this article argues that rehearsal practices are not neutral technical procedures but sites where coloniality is either reproduced or contested. It proposes a framework for decolonizing rehearsal through attention to embodied knowledge, the recovery of indigenous performance pedagogies from traditions such as Yoruba Alàrinjò and Igbo Mmanwu, institutional accountability, and the reconfiguration of directorial authority. The article contributes to emerging scholarship on decolonial praxis in Nigerian performance studies by offering both theoretical analysis and practical strategies for transformation.

Keywords: decoloniality, Nigerian theatre, rehearsal practices, institutional power, Afroscenology, indigenous performance pedagogies

Introduction

In the growing body of scholarship on decolonizing African theatre, one space remains curiously invisible: the rehearsal room. There are rich analyses of play texts that challenge colonial narratives, studies of performance events that mobilize communities, and critiques of institutional structures that perpetuate exclusion. Yet the daily, iterative process through which theatre is made; the rehearsals where bodies learn, unlearn, and transform; has escaped sustained scholarly attention. This omission is not accidental. The rehearsal process, precisely because it is hidden, temporary, and seemingly technical, has served as a conduit for colonial pedagogical practices to persist unexamined, even as theatre companies proclaim decolonial commitments in their programming and mission statements.

The Nigerian context presents a particularly compelling site for this investigation. As Morison (2021) documents, the establishment of the University College of Ibadan and later its School of Drama was deeply shaped by "Anglo American collaborations... via funding, training, and support from institutions such as the Carnegie Corporation and the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations." Morison argues that "not only did sponsorship, funding, and training influence the trajectory of theatre practice and scholarship, but the legacy of colonialism and circulation of experts also played a crucial role in the battle for the future of the practice that manifested not only at Ibadan and Calabar but across theatre departments in most first and second generation institutions in the country" (2021, p. 3). This history means that Nigerian theatre practitioners inherit institutional structures and pedagogical methods deeply marked by colonial relations, even as they create work that engages Nigerian stories, languages, and communities.

Yet, Nigeria also possesses extraordinarily rich indigenous performance traditions that offer alternative models for rehearsal and training. As Effiom and Abeebe (2025) argue, "a decolonized Nigerian theory of directing must instead be architected from the principles found in the nation's rich performance traditions, such as Yoruba Alàrinjò, Igbo Mmanwu, and Hausa Wassan Kara" (p.



2). These traditions, they contend, embody principles including “a non-linear narrative structure, the intimate and participatory relationship between performer and spectator, the integral fusion of music, dance, and masquerade with text, and the spiritual dimension of performance” (Effiom & Abeebe, 2025, p. 2). The challenge for contemporary Nigerian theatre is to bring these indigenous pedagogies into productive relationship with the institutional structures inherited from colonial education.

This paper therefore addresses the following questions: What does it mean to decolonize not only what Nigerian theatre stages, but how it is made? How do rehearsal practices reproduce or interrupt colonial power relations in the Nigerian context? And what alternative methodologies might centre Nigerian epistemologies, embodied knowledges, and community accountability in the creative process?

This paper draws on published scholarship in Nigerian and African theatre studies, ethnographic observations of rehearsal processes in Nigerian theatre companies, and interviews with practitioners engaged in decolonial practice. The study is anchored on the theoretical frameworks of Afrosociology as developed by Ravengai (2024), decolonial theory from Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018), and the growing body of Nigerian scholarship on indigenous performance aesthetics.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to:

1. Theorize the rehearsal space as a site of embodied cultural knowledge and colonial reproduction in Nigerian theatre making,
2. Critically examine how colonial rehearsal pedagogies, particularly those derived from psychological realism and directorial authoritarianism, persist in contemporary Nigerian theatre institutions,
3. Analyse emergent decolonial rehearsal methodologies drawing on Nigerian indigenous performance traditions including Yoruba Alárinjò, Igbo Mmanwu, and the folkism of Sam Ukala,
4. Propose a framework for institutional transformation that addresses power, accountability, and sustainability in decolonial Nigerian theatre making.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, multi-method research design grounded in decolonial methodology. As Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018) argues, decolonial research “must centre African epistemologies and prioritize the voices and experiences of African knowledge producers” (p. 89). In line with this perspective, the methodology combines participant observation, in-depth interviews, and archival research. The researcher conducted participant observation of rehearsal processes with four Nigerian theatre companies in Lagos and Port Harcourt between January and August 2025. Twenty-eight in-depth interviews were conducted with Nigerian theatre practitioners, including directors (n=10), actors (n=12), and company administrators (n=6). The study also examined rehearsal documentation, training manuals, and production records from the University of Ibadan’s School of Drama archives, the National Theatre archives, and personal papers of senior Nigerian practitioners.

The research engages critically with the decolonial turn in Nigerian and African performance studies, drawing on the work of Ravengai (2024), Effiom and Abeebe (2025), Mark (2026), and foundational Nigerian theatre scholars including Echeruo (1973) and Enekwe (1987). Data were analysed using thematic analysis, with member checking conducted with ten participants.

Findings

The study reveals five interconnected findings about rehearsal practices, institutional power, and decolonial possibilities in Nigerian theatre making.



1. **Persistence of colonial rehearsal practices** – Despite decades of discourse on decolonization, colonial rehearsal practices remain deeply embedded. Twenty-two of twenty-eight interview participants (79%) reported that their primary training was in Euro-American methodologies, particularly Stanislavski-based psychological realism. As one Lagos director observed, rehearsal rooms continue to rely on “Stanislavski techniques that have nothing to do with how performance works in Yoruba or Igbo traditions” (Interview 7, Lagos, 15 June 2025). This echoes Ravengai’s (2024) analysis of postcolonial theatre education across Africa, where universities inherited theatre departments “structured according to European models” (p. 477). A Port Harcourt-based actor reflected: “I trained at the university, so I learned all the Stanislavski techniques. But when I perform in my community’s masquerade traditions, none of that applies... The university training actually makes it harder to access that way of performing” (Interview 16, Port Harcourt, 3 August 2025).
2. **Director-actor power dynamics** – The research identified the director-actor relationship as a primary site where colonial power relations are reproduced. Twenty-four participants (86%) described rehearsal processes characterized by hierarchical decision-making. A Lagos-based actor described “aesthetic extraction”: “The director comes in with his concept fully formed... When I try to bring something from my community’s performance traditions... he either dismisses it or appropriates it without understanding what it means. We become informants rather than collaborators” (Interview 12, Lagos, 22 July 2025). The project-based nature of much Nigerian theatre exacerbates this dynamic, as one company administrator noted: “Each new project, the director comes in with their methodology, and the actors just have to adapt” (Interview 19, Lagos, 20 July 2025).
3. **Marginalization of indigenous pedagogies** – Only five participants (18%) reported any formal training in Nigerian performance traditions. This erasure operates through what Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018) terms “epistemic coloniality”—“the assumption that Western knowledge systems are the only valid frameworks” (p. 89). A veteran practitioner reflected: “My grandfather was a masquerade performer... That knowledge is gone now. Young actors go to workshops where someone teaches them ‘African performance techniques’ in three days... they don’t learn what it means to carry that knowledge” (Interview 22, Ibadan, 10 August 2025).
4. **Emergent decolonial practices** – The study identified significant emergent practices. Ola Rotimi’s “festival theatre,” as documented by Mark (2026), used a “pressure cooker” method to discipline “stamina, reflexes, and ensemble memory” (p. 12). A senior practitioner who worked with Rotimi explained: “Rotimi didn’t do character analysis around a table. He got you on your feet... knowledge isn’t something you think, it’s something you do” (Interview 5, Ife, 5 June 2025). Sam Ukala’s “folkism,” as Mark (2026) notes, “institutionalised improvisation and co-creation” (p. 12). Segun Adefila’s choreographic protest theatre combines ethnographic fieldwork with embodied performance scores. Bolanle Austen-Peters’ Afro-urban musical theatre, according to Mark (2026), exemplifies “hybrid adaptability” and “cultural grounding” (p. 12).
5. **Institutional barriers** – Twenty-three participants (82%) described how funding structures, production schedules, university curricula, and evaluation criteria discourage decolonial methodologies. A university-based director explained: “Our curriculum is still largely organized around Western models... Until we restructure the curriculum to centre Nigerian performance traditions, we’ll keep reproducing colonial rehearsal practices” (Interview 11, Ibadan, 20 June 2025). As Adesewo (2024) observed, “The greatest challenge is funding... The government is not investing in theatre in Nigeria” (par. 4-6). Regarding the renovated National Theatre (now Wole Soyinka Centre for Culture and Creative Arts), a Lagos-based practitioner noted: “If it only hosts commercial productions that can afford high rental fees... then it’s just another example of Nigerian elite culture” (Interview 13, Lagos, 5 July 2025).



Recommendations

Based on these findings, I propose the following recommendations:

1. Theatre departments should revise curricula to centre Nigerian performance epistemologies, moving beyond additive models toward curricula organized around traditions such as Yoruba Alárinjò, Igbo Mmanwu, and Hausa Wassan Kara (Effiom & Abeeb, 2025).
2. Training programs should integrate indigenous pedagogies, including extended, mentorship-based learning relationships and partnerships with community-based practitioners.
3. Institutions should support faculty in developing decolonial pedagogies and revise promotion criteria to value community engagement and practice-based research.
4. Companies should experiment with distributed creative authority, moving toward ensemble-based decision making and collective dramaturgy.
5. Companies should develop ongoing accountability structures with communities, including community advisory boards and long-term partnerships.
6. Drawing on Nigerian performance traditions, companies should integrate attention to practitioner wellbeing into rehearsal processes, addressing emotional, spiritual, and holistic health (Enekwe, 1987).

Conclusion

The rehearsal room, hidden and temporary, has served as a site where colonial pedagogies persist unexamined. Yet for the same reasons, it may be a site of transformative possibility. Practitioners like Rotimi, Ukala, Adefila, and Austen-Peters, and scholars like Enekwe, Ravengai, and others, are already engaged in this labour. Their work demonstrates that decolonial rehearsal is not merely theoretical possibility but lived reality. This article has attempted to contribute to that project by offering a framework for understanding and practicing decolonial rehearsal rooted in Nigerian performance traditions.

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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF OPERATORS IN ETULO AND IGBO

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Abstract

*This paper presents a comparative analysis of tense and aspect (operators) in Etulo and Igbo using the Role and Reference Grammar (RRG) framework. It examines the morphosyntactic and semantic realization of tense and aspect in both languages, focusing on the functional layering of the clause. The study reveals that while both languages are aspect-prominent, they deploy distinct strategies for marking tense and aspect. Igbo relies on tonal patterns and prefixes, while Etulo utilizes auxiliary particles and adverbials; for instance the morpheme *wa* which marks perfective aspect in Etulo occupies the sentence final position in some cases while the morpheme that indicates progressive aspect occupies the clause medial position. The findings highlight the typological significance of operator placement in RRG and the diachronic divergence within Niger-Congo languages.*

Keywords: *Operators, Tense, Aspect, Role And Reference Grammar Etulo, Igbo*

1.0 Introduction

Tense and aspect have been extensively studied across world languages, particularly within the framework of morph syntax and semantics. In African linguistics, many studies argue that most Niger-Congo languages tend to be aspect-prominent rather than tense-prominent (Welmers, 1973; Comrie, 1976). This perspective holds particularly true for Igbo and may likely be the pattern for Etulo, although Etulo remains significantly under described. Some of the common distinction posited for tense across languages is the distinction between the past, present and future whereas for aspect, distinctions such as inceptive, progressive, perfective exist. Depending on the language(s) these distinctions are expressed morphologically, lexically or analytically and aspectual markings normally located in various positions of the clause (Payne, 2007).

Etulo and Igbo are Niger-Congo languages spoken in Nigeria. This study explores how these languages encode tense and aspect using the RRG framework, which integrates syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. In RRG, tense is treated as a core-layer operator, while aspect is a nuclear-layer operator. This classification guides the analysis of the placement and function of tense and aspect markers in both languages.

The paper is divided into five sections. Section one is the introduction while section two reviews literature relevant to the study. In section three, the methodology adopted in the work is discussed, section four goes into the thrust of the study which is a comparison of tense and aspect in Etulo and Igbo, while section five summarizes and concludes the study. In the section that follows, brief information on the two languages under comparison is provided.

1.1 Language Information

Etulo is an Idomoid group of the West Benue Congo of Niger Congo group of languages (Gordon, 2005). Igbo following the classification by Williamson and Blench (2000), belongs to the West Benue Congo sub family of the proto Benue Congo language family. The two languages are spoken in Nigeria; Igbo is one of the major Nigerian languages while Etulo belongs to the minority.

Both Etulo and Igbo refer simultaneously to both the language and the ethnic group. The Igbo language is primarily spoken by Igbos found in the South-eastern part of Nigeria: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states. Igbo is also spoken in some parts of Delta and River states



in the south-southern part of Nigeria. Igbo is a tone language with three distinctive tones: high, low and down step. The Etulo are found in Benue and Taraba States, Nigeria. The Etulo speakers in Benue are found in Adi, Buruku Local Government Area and parts of Katsina-Ala, Katsina-Ala Local Government Area. According to Tabe (2007:3) Etulo is one of the Jukunoid groups that formed the erstwhile Kwararafa kingdom in the Benue valley in the distant past. The Etulo as noted by Tabe live on both banks of the Katsina-Ala River, about 136 kilometres east of Makurdi, the Benue state capital. The author further avers that the Etulo land (Ikpese Etulo) stretches from 7°N to 9°N latitudes and lies 11°E and 13°E longitude.(Tabe 2007:1). With regard to tone, Ezenwafor and Mmadike (2012) classify Etulo as a register (terrace level) tone language with three level tonemes : The high, the low, the downstep and a rising falling tone.

The basic structure of Igbo and Etulo clause is SVO. The Etulo verb consists of a verb stem in combination with other optional constituents. Okoye (2021) cites the instances of transitive and intransitive clause in Etulo as follows:

1a. Àfè gbobu tasā
Afe break plate
Afe broke the plate
[do` (Àfè, θ)] CAUSE [INGR break` (tasā)]

b. Tasa gbobū
Plate break
The plate broke
INGR break` (tasā) (Okoye 2021:590)

As noted by Okoye (2021), 1a instantiates a transitive clause in Etulo and its logical structure while example 1b shows an intransitive clause in Etulo. The logical structure reveals the two arguments of the verb. In 1a Afe is the Actor, a willful agent who instigates an action while *tasa* ‘plate’ is the patient, an entity which undergoes a change of state and condition described by the verb *gbobu* ‘break’. The patient is subsumed under the undergoer macro-role in RRG. This means that the core arguments function as subject and object regardless of their semantic roles. In 1b, the logical structure shows the verb’s single argument which is the undergoer. Notice that the only argument of the intransitive verb is realized as the subject, its semantic role notwithstanding.

The effort in the present study is to compare tense and aspect in the Etulo and the Igbo languages using the Role and Reference Grammar theoretical approach. The rest of the paper is structured as follows: Section 2 reviews related literature and discusses the theoretical framework adopted in the study. In Section 3, the methodology is provided while section 4 with its subsections compares the realization of tense and aspect in Etulo and Igbo. Section 5 provides the summary and concludes the study. The next section goes into the review of tense and aspect.

2.0 An Overview of Tense and Aspect

Tense and aspect systems in African languages have long intrigued linguists due to their diversity, complexity, and typological uniqueness. While some African languages exhibit rich morphological tense systems, others rely more heavily on aspectual distinctions or pragmatic context.

Comrie (1985) and Chung & Timberlake (1985) laid the groundwork for understanding tense and aspect systems globally, including African languages, emphasizing the need to distinguish between grammatical tense and aspect. Comrie (1985:7) observes that locating situations in time is a conceptual notion and as such independent of distinctions made in any particular language. He thus views tense as the grammaticalization of location in time. The author distinguishes between absolute and relative tenses. Absolute tense takes the present moment as the deictic centre while relative tense does not include the present moment as part of its deictic meaning (1985:35).



According to Comrie, the present, past and future tenses are instances of absolute tense. The present tense is used to describe states and processes that hold at the time of speech but began before the time of speech and may likely continue beyond the speech time as in the expression *Ada is working on the Etulo language*. The past tense locates a situation prior to the present moment while the future tense locates a situation at a time subsequent to the present moment. Comrie (1985: 44-46) however posits that the controversy surrounding the future reference with respect to whether it should be subsumed under tense or mood remains an empirical question that can only be answered based on the investigation of future time reference across languages.

Frawley (1992:336) sees tense as the grammatical and morphological means employed by a language to locate an event in time. Frawley notes that languages vary in their assignment of tense locus and thus distinguishes between absolute and relative tenses. Frawley’s tense distinction aligns with that of Comrie (1985). According to Frawley (1992:343), absolute tense reaches directly into the speech event by relating the event to the present position of the speaker, i.e, it relies on here and now to determine the tense locus. He also observes that the tense locus is inherited from a point outside the moment of speech. With regard to relative tense, Frawley notes that it applies typically to events that are dependent on other events such as reported speech or indirect discourse. Frawley exemplifies with the Russian example below:

2. Ja spros- il počemu u nego trjasutsja ruki
I ask past why to him tremble/pres hands
I asked him why his hands were shaking

Frawley asserts that in example 2, it is ungrammatical for *trjasutsja* ‘tremble’ to be assigned past tense. The verb rather inherits its tense from the first verb *spros* ‘ask’.

According to Simango (2003) Bantu languages like *iciBemba*, *ciCewa*, and *Bamileke* are reported to have 8–10 tense distinctions, including fine-grained past categories like *hodiernal*, *hesternal*, and *pre-hesternal*. *Setswana* and *Swati* show fewer tense distinctions but compensate with aspectual and pragmatic markers

Chung and Timberlake (1985) opine that in many Kwa languages (e.g., *Akan*, *Ewe*, *Ga-Dangme*), tense is not grammatically prominent. Instead, aspect and modality dominate, with tense often inferred from context. The *Aspect and Modality in Kwa Languages* project highlights how these languages challenge Eurocentric grammatical models.

Studies on *Hausa*, *Wolof*, and *Igbo* dialects reveal dual tense/aspect systems that vary by clause type (e.g., main vs. relative clauses) and focus structure. In *Igbo* dialects like *Ògbahù* and *Ìmilikè*, tone and negation interact with tense and aspect marking, showing a deep integration of prosody and grammar

Dirven and Verspoor (2004:93) discuss tense with respect to what they termed the speech act time. According to them, tense is the grammatical category which relates an event in time with respect to the speech act time which is the moment of speaking. They further aver that events that take place at speech time act itself (present) and before the speech time (past tense) have reality status while events that take place after the speech act (future tense) have the status of potential reality. The authors opine that the category tense is one of the grounding elements of a sentence that aids to ensure successful communication.

Viveka (2012:194) views tense as the linguistic device used to show when an event took place. This device however excludes lexical items and expressions like *yesterday*, *tomorrow* though they indicate when an event occurred. Furthermore, the author opines that some languages lack grammatical marking for tense. That is, they appear to be without tense as seen in example 3 from the *Julhoan* language cited in Viveka (2012:196).

3. ha úá Tjùmlkúí
3SG go tsumkwe
He went/goes/will go to Tsumkwe



The translation of example 3 translates to past, future or present form except where further context is employed to achieve differentiation in the time of the event.

Another strategy pointed out by Viveka that can be used to mark a clearer grammatical distinction for time is by distinguishing between degrees of remoteness. Languages that employ this kind of difference code an event either having taken place in the near past or remote past and going to take place in the near immediate or remote future (Viveka 2012: 199). Moreover, Viveka submits that languages with remoteness in the past distinguish between today (hodiernal past) or not today (hesternal past).

The example in 4 below taken from Carlson (1994:329) cited in Viveka (2012:199) instantiates a language with both hodiernal past and hesternal past.

4a Mìni mu pyi di ye?
ISG REC.PAST 2SG tell how question mark
What did I tell you (earlier today)?

b. Jò u ná sá lí iwó ye?
who 3SG REM past go it take Q
Who went and took it?

The examples in 4a and b are both in the past. However *ni* in 4a is used to show that the inquiry is with respect to the recent past while *ná* in 4b shows that the question being asked is with regard to a distant past.

Alloway and Corley (2004) compare tense in Mandarin and Tamil verb forms and submit that the difference between the two languages is that whereas in Tamil tense changes are marked by adding suffixes to the verbroot, Mandarin, shows no explicit tense marker; rather adverbs like tomorrow, yesterday are included to situate an event within temporal parameters. Table1 below demonstrates the present, past and future tense inflections of the verb ‘to eat’ in Tamil and Mandarin

Table 1 Tense inflection in Tamil and Mandarin.

Verb-to eat	Present	Past	Future
Tamil	Saapeda ran	Saapetaan	Saapedu Vaan
Mandarin	Chi’h	Chi’h	Chi’h
Gloss	Eats	Ate	Will eat

(Alloway and Corley 2004: 322)

Table 1 shows obvious morphological endings for the different tense forms in Tamil while in Mandarin the verb remains invariable.

The Afranaph Project, a major initiative collecting tense and aspect data across African languages using structured questionnaire has revealed cross-linguistic variation in how languages encode temporal relations and aspectual nuances. Sibisi and Tappe (2020) conducted an intra-individual study comparing isiZulu and English tense and aspect usage. Their findings show that L1 isiZulu speakers simplify English tense and aspect morphology, especially avoiding the -en participle, highlighting L1 transfer effects.

Ralusahi (2015) examined Tshivenda-English bilinguals, showing that Bantu logic of temporal reasoning influences English usage, suggesting a substrate-driven evolution of Black South African English.

Dirven and Verspoor (2004:94) see aspect as a grounding element of a sentence, which represents how the speaker relates an event to what obtains at speech act time or at another specified time. According to Crystal (1992:29), aspect as a grammatical category marks duration or the type of temporal activity denoted by the verb.



Emenanjo (2015:447) submits that although both tense and aspect have to do with time, the former denotes static, atelic and definite time while the latter deals with dynamic, telic and extended time. Thus, he opines that tense is the grammaticalization of location of time in terms of past, present or future while aspect is the grammaticalization of duration in terms of inceptive, progressive, perfective etc.

For Frawley (1992:294), aspect as a category shows that an event is distributed through the period in which the event occurs. The author distinguishes among perfective/imperfective, telic/atelic, punctual/durative, iterative/semelfactive, progressive and habitual aspectual types. Whereas perfective aspect views event as a complete unit irrespective of whether the event has itself ended, imperfective aspect sees “an event as non unitized whether or not the event is finished”. Furthermore, the author observes that in the interpretation of perfective events, the internal properties such as the beginning, the middle and the end are less relevant; hence, the events are viewed from a distance while for the imperfective aspect, events are viewed from within and the internal properties are much relevant. Frawley exemplifies using the Kusaiean language in 5

5a. Eltahl kang ik ah
They eat/imper fish the
They are eating the fish (imperfective)

b. Eltahl kang- lah ik ah
They eat up -/ perf fish the
They ate up the fish (perfective)

(Culled from Frawley 1992:298)

Examples 5a and b show that for the imperfective, there is no morpheme attached to the verb *kang* ‘eat’, whereas for the perfective form, the morpheme *-lah* is suffixed to *kang* ‘eat’

The distinction between telic and atelic is with respect to goal-directedness. Frawley (1992:302) opines that telic events have built-in goal that must be reached, in order to be successfully affirmed while atelic events do not imply such goals. Punctual aspect shows momentous acts while durative aspect denotes events that occupy time. Events that consist of a single act is denoted by semelfactive aspect but where the events have multiple acts, it is in the iterative or frequentative. The instance in 6 below distinguishes between the semelfactive and iterative aspects.

6a. Ada shrugged

b. Ada wiggled

Example 6a is semelfactive while 6b is a case of frequentative. The next section sets forth the theoretical background for this study

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is the Role and Reference Grammar (henceforth RRG). RRG is a theoretical approach first proposed by Foley and Van Valin (1984). The theory was developed in Van Valin (1993) and further developed in Van Valin and La Polla (1997) and Van Valin (2005). RRG emphasizes the exploration of language systems based on their use in communication. The theory posits a Layered Structure of the Clause (LSC), comprising the nucleus (verb + nuclear operators), the core (arguments + core operators), and the clause (peripheral elements). According to Van Valin (2005), there are two aspects of clause structure and they are; relational and non-relational aspects. Whereas the relational aspect deals with the relations between predicate and its argument, the non-relational aspect deals with how phrases, clauses and sentences are organized in hierarchy. A component of RRG theory of clause structure which is relevant to this paper is the theory of operators. Operators in RRG refer to grammatical categories like aspect, tense, negation and illocutionary force. These operators modify specific layers of the clause. They represent grammatical categories, which are different from predicates and argument (Van Valin &



La Polla (1997:40). Illocutionary force is a universal operator that refers to whether an utterance is an assertion, a question, a command or an expression of a wish. Every language has illocutionary force as operator because it is possible to make statements, ask questions and give commands in all languages Van Valin (1997:41). Van Valin and La Polla (1997:45) also opine that different operators can modify different layers of the clause. Nuclear operators modify the verb directly (e.g., aspect) while core operators modify the core (e.g., tense). Having explained the aspect of RRG relevant to the present study, the next section provide the methodology for the study.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive comparative method and uses both primary data (Etulo) and secondary data (Igbo) to ensure a balanced approach to the analysis. Primary data were sourced from competent Etulo native speakers resident in Adi, Buruku Local Government Area of Benue State through elicitation sessions based on translation of temporal and aspectual sentences from English into Etulo and recording of natural narratives and dialogues for contextualized data. Data sourced from established Igbo grammars and descriptive studies (Emenanjo 1978; Nwachukwu 1983; Ndimele 1999) formed the secondary data for the study. Native Igbo speakers were consulted to verify examples and clarify ambiguities in interpretation. In the analysis of data, the realizations of tense and aspect are discussed and adequately exemplified. This discussion of tense and aspect in Etulo forms the basis for comparison with Igbo which is well documented. The comparison follows the RRG theoretical approach. The tone marking convention adopted is that of Green and Igwe (1963) where all but high tones are marked. Section 4.0 beginning with subsection 4.4.1 below discusses tense in Etulo and Igbo

4.0 Tense and Aspect in Etulo and Igbo

4.4.1 Tense in Etulo and Igbo

In Etulo, there is no change in the form of the verb that obviously distinguishes the present from the past form as shown in 7 below

7a. Àfè gya angwò
Afe buy yam
Afe bought yam

b. Èfu gbobū tasa
Efu break plate
Efu broke the plate

The sentences in 7a and b are appropriate expressions of both present and past in Etulo. The forms of the verbs remain invariant, as there is no morpheme attached to show time distinction with respect to the events being expressed.

However, sometimes in order to show that an event occurred prior to the time of speech, Etulo uses adverbials of time that are not attached to the verb to make the past very distinct. The words used to indicate past reference include *teyī* ‘first /previously’, *nosē* ‘before’, *tsekise* ‘already’ and *zika* ‘earlier today’. These words are instantiated in 9a-d.

9a. Efu *teyī* gyā mbwe mì idù
Efu first buy meat at market
Efu bought the meat at the market

b. Èfu *nosē* gyā mbwe mì idù
Efu before buy meat at market
Efu bought meat at the market before



c. Èfu tsekise yē ungwō nwi Mfō kyō

Efu already know thing which Mfo do

Efu already knew what Mfo did

d. Èfu zika gyā mbwe mì idù

Efu earlier buy meat at market

Efu earlier today bought meat at the market

9a –d are instances of past expressions in Etulo. In 9a, the word *teyi* ‘first’ precedes the verb to show that the action was carried out before the time of speech. Another word, *nosē* ‘before’ also performs that same function of indicating a past action. With respect to *zika*, which translates to English ‘earlier’, it is only used if the past action was carried out or indulged-in the same day and at an earlier time before the speech time. If the action was performed on preceding days, *zika* renders the sentence ungrammatical. The use of the words in 9a-d to signal the past in Etulo is in consonance with Lyons (1977:67) observation that though some languages may lack tense as a clear verbal category, all languages have various deictic adverbs or particles of time that help to relate the time of a situation being described to the time of utterance.

The future tense in Etulo is solely expressed using the auxiliary *ka* ‘will’. This obligatorily precedes the verb in utterances and bears a low tone. Instances showing future actions are shown in examples 10 below:

10a O kà kye àwùyà mgban nu mā

3SG AUX take wealth Poss give 3PL

He will take his wealth and give them.

b. Èfu kà kè

Efu AUX go

Efu will go

c. Èyi kà gye mi òkwò

1PL AUX eat at farm

We will eat at the farm

d. Èyi kà kyìdò yi èkà

1PL AUX do work with together

We will work together.

From the analysis of tense, one observes that although tense is not overtly marked on the verb, there are salient distinctions made for the past time in Etulo. Thus, one can say that Etulo uses lexical time reference. *Teyi* ‘first /previously’, *nosē* ‘before’, *tsekise* ‘already’ and *zika* ‘earlier today’ can be said to reflect degrees of tense.

Igbo has been shown to have a minimal tense system and a rich aspect system (Emenanjo, 1978; Nwachukwu, 1983). Emenanjo (1978) and Nwachukwu (1983) argue that past/non-past tense can be marked through auxiliaries or particles and tonal shifts. In Igbo, the past is often marked by low tone or suffixes like -rV while the future is marked by the auxiliary “ga” as illustrated below

11a. ọ rì rì nri

3SG eat-PST food

He/she ate food

b. ọ ga e-ri

3SG FUT pre -eat

He/she will eat.



While tense refers to the time of an action (past, present, future), aspect describes the nature or structure of the action whether it's completed, ongoing, habitual, etc.

4.4.2 Aspect in Etulo and Igbo

Etulo distinguishes between inceptive, progressive and perfective aspect. In the instances in 12 below, the particle *wà* is used to indicate an action that had already been completed. The particle occupies the sentence –final position. It cannot be said that the particle marking perfective aspect immediately follows the verb owing to the exceptions observed in 12c and 12g below. In all instances, *wà* bears a low tone

12a. ònjà ná ba wà
Woman DEM come Perf
That woman has come

b. Ìngìsè ná kyé òzù mgbán gyā wà
Person DEM take house 3PLposs buy Perf
That person has bought his own house

c. Èfu fawā Mfo ànwutò wà.
Efu tear Afe cloth Perf
Efu has torn Afe's cloth.

d. Efu gbòze wà
Efu spoke Perf
Efu has spoken

e. Èyi kàkà wà
1PL arrive Perf
We have arrived.

f. A gyē wà
3PL eat Perf
They have eaten.

g. Èyi gyē (ungwò) mí òkwò wà
1PL eat (food) PREP farm Perf
We have eaten at the farm

h. Èyi bā wà
1PL come perf
We have come

i. Anì gye wà
ISG eat perf
I have eaten

j. A ngyēlū wà
3PL finish perf
They have finished



Other distinctions observed with reference to the duration of events are shown in 13 following. Examples 13 a-h show that the event expressed by the verb persists as at the time of speech. This is marked by *lè*. Example 13i represents a case of an unfulfilled event as indicated by the morpheme *ki*

- 13a. Anì lè lu òkwò
ISG PROG go farm
I am going to the farm
- b. Efù lè nunâ
Efu PROG sleep
Efu is sleeping
- c. Anì lè kyìdò
ISG PROG do work
I am working
- d. Èfù lè tsɛ ɔnyà kyè
Efu PROGrun race about
Efu is running about
- e. Á lè gbòdzɛ
3PL PROG talk/speak
They are talking
- f. Ánì lè gye ungwogyē
ISG PROG eat food to eat
I am eating
- g. A lè shìɔdzé
1PL PROG make noise
They are making noise
- h. Anì lè kyìdò ònò neni
ISG PROG do work time now
I am working now
- i. Eyi ki lè gye ungwogyē
1PL PROG eat thing to eat
We would have been eating

It is observed that the morpheme, which marks perfective aspect in Etulo, occupies the sentence final position while the morpheme that indicates progressive aspect occupies the clause medial position.

In Igbo, aspect plays a more central grammatical role than tense. Aspect is typically encoded via verbal prefixes (*na-* for progressive), tonal distinctions, and auxiliary constructions. Ndimele (1999) emphasizes the role of serial verb constructions in marking aspectual nuances in Igbo, while Agbo (2003) discusses the prosodic and morphological cues that help distinguish different aspectual forms. Commonly attested aspects in Igbo include perfective (completed action), progressive (ongoing action), habitual, and retrospective or perfect (past event with present relevance). Examples 14a and b show perfective and progressive aspectual distinctions in Igbo.

14a Nwa a erielà nri ahu



Child this eat PERF food that
This child has eaten that food

b. Nwa a na eri nri ahu
Child this PROG eat food that
This child is eating that food

4.4.3 An RRG Comparison of Tense and Aspect in Igbo

Based on RRG, a functionally motivated grammatical theory that treats syntax, semantics, and pragmatics as integrated, we represent the central concepts relevant for this study as follow:

Nucleus: The verb and aspectual information (e.g., progressive, perfective).

Core: Includes the arguments (subject, object) and tense.

Clause: Includes the core plus peripheral elements (time adverbials, etc.).

Operators: Grammatical categories like tense, aspect, and modality.

Aspect → Nuclear Operator

Tense → Core Operator

In Igbo, tense is generally inferred but can be explicitly marked by auxiliary elements like *ga-* for future as shown in 15 below

15a. *Ọ riri nri.* “He ate food.” → Past

b. *Ọ ga-eri nri.* “He will eat food.” → Future

LS: *do'(ọ, [eat'(ọ, nri)])* & PAST/FUTURE

RRG treats *ga-* as a core operator, taking scope over the core and preceding the nucleus which is the verb *ri*.

For Etulo, there is no verb inflection to mark tense rather the past is inferred using temporal adverbials (*teyī, nosē, tsekise, zika*), and future is marked with the auxiliary *ka* as Illustrated in 16 below

Past (Lexical/Core Peripheral)

16a. *Efu teyī gyā mbwe* “Efu bought meat earlier.”

Time reference comes from deictic adverbials which are peripheral elements.

Future (Core Operator)

b. *Efu ka kè.* → “Efu will go.”

ka is an auxiliary with core-operator function, preceding the verb in line with RRG’s hierarchy.



Table 2 Comparative Table of Tense in Etulo and Igbo

Tense Features	Etulo	Igbo
Past Marking	Time adverbials (teyi,nose, zika)	Tonal / Contextual cues
Future Marking	ka (preverbal auxiliary)	ga (preverbal auxiliary)
Tense Morphology	No inflection; relies on lexical elements	Limited inflection
Temporal Adverbials	Essential for past distinction	Optional
Tense as Core Operators	Yes (future); past expressed lexically	Yes (especially future)

Aspect is highly grammaticalized and functions as a nuclear operator. In Igbo progressive *na-* prefix
O na-eri nri. He is eating.

LS: do'(o, [eat'(o, nri)]) & PROG

Perfective: Tone + bare verb

O riri nri. “He ate.”

LS: do'(o, [eat'(o, nri)]) & PERF

Habitual: *na-* + context often overlap with progressive in form.

In Etulo, aspect is more prominent than tense and follows nuclear operator placement.

Perfective: Sentence-final particle *wà*

Efu gbòze wà. “Efu has spoken.”

ònjà ná bawà. “That woman has come.”

wà functions as a nuclear operator, semantically akin to the English present perfect.

LS: do'(efu, [speak'(efu)]) & PERF

Progressive: Clause-medial morpheme *lè*

Efu lè nunà. “Efu is sleeping.”

Ani lè kyìdò. “I am working.”

lè appears before the verb, indicating nuclear-level scope.

Inceptive/Unfulfilled Aspect: *ki*

Eyi ki lè gye... We would have been eating

The above suggests an unrealized event, possibly at the boundary between aspect and modality.



Table 3 Comparative Table of Aspect in Etulo and Igbo

Aspect Type	Etulo	Igbo
Progressive	lè (preverbal particle)	na- (prefix)
Perfective	wa (post verbal particle)	Tonal/bare verbs
Retrospective	Encoded in wa	Serial verb
Inceptive Aspect	Ki	Not overtly marked
Aspect as Nuclear operator	Yes	Yes

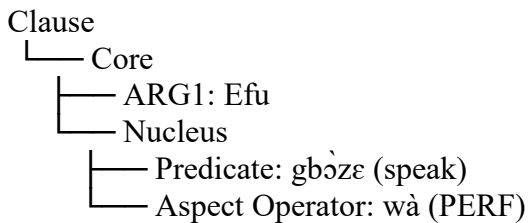
4.4.4 Structural Alignment (RRG Layered Structure)

The layered structure of the Etulo and Igbo clause is shown below:

Etulo Example (Perfective)

Efu gbòze wà. → “Efu has spoken.”

RRG Layered Structure



Igbo Example (Progressive)

O na-eri nri. → “He is eating.”

RRG Layered Structure

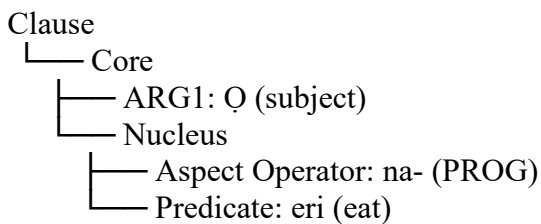


Table 4 Summary of RRG Comparison

RRG	Etulo	Igbo
Nuclear operators (Aspect)	Lè (PROG) wa (PERF)	Na, tonal shift
Core operators(Tense)	Ka (FUT)	Ga- (FUT)
Peripheral Tense Indicators	Teyi, nose, zika, tsekise	Adverbs (Contextual)



Unrealized/ Aspect	Inceptive	Ki	Not overtly marked
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5.0 Summary and Conclusion

This study explored operators (tense and aspect) in the Etulo and the Igbo languages from the RRG approach. The RRG based analysis reveals that both Etulo and Igbo prioritize aspect over tense. Whereas Igbo marks tense and aspect using a mix of tonal changes, verbal prefixes (e.g., *na-*, *ga*), and auxiliary constructions, Etulo shows less grammaticalized tense marking, often relying on temporal adverbials or auxiliary-like constructions. This divergence shows the various morphosyntactic paths that languages within the same family can take.

Tense in Igbo is minimally marked (primarily past vs. non-past), while aspect is robustly expressed across perfective, progressive, habitual, and retrospective domains. The Etulo aspect system appears more developed, with evidence for perfective, progressive, and habitual aspects. The analysis supports the view that tense-aspect systems in Niger-Congo languages are tilted toward aspectual encoding, with tense often being inferred from context or marked through minimal means. The comparison contributes to cross-linguistic studies of grammaticalization, illustrating how different languages within the same macro-family can evolve divergent strategies for encoding time.

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DIACRITICAL MARKS IN FRENCH AND YORUBA LANGUAGE; POINT OF CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE

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Abstract

Language is not only a tool for communication but also a carrier of culture, identity, and meaning. Among the many features that give language its richness, diacritical marks play a crucial role in shaping pronunciation, meaning, and interpretation. Diacritical marks play an important role in many languages because they guide pronunciation and meaning in words that are homographs. In both French and Yoruba, these marks serve as essential linguistic tools, although they operate in different ways. In the two languages the utilisation of these accents is very important because without them there will be a lot of confusion for the speakers of the languages. This study examines the points of convergence and divergence in the use of diacritical marks in French and Yoruba. French employs diacritics such as the acute (é), grave (è), circumflex (â), cedilla (ç), and diaeresis (ë) mainly to influence pronunciation, indicate historical spelling, or distinguish between similar words. Yoruba, on the other hand, uses tone marks and under dots to indicate tonal variation and vowel quality, which are crucial for meaning since Yoruba is a tonal language. The paper adopts a comparative and descriptive approaches to highlight how these orthographic features reflect deeper phonological and cultural realities. It reveals that although both languages share the use of diacritics as visual guides in written communication, Yoruba and French depend heavily on them for semantic clarity. By examining these similarities and differences, this study contributes to cross-linguistic understanding and emphasizes the importance of diacritics in preserving linguistic identity and accuracy in communication.

1.0. Introduction

Language carries the weight of human experience, and even the smallest marks on a page can shape meaning in profound ways. Diacritical marks—those seemingly minor signs placed above or below letters—serve as powerful tools that guide pronunciation, clarify meaning, and preserve linguistic identity. In both French and Yoruba, diacritics are not mere decorative elements; they are essential components of the writing system.

French, a widely spoken Romance language, uses diacritical marks such as the acute accent (é), grave accent (è), circumflex (ê), diaeresis (ë), and cedilla (ç). These marks often signal differences in pronunciation, distinguish between words, or reflect historical developments in the language. For example, the difference between é and è can subtly alter pronunciation and sometimes meaning, while the cedilla ensures that c retains a soft sound before certain vowels.

Yoruba, a major language spoken in West Africa, particularly in Nigeria, employs a different system of diacritics rooted in its tonal nature. Yoruba uses tone marks—high (´), mid (unmarked), and low (˘)—to distinguish meaning between words that may otherwise appear identical. For instance, a single sequence of letters can produce entirely different meanings depending on the tone applied. In addition, underdots are used to differentiate vowel qualities, further enhancing clarity and precision in written communication.



Despite these differences, both French and Yoruba demonstrate a shared commitment to using diacritics as tools for linguistic precision. This raises important questions: To what extent do these languages converge in their use of diacritical marks? Where do they diverge, and what do these differences reveal about their phonological systems?

This study seeks to answer these questions by examining the roles, functions, and implications of diacritical marks in both languages. By comparing French and Yoruba, the paper not only highlights structural similarities and differences but also underscores the cultural and linguistic significance embedded in these small yet powerful symbols. Ultimately, this exploration provides deeper insight into how writing systems adapt to the needs of their speakers and preserve meaning across contexts.

2.0. Concept of Diacritics

According to Crystal (2008, p.142), diacritic is a mark added to a symbol to alter the way it is pronounced. Diacritic marks (or ‘diacritics’) include the various accents (´ ^ ` etc) and other signs of devoicing (^) and nasalization (~). These diacritics are used on vowels and syllabic nasal consonants to indicate the languages tones. The major ones that shall be considered in this write up are:

1. The acute accent (´) for the high tone in Yoruba..
2. The grave accent (`) for the low tone in Yoruba.
3. The optional macron (-) for the middle tone in Yoruba
4. The circumflex accent (^)
5. The Umlant (¨)
6. The Cedilla (,)

The first three are used in Yoruba language while French language makes use of the first two, the fourth, the fifth and the sixth one. It is highly essential to put accents in their proper places because an incorrect or missing accent is a spelling mistake just as an incorrect or missing letter would be. We shall therefore look at each of them in detail.

3.0. A Brief History of the Yoruba Language

Yoruba is one of the three major indigenous languages of Nigeria (alongside Hausa and Igbo) and it is a member of the Volta-Niger branch of the Niger-Congo family of languages. It is spoken by about 22 million people in Southwest Nigeria, Benin, Togo, the U.K, Brazil and the USA. Yoruba first appeared in writing during the 19th century. The first Yoruba publications were a number of teaching booklets produced by John Raban in 1830-2. The person who made the biggest contribution to Yoruba literacy was Bishop Ajayi Crowther (1806 – 1891), who studied many of the languages of Nigeria, including Yoruba and wrote and translated in some of them. Crowther was also the first Christian bishop of West African origin. Yoruba orthography appeared in about 1850, though it has undergone a number of changes since then.

Yoruba is a tonal language i.e the pronunciation of words in Yoruba language is tonal; where a different pitch conveys a different word meaning grammatical distinction. This means that pronouncing words in Yoruba is based on what is called’ *àmì ohùn* meaning Tone marks. These marks are applied to the top of the vowel within each syllable of a word or phrase.

Dò-Low with a falling tone, depicted by a grave accent.

e.g. àṣà (ò ò) culture
èdè (ò ò) language

Re- Mid with a flat tone, depicted by an absence of any accent.

Pupa (re re) red



Tuntun (re re) new

Mí-High with a rising tone, depicted by an acute accent.

Kólá (mi mi) name of a person

Dúpé (mi mi) name of a person

Understanding the use of tone marks is the key to properly reading, writing and speaking the Yoruba language. This is because some words have similar spelling but at the addition of tone marks, these words could have very different meanings.

Here are some paired examples:

- A). Ọkọ (re re) husband
 Ọkó (re mi) hoe
 Ọkò (re do) vehicle
- B). Àgbòn (do do) jaw
 Agbòn (re do) basket
 Àgbon (do re) coconut
- C). Ìgbà (do do) time
 Igba (re re) two hundred
 Ìgbá do mi) garden egg
- D). Òjó (do mi) name
 Òjò (do do) rain
 Ojo (re re) coward

If the accents are not put on the words above when used in a sentence it will definitely lead to confusion. It is very important to insert accent makes on words written in the Yoruba language and to place dot under the letters that require it. It is very difficult to read and understand the meaning of sentences if this is not done.

4.0. FRENCH LANGUAGE

French is an important world language. it is a Romance language that originated from Latin and developed in the region of northern France. Today, it is spoken by over 300 million people worldwide across Europe, Africa, the Americas, and parts of Asia, making it one of the most influential global languages. French is an official language in many international organizations such as the United Nations and the African Union, and it plays a significant role in diplomacy, education, literature, and culture. Known for its rich vocabulary, expressive style, and historical contributions to philosophy and the arts, French is also widely studied as a foreign language, especially in countries like Nigeria where it serves as an important tool for regional and international communication. According to Ade Ojo (2002: 2)

It is in fact the 5th intercontinental world language after English, Spanish, Arabic and Portuguese in terms of the sheer number of its speakers who are found in all the five continents. French is the second most important language of the world coming after English, with the two endowed with the potentials and a past history of privileged acceptance and usage in interpersonal, diplomatic, business and socio-cultural relations all over the universe. French is the language with the second largest number of speakers in the EU, coming after German. It is one of the three languages (with English and Arabic) that are used by the OAU for its official transactions and publications. It is actively and



competently spoken by more than 140 million peoples in the world and gladly learnt and used by another 300 million in non-Franco- phone countries who have been ‘somehow’ exposed to the learning of French and who can (manage to) express themselves in it. He adds that French belongs to the enviable Club of 12 of the world’s 5440 languages that are spoken by more than 100 million users.

Ade Ojo adds that, French unlike African languages, which are tone languages, is an intonational language, meaning that it is (and has to be) spoken with an intonation which is a melody that allows the level of the voice to rise and fall. The pitch produced allows the speaker to bring out the feeling behind the message or utterance (in a declarative sentence or Statement, an information question, a yes /no question or an imperatives sentence). For example, it is through the intonation that the contrast in the following statement comes out: *Tu Veux ou tu ne veux pas?* (you want or you don’t want?).

4.1. Different Types of Sentences and Their Intonation

A). For a statement or a declarative statement, the speaker ends the statement with a falling intonation e.g

Je vois le professeur (I see the teacher).

B). For an information question that the answer is not no or yes, the speaker starts by raising his voice and ends the question with a falling intonation e.g.

Où allez-vous? (Where are you going?)

C). The yes/no question viz a question that can be answered with just a ‘oui’ (yes) or a ‘non’(no) is started with a falling sound and is ended with a rising intonation e.g.

Question: Tu parles français? (do you speak French?).
Answer: Oui, je parle français. (Yes, I speak French).

D). An imperative or command sentence has a falling intonation e.g.

Viens! (Come)
Parle français! (speak French!)

4. 2. French Accents

There are four French accents for vowels and one accent for a consonant. These are:

a). **The grave accent (`)**: This accent can be found on an A, E or U. On the A and U, it usually serves to distinguish between words that would otherwise be homographs e.g. ou (or) vs où (where)

a (has) vs à (to or at)
dès (as from) vs des (some)

It only alters pronunciation when over the letter E to [ɛ] e.g.père (father), mère (mother) etc

b). **The acute accent (´)**: The accent can only be found on an E. It changes the letter’s pronunciation to [ay] e.g. étudiant (student), médecin (doctor), marché (market). .

c). **The accent circumflex (^)**: The accent circumflex can be on an A,E,I or U. The circumflex usually indicates that an S used to follow that vowel, e.g. forêt (forest).It also serves to distinguish homographs; e.g. du (contraction of de + le) vs dû (past participle of devoir et tache (spot) vs tâche (task).

d). **The accent tréma (¨)** : dieresis or umlaut can be on an E,I.or U. It is used when two vowels are next to each other and both must be pronounced e.g. naïve, Saül Ambiguë, and Noël. It equally serves to distinguish between homographs e.g. mais (but) vs maïs (maize)

e). **The cedilla (,)**: is found only under the letter C. It changes a hard Csound (like K) into a soft C sound (like S) e.g. garçon, leçon. The cedilla is never placed in front of E or I, because C always



sound like an S Infront of these vowels. Ajiboye (2006:25) submits that the cedilla could be found whenever C is followed by a , o or u e.g. ça, leçon, déçu. (see About.com French Language File /// C / users /Document/ French Accents- Diacritical marks used in French accessed 20th November ,2014)

5.0. Similarities Between French and Yoruba Accents

Going through our discussions on the diacritics used in French and Yoruba language, we discover that the diacritics are used on vowels in a syllable. Aduke (2008:6) says in French a syllable is made up of a consonant plus a pronounced vowel, a vowel only or a consonant plus a semi – vowels. There are single syllables and double syllables:

Single syllable	Double syllable
Là (CV) there	bébé (CV-CV) baby
Île (CV) island	découragé (CV-CV-CV-CV) discouraged
À (V) to, at	été. (V-CV) summer

The examples given above showed that accents are mostly placed on vowels in a syllable in French. The same thing happened in Yoruba where the diacritics are used on vowels in a syllable. According to Bamgbose (2005:26) there are three possible syllable structure in Yoruba , a consonant + vowel (CV), a vowel alone (V), and a syllabic nasal. Every syllable bears one of the three tones (high, mid and low).The syllable in Yoruba could be also single or double syllable.

Single syllable	Double syllable
Wá (CV) come	Dúpé (CV-CV) name of a person
A (V) we	Òkú (V-CV) dead person
	Pa n la (CV-N-CV). stock fish

Our findings also reveal that accents are not only placed on vowels, there are some consonants that make use of accents for correct pronunciation. Let’s look at the following examples both in French and Yoruba

Yoruba	French
Bá –n-gbó-sé (name)	Garçon (boy)
Kò-ṅ-kò (frog)	Leçon (lecture)

From the examples given above, the syllabic nasal (n) also carries accent in Yorùbá , while the consonant (c) also has an accent in French.

Another area of similarity between the two languages is that, they make use of accents to distinguish homonyms. Let consider these pairs of word in the two languages.

Yoruba	French
a) O –ko (re re) husband	a). Là (adverb=here)
O- kó (re mi) hoe	La (article=the)
O-kò (re do) vehicle	
b) A-gbón (re mi) hornet	b). Mais (conjunction=but).
À-gbon (do re) coconut	Maïs (noun=maize)
À-gbòn (do-do) jaw	
c). Ò-jò (do do) rain	c). Tache (noun=stain).
Ò-jó (do-mi) name	Tâche (noun= task).
O-jo (re re) coward	
d). Ìgbà (do do) time	Dès (preposition=as from)
Ìgbá (do mi) garden egg.	Des (partitif article=some)



- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ì-gbá (re mi) calabash e). Apa(re mi) arm Àpà (squanderer). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ou (conjunction=or) Où (adverb=where). |
|--|---|

Looking at the pairs of the words above, if not because of the proper accents placed on them, there would have been a confusion in their meaning. To buttress this point, Ajiboye (2006:25) opines ‘it is important to master the use of these accents, as loss of intended meaning may arise if they are not properly applied. ‘He says again that accents are crucial to spelling in French. Omitting one of them is like omitting a whole letter’. The differences between the pair of words are due to accents placed on them

6.0 Areas of Divergence Between the Two Languages

Since French language is a European language and Yoruba is also one of the African languages, there bound to be differences between the usages of their accents. Aduke (2008:6) says ‘accents are fixed in French and must be learnt along with each word’. All the accents placed on French words have been there right from the onset, they are rules that must be adhered to strictly. Words such as: garçon, dès , là où etc will continue to exist like that as decided by French academy, but this is not so in Yoruba language.

Secondly, another area of divergence observed between the two languages is that in many African languages, words change their meanings with a change of accent and intonation. For example in Yoruba language, the word o-j-o has three different meanings:

- Òjò = rain
- Ọjọ = name
- Ojo = coward.

According to Aduke(ibid), ‘note that such changes as noticed in the Yorùbá language do not occur in French. Even though accents add nothing to the meaning of a word, they are no less important in French’.

We also discovered that, Yorùbá accent is easy to learn and put on different words than that of French. BisBus International (1997-2010) submits ‘the easy way to learn how to pronounce words with these accent marks is to compare them with three of the tones played on the organ of the Piano’. These are (do re mi)

Conclusion

This paper has tried to shed more light on the diacritics that we make use of both in the French and the Yoruba languages, though emerging from different linguistic traditions, serve fundamentally similar purposes: they guide pronunciation, clarify meaning, and preserve the integrity of each language. In French, diacritics such as the *accent aigu* (é), *accent grave* (è), *accent circonflexe* (ê), *tréma* (ë), and *cedille* (ç) primarily function to indicate vowel quality, historical spelling changes, and phonetic distinctions. While they are sometimes seen as optional in informal digital communication, their presence remains essential in formal writing and in avoiding ambiguity.

In contrast, diacritical marks in Yoruba are indispensable and non-negotiable. As a tonal language, Yoruba relies heavily on diacritics—namely the acute accent (´), grave accent (`), and macron (¯)—to indicate high, low, and mid tones respectively. These tonal markings are not merely phonetic aids but carriers of meaning; a change in tone can result in entirely different words. Therefore, the omission or misuse of diacritics in Yoruba can lead to serious misunderstandings and loss of meaning.

Despite these differences, both languages demonstrate that diacritical marks are not ornamental but functional elements of orthography. They reflect deeper linguistic structures—phonology in French and tonology in Yoruba—and contribute significantly to readability, comprehension, and accurate communication.



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A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE SURVEYS OF ENGLISH IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

English varies with group in terms of place and class. A survey of one of the English variant refers to an either quantitative or qualitative study conducted to determine the overall state of the English variant used by a group. While a systematic review of surveys of the English is an evaluation of selected surveys conducted on the English used by a group within a period to provide an up-to-date account of the English used in Nigeria. Systematically reviewing the existing surveys on the English used in Nigeria is what has been neglected. Consequently, the study identifies the criteria used by the surveyors for categorising the English used by Nigerian and examines the pattern of development in the surveys. In achieving these, six key surveys of the English in Nigeria, conducted within 1958 to 2025, are selected and systematically reviewed within the theoretical framework of sociolinguistics. The results indicate that linguistics, intelligibility, sociolinguistics, region and social class are the variables used by scholars to categorise the use of English in Nigeria, with the variable of education considered as the most influential. Developments in the English categorisation was first determined by criterion of education, through others to the criterion of sociolinguistics. However, early and frequent exposure to the English are observed to be the overriding criterion for the acquisition of highly categorised competence in the use of English by Nigerians. Using the criterion of early and frequent exposure to the English should therefore be used in further surveys to categorise the English used by Nigerians.

Introduction

Two steps in conducting a survey have been identified by Glasow (2005): determining the sampling technique to be used in selecting the sample size from the study population and identifying the population estimate from the sample data and the reliability of such population estimates. By ‘survey of English,’ this study means the study of English variant used by a group who share certain backgrounds. This, for example, refers to responses to a set of quantitative items or qualitative questions (or both put together) about a subject matter collected from a representative sample of individuals (Ponto, 2015). The responses can be represented by previous surveys conducted on a subject matter (Cummings et al., 2025). In this case, the period of years within which the previous surveys were conducted is normally specified (Jui et al., 2025).



As obtained in this study, it is the previous studies conducted on the English in Nigeria as from 1958 to 2025 that are assessed, bringing to focus how the surveys began and evolved in patterns. As they differentiate it from mere literature review which is roughly narrative, systematic review is evidence-based because it is descriptive, synthetic and, of course, entirely based on empirical results. In a different shade, systematic review refers to the design which combines results of previous studies as data on a subject to principally establish a novel results and conclusion on the same subject (Pollock & Berge, 2018). Thus synthesising the knowledge empirically gathered to serve as basis for new results and conclusion in order to reveal unclear facts and patterns (or trends) which are present in relevant literature forms systematic review (Maeda et al., 2022).

With primarily the interest of Nigerian university students of English in mind, therefore, this study presents a systematic review of surveys conducted on the English in Nigeria, focusing on:

1. identifying the criterion for the categorisation in each survey of the English in Nigeria,
2. examining the pattern of developments in the surveys of the English in Nigeria as from 1958 to 2025.

Literature Review

The English in Nigeria

Depending on a country, the expression ‘the English in Nigeria’ has been used to demonstrate that English is not native to such country. An American, George Philip Krapp adopts the expression in 1925 as title – *The English Language in America* (Voquent, 2019). He introduces the idea of ‘General American’ – the neutral America accent, to which he refers as something that will endlessly be aimed at but never be achieved. Like America and of course any other country using English as non-native, Nigerian scholars have recognised the displacement of ‘the English in Nigeria’ by ‘Nigerian English’. The latter carries the sense that English is no longer foreign to Nigeria having been adapted because, as Odumuh (1987) says, it has been in Nigeria long enough and has acquired some local distinctive features making it typically Nigerian.

Although authors such as Brosnahan (1958) and Banjo (1971) earlier asked for the English adaptation, twenty-eight years after Odumuh (1987), Jowitt (1915) and Ugorji (2015) renew the call. Jowitt who observes some of the distinctive features of Nigerian Received Pronunciation (RP) says adapting the English in Nigeria requires an endonormative (as opposed to exonormative) approach, a situation where the Nigerian sociolinguistic background will be significantly involved in the process so that the result will bear resemblance with the native RP. This is in addition to the reference he makes to Adegbija (2004) who is convinced that English is equally a Nigeria’s property. For Ugorji, confidence and psychological independence in using the English will be gained when the Nigerian English is developed reflecting the Nigerian identity.

Other scholars who are Pro-British RP include Atoye (1987), Amayo (1988), while the scholars who are anti- RP include Eka (1985), Adetugbo (1987), Dairo (1988) among others. On several occasions, the educated form of English spoken in Nigeria, especially in very formal contexts and by the national news broadcasters have been described as the Educated Nigerian English (ENE) by Olaniyi (2010), Standard Nigerian English (SNE) by Jibril (1982), Eka (1985), and Jowitt (1991, 1996, 2006). Billy & Kaseem (2013) identify the conflicting views as ‘Pro-British’ interest expressed by the native-affiliated judgment and ‘Anti-British’ presented by non-native-affiliated judgment. This emphasises that the term RP is no longer an exclusive term to refer to the Standard British English.

Advent and Spread of the English in Nigeria

Portuguese, the oldest ally of the English, came to Nigeria in the sixteenth century, precisely in 1472 followed by the English in 1553 as reported by Odumuh (1987), who states that the Portuguese came to Benin in Southern Nigeria after the arrival of Arabians in the Northern Nigeria in 1075. From this, English has been in use in Nigeria for five hundred and forty-seven years. The Portuguese depended largely on translators and interpreters to obtain Nigerian slaves who were taken to Portugal, acquired some basic English and returned to Nigerian. Between 1440 and 1750 pidgin Portuguese was developed as a lingua franca in the bid to speak the well-established Sibir,



the lingua franca used essentially across the Mediterranean for trade. Eventually, the Sibir got replaced by the pidgin Portuguese. When the English colonisers first came to the southern Nigeria in 1553, their interest was to buy slaves. The bought slaves were made to come back home in mass owing to the Industrial Revolution between 1760 and 1820 which rendered their services inefficient, hence the abolishment of the slave trade in 1833.

During the Industrial Revolution, the mass slave returnees found the pidgin Portuguese the less intelligible, as such it got replaced by the more understood English acquired by the returned slaves in 1744 as lingua franca. Lagos in the southern Nigeria was made centre for the colonial administration in 1861 because it was already a commercial and the most cosmopolitan. The Oil Rivers Protectorate of Northern Nigeria took over government of the North. Within the first decade of twentieth century, before the formation of Nigeria, the southern and the northern protectorate passed through what Odumuh calls 'pacification' (making peace with the colonised), 'occupation' (establishing the colonial administration and recruiting of colonized staff) and 'consolidation' (developing infrastructure for education, health, economy, roads, housing and so on). It was the merger of these two protectorates of south and north in 1914 at the instance of the colonisers that formed Nigeria as a country.

Qualification for recruitment into the colonial service was essentially use of English but where the recruited had no minimal proficiency in the English, he had to acquire it in order to be kept in service. Because the English was basically an expression of the English culture and sociolinguistic background, Nigerians had to imitate the native dialect and accent at the beginning. As development continued, the Christian missionaries undertook the task of educating and preparing Nigerians for more professional and technical responsibilities in the colonial service. The recruitment expanded with time but was interrupted by the first and second world wars respectively fought between 1914 to 1918 and 1938 to 1945. As part of the development plan, the first census was conducted in 1952/1953. The population of Nigeria was 32.5 million as revealed by the census, which made her the most populous in Africa and remains so today.

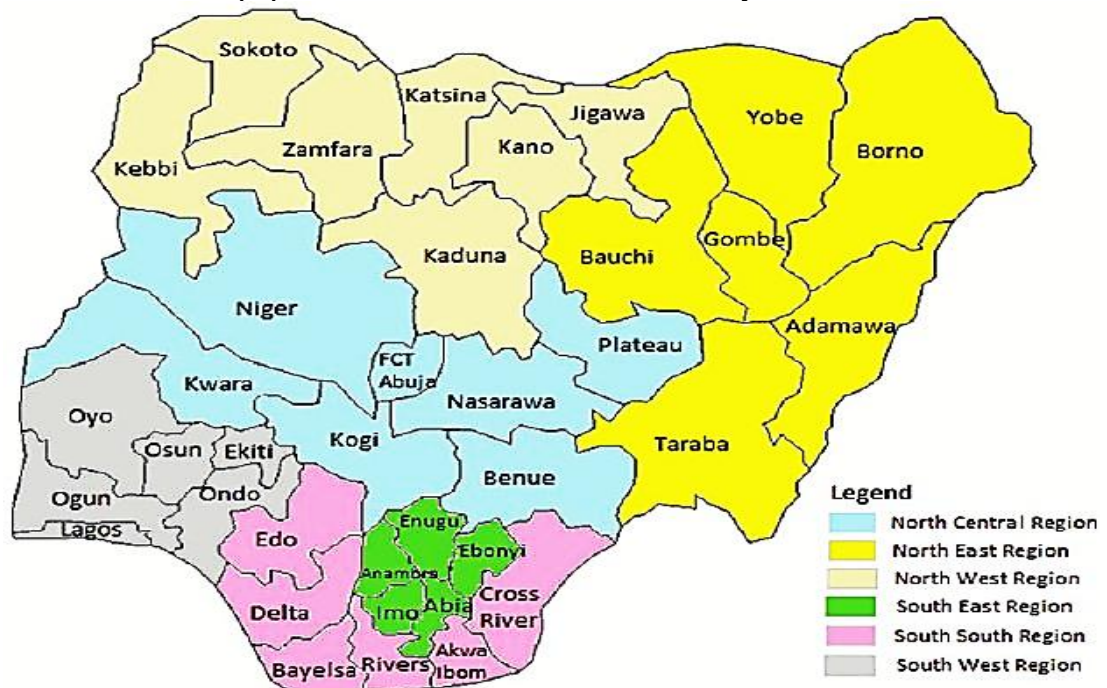


Figure 2.2 Map of Nigeria Comprising Its 36 States and Capital (Abuja)

Demands for more participation in the colonial administration continued alongside constitutional development. As many Nigerians got co-opted into positions of secretaries, senior and permanent secretaries in various ministries, many others had the opportunity to go for further education in United Kingdom. With this high degree of indigenisation of the colonial administration, national awareness increased among the Nigerian elite and the demand for independence heightened.



Pressure groups and political parties were rapidly developed essentially by the Nigerians who got educated abroad and perpetually asked the colonisers to leave.

English fully assumed the language through which not only the colonial administration was facilitated but also through which the political agitation for self-determination was carried out. The colonial administration and Education were the two potent tools for spreading the English, which was both a means of teaching-learning and the most requisite subject taught as it is today. Many of the Nigerians that work as domestic aids to the colonisers also got to learn the English. Because acquisition of the English was made almost entirely the condition for gainful employment and social attractiveness, every average Nigerian wished to have it. These social differences were accountable for the rise and categorisation of Nigerian English into Nigerian Pidgin, Nigerian Non-standard and Nigerian Standard.

Being the most populous and of course, agriculturally, the richest in Africa, foreign nationals found it attractive. Odumuh further reports that in March 1955, there were 12,500 Europeans (mostly British), 1,000 Americans, 250 Indians and 2,500 non-Nigerians. With this multilingual Nigerian setting, the English further got spread and accepted as language of contact, cross-cultural and wider communication. What appears to be most determining was the common knowledge that Nigeria was already heavily multi-lingual without the foreigners, having a total of 250 identified distinct languages. The diversity was further complicated by the coexistence of Christianity and Islam. While English was used to preach Christianity and teaching western education in the south where it was mostly accepted, Arabic was used for preaching Islam in the north. Therefore, apart from the barrier of their language differences, sentiments linked to religious differences tended to make adherents resist each other on the question of adaptation of English whenever the two groups were in either official or informal contact.

This was the situation in which the English struggle to survive while being compelled to adjust to the complex psycho-social needs of the diverse Nigerian people. English was no longer alien to Nigerian elite who could competitively use it with the British. Because all official documents of governance were written in English, by 1960 when independence was gained, Nigerians had to accept, without option, the English by convention rather than policy as her official language. The first post-independent census conducted in 1962 revealed that the population of Nigeria has increased towards twice the population in 1953 – 55.7 million. The regional distribution of the population was north – 29.8 million and south – 25.8 million (further distributed into south east – 12.4 million, south west – 10.2 million, south mid-west – 2.5 million and Lagos – 0.7 million). Although the last census conducted in 2016 puts the Nigeria's population at 140 million, it is presently speculated that the population is over 190 million, as recently confirmed by the Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari who says in his speech to the United Nations General Assembly of 17th September, 2019 that Nigerian population is close to 200 million. Out of the 250 indigenous languages shown above as reported by Odumuh, and up dated by Adegbite (2010) as over 500, the major ones are three: Hausa Igbo and Yoruba, predominantly used in the north, south east and south west respectively.

Today Nigeria is broadly divided into northern and southern regions, with north about twice the size of south. For the convenience of politics, the country is further divided in 6 geopolitical zones: 3 in the north which are north-west, north-east and north-central, and 3 in the south which are south-west, south-east and south-south. Further, while north is divided into 19 states, the south is divided into 17 states, altogether 36 states except for the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, located in the north central, about the middle of Nigeria. Each state is further divided into local government areas, altogether the local government areas are 774: south has 355 and north 419, out of which 6 are in Abuja.

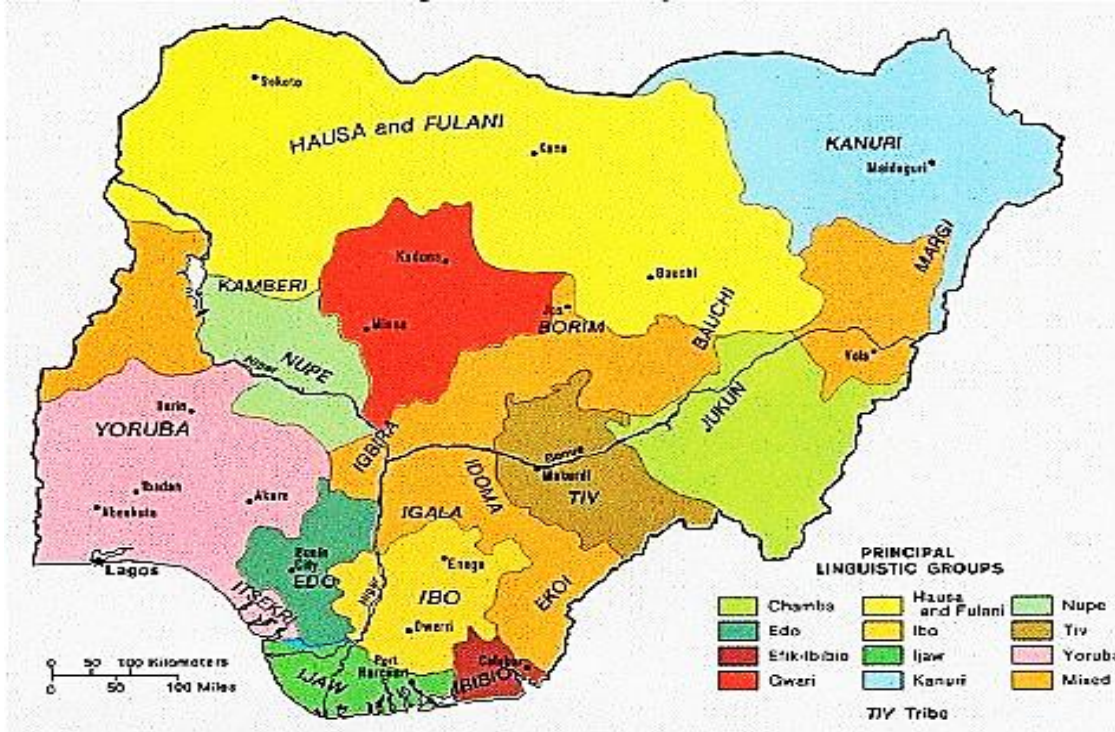


Figure 2.3 Map Showing Locations of Major Linguistic Groups in Nigeria

Before the independence, key agents which facilitated spread of the English were education, communication, transportation, military, indigenous languages and literature (Odumuh, 1987). Being the most influential of all, education allowed pupils from the scratch to go straight for English at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of the education (Adegbite, 2010). The Christian Missionary Societies initially undertook the business of educating Nigerians across the two regions, south and north. Those that were identified to have uncommon abilities were sponsored abroad in Europe, America and elsewhere (Jowitt, 1991). With rising population, government schools were established and run alongside the missionary schools to meet the increasing educational demand (Jowitt, 2009). Both men and women were trained as professionals in various fields including English language, who in turn undertook the work of teaching it to others (Josiah & Essien, 2015).

Transportation and communication worked collaboratively in spreading the English. The constructions of roads, railways and air ways facilitated movement of people who established contacts through which English became contact language and lingua franca at various points. In the same process, commercial newspapers, periodicals, cinemas in English were produced and disseminated. Nigerians also got to easily communicate with other English speakers abroad through postal and telephone services which were also made possible because of the developed transportation system. The reason Nigerian indigenous languages became an important agent in spreading the English was obvious. It is because no linguistic group has agreed to officially adopt an indigenous language at the expense of its own. As such English by consensus became a neutral language for the 250 linguistic groups because no group owns it as a native language.

On literature as an agent for spreading the English, Jowitt (2009) notes that are related so much so that a development in one affects the other. In this regard, the rise of Nigerian English literature facilitated the spread of English, not only in its native form but also in its adapted form. In the works of Nigerian authors such as Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Charlse Njoku Flora Nwapa and Peper Clark write in adopted English, but authors such as Amos Tutula, Cyprian Ekwensi and Gabriel Okara use adapted, non-standard and pidgin English. These books are read worldwide so much that scholars use them today as basis to understand the nature of English variation in Nigeria.



Status and Model of the English in Nigeria

In agreement with other usages elsewhere, it has been noted that ‘Nigerian English,’ instead of ‘the English in Nigeria,’ be used. However, until the former is established, the latter will continue to be the case. English in Nigeria is second language (L2), which Crystal (1992) defines as a language acquired to meet communication need and not as a mother tongue. The alternative term that appears preferable to the L2 in Nigerian context is ‘official language’. Because all the occasions of education, broadcasting, adjudication, laws-making and writing books are official responsibilities conducted in English, the English becomes official. How English comes to acquire such an official status in Nigeria can be traced essentially to the colonial times when it was used for such purposes.

Jowitt (1991) refers to section 53 of the 1979 Nigerian Constitution which says Government’s discussion will be transacted in English. This question of ‘official language’, as Jowitt further says, has been discussed since independence alongside the question of ‘national language’. Non-consideration of the key issues about standardisation of the Nigerian English makes Adegbite (2010) to conclude that the official status of English is incomprehensively and arbitrarily provided in the constitution. The amended 1999 Nigerian Constitution states that English is only allowed to be used for instruction when the child is four years and throughout his junior and senior secondary schooling, without mention of what language should be used in his tertiary education.

Choice of the RP as reference accent is made by examining bodies such as West African Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), National Examination Commission (NECO) and National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB). As such, instructors at the primary school level only see it advisable to use the RP to prepare the primary pupils accordingly for the secondary education. At the University the level, the choice for RP as reference accent is informed by its worldwide popularity, its adoption in *English Pronouncing Dictionary* and *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* which are major sources for teaching-learning and the need to go with the seeming globalised pronunciation.

On the question of the model of English Nigerians imitate, it is difficult to precisely say without findings and conclusions based on empirical research in Nigeria. This is because a lot of factors have interplayed to alter the impression before, during and shortly after independence that Nigerian English is modelled after that of British only because the British introduced Nigerians through colonialism to English. Today factors such as globalism, globalisation, internet, global education system, literature and media (traditional and social) has exposed Nigerians to several models of English, notably British and American (Holmes, 2013). Non-consideration of the British-American English joint use stems from the precedence set by early studies on English in Nigeria. Such studies do not recognise the presence of British and American English in educated Nigerian English and describe it as such. This is evident in Brosnahan (1958), Adesanoye (1960), Banjo (1971), Adekunle (1974) Adeniran (1979) and Pai and Oderinde (1979). Awonusi (1994) and Egwuogu (2006) observe that AME are now affecting the teaching and learning of English in Nigeria, so much that identifying the model to teach is problematic.

Categorisation of the English in Nigeria

Before the Nigerian independence when the English in Nigeria was rather foreign to Nigerians, Brosnahan (1958) makes its first categorisation into four, strictly in terms of educational attainment. They were Nigerians who have acquired: no formal education (who formed the first form of Nigerian pidgin English), primary education, secondary education, and university education. The reason for using the social factor of education while ignoring other factors by Brosnahan is its direct correlation with English proficiency as at then, and even presently the correlation holds in some specific Nigerian situations. The mesolectal Nigerian English variant accent then was labelled the second category (used by secondary school finishers) who formed most of the English-speaking Nigerians.

In what appears to be a review to Brosnahan’s education-based categorisation, Banjo (1971) forms the linguistic-based variation, similarly into four. The first variant (equivalent of Brosnahan’s



first category) is interfered by mother-tongue features, as a result, users eventually resort to using Nigerian English pidgin. The second variant (equivalent of Brosnahan's second category) in syntactic and semantic terms, is near the British standard, but typically interfered by mother-tongue in phonology and lexis. The third variant (equivalent of Brosnahan's third category), in terms of syntax, semantics and phonology, but are co-variants with the British standards in terms of phonetic and lexical features. The fourth (equivalent of Brosnahan fourth category) is an equivalent of the British standard in syntax, semantics and phonetics without a mention of lexis, which most likely will be at variance with the British Standard variant.

Brosnahan's education-based and Banjo's linguistics-based schemas of Nigerian English use are integrated with an addition of the feature of intelligibility in Odumuh's (1987) sociophonetic schema, as only the phonological features of Nigerian English are considered. Like those of Brosnahan and Banjo, Odumuh identifies non-standard, basic (or general), standard (or educated) and sophisticated (or near-perfect) as the four varieties of spoken Nigerian English. According to Odumuh, the non-standard variety is demonstrated in the performances of beginners whose education in English is scarce and had a limited English speech encounters both in and outside of primary school. As such the linear and non-linear features of their English speech mother-tongue-based, accompanied by improper choice of words and expressions, hence its inability to be accepted and intelligible internationally.

In the basic (general) variety, contrasts in the linear and non-linear features are observed in the English speech of the users who essentially possess the education above the primary and below the university levels and were by accepted models to acquire such a fair proficiency in RP. These Nigerian users have generally mastered the contrasts in linear and non-linear English phonology and use it intelligibly despite deviation in the realisation of some identified variable forms. The standard variety, which is the educated spoken Nigerian English, is used by those who have university education. Their English speech is nationally and internationally accepted and intelligible because of the clear contrast in its linear and non-linear features. In the sophisticated variety, a near-perfect realisation of English variable forms is observed by Nigerians who are not only highly educated but have also had considerably exposed to the native RP through special training, perhaps by the native RP speakers themselves.

In the four varieties and their characterisation shown above as given by Odumuh, the schema is constructed having in mind the RP as the reference accent. The schema is native-affiliated because, as specified in the fourth variety, perfection can be attained in using the RP only by the English-speaking natives whose accent is the model for imitation by the English-speaking non-natives. Understandably, however, such a native accent model together with its imitations as the affected standard (or educated) and sophisticated or (near-perfect) varieties in Odumuh's schema of Nigerian spoken English are 'exonormative', against 'the endonormative' requirement. They are lacking in demonstrating the sociolinguistic and cultural environment of Nigeria (Jowitt, 1992; 2015) and the psycho-social needs of Nigerians (Adegbite, 2010; Ugorji, 2015). The variety that meets the endonormative requirement for the Nigerian English accent is the basic (or general) one, which is the Nigerian mesolect being pursued to be compared with the RP accent with focus on their respective realisations of the English contractions.

Although Odumuh notes that the basic variety is occasionally marked by certain deviations, the perceived 'deviant' are actually 'variant forms' that are today considered co-variants (in competition) with the RP variants, otherwise comparing the Nigerian standard (educated) or sophisticated (near-perfect) will make no significant variation to derive interest (Wakkai & Gonsum, 2011) and (Olajide & Olaniyi, 2013), (Oladipupo, 2014) and (Oladipupo, 2015). However, the parallel in referring to the RP in the three schemas of Brosnahan, Banjo and Odumuh only represent the unavailability of a reference accent as the basis for all relational or comparative arguments. If every accent is so patterned after another, then every accent is a referent standard.

In a way, Brosnahan, Banjo, and Odumuh's schemas inadequately consider the influence of the Nigerian indigenous languages on the English accent of Nigerians. This inadequacy is observed and explicitly incorporated into the schema formulated by Jowitt (1991). The schema is called



‘Popular Nigerian English’ (PNE). Jowitt says that the accent of every Nigerian is a combination standard (or RP) and the PNE forms. The PNE comprises, in terms of mother-tongue or ethnicity, the Nigerian sub-variant accents of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba native speakers and, in terms of class, variants and errors. The Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba affiliated variants are labelled following their initials as PNE(H), PNE(I) and PNE(Y), where the optional letters are replaceable by any other Nigerian indigenous languages. But the original selection of the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba in the schema is because they are by far the major Nigerian languages in terms of number of speakers, spread and standardisation.

While the variants are acceptable forms competing with the reference forms as co-variants, the errors or deviations, when they eventually occur, form a pattern in their occurrence and are considered co-variants (Ekundayo, Teilyano & Longe, 2013; Wakkai & Gonsum, 2016; Obiegbu, 2018). By ‘popular’ in the ‘Popular Nigerian English’ Jowitt means ‘average’, which in turn refers to Nigerian mesolect, as opposed to the Nigerian acrolect – the standard and sophisticated Nigerian accent (whose users altogether are fewer than the mesolectal users) and the Nigerian basilect – the non-standard or non-educated accent (whose users are normally the highest in number).

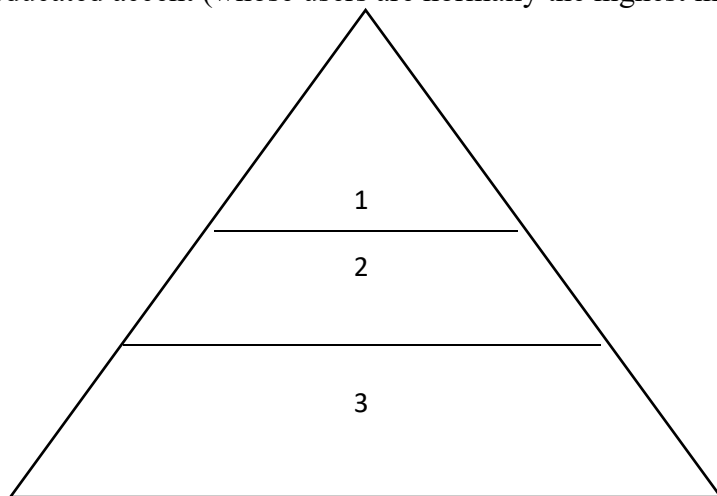


Figure 2.6 Oladimeji’s pyramid of the three Nigerian varieties of English Oladimeji (2014)

Oladimeji (2014), like Jowitt, without prejudice to the constraints of education, intelligibility, phonology and standard, categorises the Nigerian English on the basis of considers ethnicity as the most determining factor for Nigerian English variation. However, while Jowitt views the ethnic variant accents as components of the popular or average Nigerian English, Oladimeji proposes for their hierarchical grouping according to degree of popularity (and not number of ethnicities in a group) on the pyramidal triangular.

Oladimeji’s view, Group 1 – the least in membership, comprises the ethnic English accent of the three major Nigerian languages – Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, altogether form the most popular Nigerian English accent. Group 2 is the second ranked in popularity and membership; it consists of the ethnic English accents of Epira/Igara, Egba, Efik, Ibibio, Itsekiri and so on. Group 3 is the third ranked in popularity and membership; it is composed of Nnewi, Ogbaru, Ihiala, Nsuka, Idemili, Oron, Abon, Awka and so on. It is not clear whether ‘the most popular’ means the acrolect, but it is obvious that the determining factor for popularity here is how many the users of a given accent are.

Figure of the classical pyramid illustrating the broad-based lowest regional variant rising to the highest class of the RP is shown below as given by Halfarová (2014):

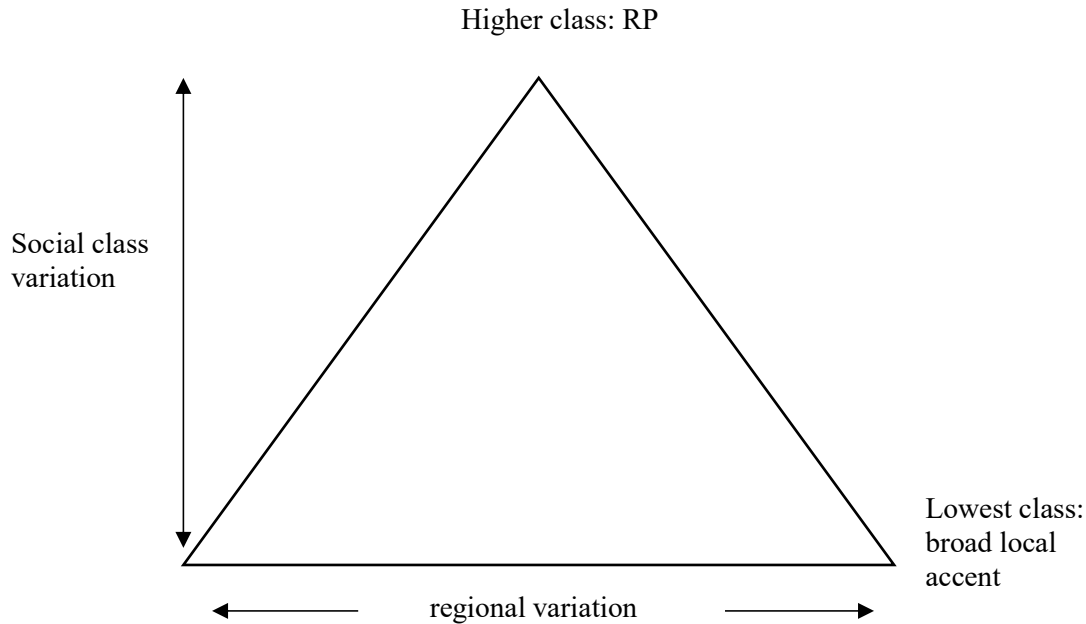


Figure 2.4 The Class Variation Pyramid (Halfarová, 2014)

Trudgill (2019) states that the relationship between the social and regional variations in accent was originally presented on diagramme of a cone as reported by Ward (1929), from where it has been modified to an equilateral triangle. He further reports that, because there is reasonable phonological variation among the regional accents, it is placed at the broad base of the triangle, and as the base rises to form peak of the triangle, the regional phonological variation decreases and narrows towards the top. At the top where the angle is formed variation ceases to exist to signal the RP variant. Because there is no definable point where one variant accent begins to exist and terminates, English continuum is established, with the equilateral triangle effectively presenting the RP as social variation in Britain.

In adapting the variation equilateral triangle for Nigerian situation, (Okoro, 2017) considers Jowitt's incorporation of the three major Nigerian mother-tongues.

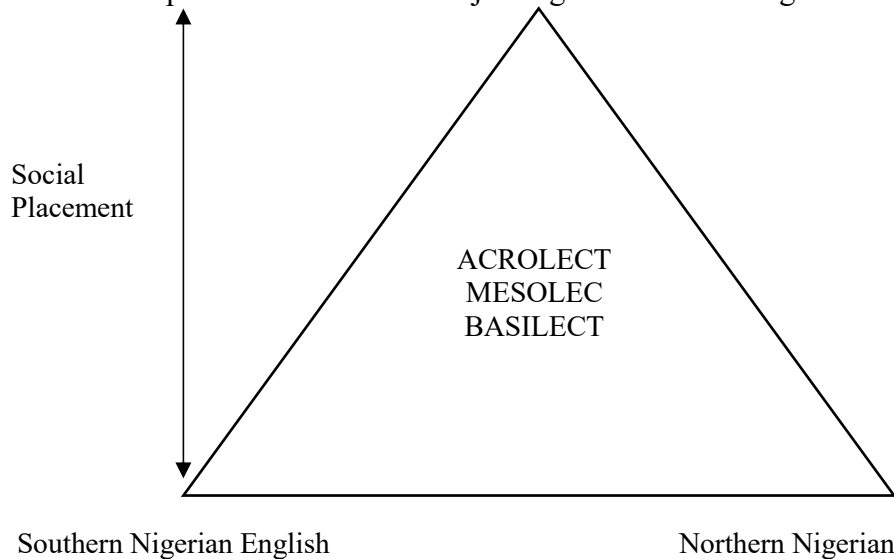


Figure 2.5 Okoro's Pyramid of Nigerian English Continuum (Okoro, 2017)

Trudgill's explanation on the classical equilateral triangle showing the British English variation above is the same for its replication by Okoro. In addition, however, the northern and southern Nigerian 'Englshes' are respectively the Jowitt's PNE(H) on the one hand and PNE(I) and



PNE(Y) altogether as both the I(gbo) and the Y(oruba) are geographically situated in the south. The variation between them at the base of the triangle is reasonable but as they acquire more education and get more exposed to the RP, the variation decreases with the triangle getting narrower towards the top. While the phenomenon of English continuum also exists in the Nigerian situation, acrolect and basilect are extreme variants with the variation between them very wide, but each of them is close to mesolect. Therefore, while comparing the acrolect to the RP, as stated above, will make no significant difference, comparing basilect to RP will make too much difference to handle.

Theoretical Framework

Clearly from the two preceding and of course the proceeding sections, the preoccupation of this study is language and society. Sociolinguistics, therefore, suitably becomes the framework within which this study is conducted. Precisely, it is the unavoidable influence of the social variables of ethnicity, education, region and social class on use of English by Nigerians that form the basis on which surveys are conducted on the English in Nigerian. Wardhaugh (2006) considers the influence of the social variables as one of the three approaches to sociolinguistics, emphasising that it is the commonest approach used since the development of modern sociolinguistics (Labov, 1963; 1966).

From the seminal work of Trudgill (1974), ‘sociolinguistics’ equals ‘language’ and ‘society’. In this study, however, it is sociolinguistic surveys that are reviewed. Any discipline whose object of study equally relates to society is bound to interface with sociolinguistics. This represents the view of Farr (2013) on sociolinguistics as multidisciplinary. Although sociolinguistics falls under the subfield of applied linguistics – as opposed to the subfield of theoretical linguistics – it forms the nucleus of the applied linguistics as it explains why the two are sometimes equated under the umbrella of linguistics. Tollefson (2011) is convinced by this equation to label their merger as ‘Applied Sociolinguistics’. In effect, when a sociolinguistic theory is applied to solve societal problems linked to, for example, ethnicity, education, region and social class, the sociolinguistics becomes applied. Thus ‘applied linguistics’ is considered as ‘applied sociolinguistics’ in this study.

Methodology

In line with the primary objective of the study – assessing the results of selected previous surveys on the English in Nigeria – systematic review is the design used for conducting the research. It is a process by which research evidence are brought together, having met the eligibility criteria, to address a specific, set objective (Wischlitzki et al., 2020). The eligibility criteria in selecting the studies for systematic review is recognised by Khan et al. (2003) as one of the five steps to conducting systematic review in social-related subject. As adopted for this study, the five steps are (1) framing questions for a review, (2) identifying relevant work, (3) assessing the quality of studies, (4) summarising the evidence and (5) interpreting the findings. However, Wischlitzki et al. (2020) establish three elaborate steps for conducting the systematic review, while collapsing the steps one and two shown above as ‘search strategy’, steps four and five as ‘data extraction and analysis’ and step three standing as ‘eligibility criteria and study selection’.

Results

Results for Objective I

Having formulated the two objectives of this systematic review study, six relevant works were identified during the literature search strategy are shown in the table below:

Table 1: Categorisations of the English Usage in Nigerian

S/No	Name of Author	Year of Publication	Criterion for Categorisation	Number of Categories
1.	Brosnahan	1958	Education	1. Non-formal Education English (Nigerian Pidgin English) 2. Primary School English 3. Secondary School English 4. University English
2.	Banjo	1971	Linguistics	1. Interfered English



				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Near British Standard English (in Syntactic and Semantic terms) 3. Near British Standard English (in Semantic, Syntactic and Phonological terms) 4. British Standard Equivalent English (in syntactic, semantic and phonetic terms)
3.	Odumuh	1987	Intelligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-standard English 2. Basic (General) English 3. Standard (Educated) English 4. Sophisticated (Near-perfect) English
4.	Jowitt	1991	Ethnicity (as Individual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PNE(H) 2. PNE(I) 3. PNE(Y)
5.	Oladimeji	2014	Ethnicity (as Group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group 1 English (most popular with least number of languages) English (Speakers of Nigerian Major Languages) 2. Group 2 English (more popular with more number of Languages) 3. Group 3 English (popular with most number of Languages)
6.	Okoro	2017	Social Class and Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Classification 1. Acrolectal English 2. Mesolectal English 3. Basilectal English Regional Classification 1. Southern English 2. Northern English

Results for Objective II

Towards the attainment of independence in 1960, acquiring education through English was promoted by both public and private groups as the primary means for total development in Nigeria. Thus, using the criterion of education by Brosnahan (1958) became almost the singular factor for determining the variation in the use of English in Nigeria, on the assumption that the transforming power of education will eliminate almost all other limitations encountered by Nigerians in using the English. Achieving this goal will eventually equalise the English competencies of all Nigerian English speakers, thereby unifying the Nigerian English as higher attainment in education leads to better use of English.

The focus on education shifts to linguistics in Banjo (1971) who emphasises the inherent features of the variants of the Nigerian English, paying roughly no attention to education. This underscores the fact that one can acquire the competence in English without necessarily being to school, provided the exposure to good English is gained in early life. As much as education is key to acquiring English competence in Nigeria, where teaching-learning is conducted in English, right from the beginning, exposure to using English outside of the school is more crucial to acquiring better English competence.

In Odumuh (1987), intelligibility becomes the criterion for defining the Nigerian English variants, with emphasis on the spoken form, the phonological features. In this shift, pronunciation determines how well a spoken text is understood. Such intelligibility is conditioned by the Nigerians' levels of education. Similar to that of Brosnahan, education is considered crucial in the comprehension and production of intelligible English speech by Nigerians.

Other social variables such as region, class and mother tongue are added to education by Jowitt (1991) to produce his sociolinguistic criterion for determining English competence. Such English sociolinguistic criterion is considered more comprehensive as education is only one of the



variables that influences the comprehension and use of English by Nigerians. In a remarkable way, contact (with English native speakers), region, social class and mother tongue, as obtained elsewhere, influence the acquisition of English by Nigerians.

While Oladimeji (2014) refers to the variable of mother tongue as ‘ethnicity,’ Okoro (2017) considers that Nigerians acquisition of English is a product of the interaction of the variables of region and class. In their separate entities, they give rise to regional and social class dialects. However, these two criteria given are only viewed as a part of Jowitt’s English sociolinguistic criterion, in which several other social variables can be considered

Discussion and Conclusion

This study confirms the approach that it is the social variables which influence language as Wardhaugh (2006) states. In each of the six surveys presented above, the categorisation of the English in Nigeria supports Ugorji’s (2015) view that unless the English is used by Nigerians to express their identity, confidence and psychological independence will not be gained. Such confident and psychologically independent Nigerian English variants, categorised as ‘University English’ by Brosnahan (1958), ‘Near British Standard English’ and ‘Standard British Equivalent English’ by Banjo (1971) and ‘Standard English’ and ‘Sophisticated English’ are consistent with the descriptions given by Olaniyi (2010) and Jowitt (1991, 1996, 2006) as ‘Educated Nigerian English’ and ‘Standard Nigerian English’ respectively.

In the surveys conducted on the English in Nigeria, the focus on education as the dominant variable influencing English production is contingent upon the role English has been made to perform as language of education. However, the assumption that the higher ones’ educational attainment, the more competent one becomes in the production of the English is falsifiable. Frequent, early exposure to the production of English primarily enables high competence in the production of English. This has the high tendency to override the influences of region and social class on the production of English, as speakers with roughly the same level of education and exposure to the production of English will tend to produce the English with roughly the same competence regardless of their differences in terms of region and social class. It thus means that the region and ethnic group a Nigerian belongs do not really influence his English production, but among whom he was raised early and lives frequently. These, among other variables, significantly contribute to accounting for the production of English by Nigerians today.

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AUTOSEGMENTAL ANALYSIS OF TONE AS NEGATION MARKER IN ÌJÈṢÀ DIALECT OF YORÙBÁ

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Abstract

Negation is universal to all languages of the world but the means of marking negation are different from one language to another. This study examines tone as a negation marker in the Ìjèṣà dialect of Yoruba. The objectives of this study are to: examine the process of vowel lengthening and types of tone in Ìjèṣà; enumerate the functions of tone in Ìjèṣà and analyse the operation of tone as a negative marker in the dialect. Data for this study were collected through the Interview method, which is one of the elicitation techniques. Five Ìjèṣà native speakers were interviewed, of whom three were males, while two were females. The autosegmental theory propounded by Goldsmith (1976) is used for the analysis of this study. This study found that Ìjèṣà uses the three tones as the major means of changing positive statements to negative ones in the dialect. The study concludes that tone marks negation in Ìjèṣà through vowel lengthening.

Keywords: *Negation, negative marker, autosegmental, vowel lengthening and Ìjèṣà dialect.*

Introduction

Ìjèṣà is one of the varieties of the Yorùbá language classified under the Kwa subgroup of the Benue-Congo language family of Africa. The people speaking this variety of Yoruba language are also referred to as Ìjèṣà people of Yorùbá. Ìjèṣà is widely spoken in Osun State in the South-Western part of Nigeria. Ìjèṣà spoken communities include: Ìpetu-Ìjèṣà, Ìbòkun, Ìjèbú-Jèṣà, Èrìnjèṣà, Èṣàòkè, Ìlòkò, Ìpéríndó, Èrìnmò, Ìdómìnàsì, Ìwáràjà, Ìmò, Ètìòṇì among others. As a dialect of Yorùbá, Ìjèṣà shares specific features with the standard form. These include word order, segmental, and suprasegmental features. The realisation of negative constructions in Ìjèṣà is partially different from what obtains in its standard form. This difference is the central idea of this study.

The Yorùbá language has no inflexion, meaning it uses lexical items/ constituents to express different grammatical categories, such as tenses, aspects, numbers, and gender, among other uses of inflexion found in languages. For this reason, negations are always expressed with the use of distinct lexical items in Yorùbá sentences. In contrast to this notion, Ìjèṣà a variety of Yoruba has tones as the major means of expressing negation. This study, therefore, intends to analyse tone as a negation marker in Ìjèṣà negative constructions.

Every study of this nature must have its significance and its contribution to knowledge; hence, this study is not exempted from fulfilling this notion. It widens the scope of tone in Ìjèṣà; it contributes to the study of tone by revealing other functions of tone in the dialect which is different from the regular functions in its standard form and other varieties; it serves as a means of documenting an aspect of the phonology of Ìjèṣà; and it will serve as a reference source for further studies on dialectology, phonology and application of autosegmental theory.

Yorùbá, of which Ìjèṣà is a variety, attests to three types of tones. These are low, mid and high tones. These tones, apart from their lexical function in Standard Yorùbá and its varieties, also distinguish between positive and negative constructions of Ìjèṣà. Whereas, negation is expressed in the standard Yorùbá with the use of distinct lexical items such as kò/ò, kì í and má, Ìjèṣà marks negation with the use of ‘é’ and mó, by lengthening the final vowel of the noun subject or verb. Nevertheless, this study examines the use of tone as a negative marker in Ìjèṣà dialect within the framework of autosegmental.



2.1 Negation

Negation is a process in languages in which either a word or an entire sentence is negated, or some constituents of a sentence are negated. Crystal (1980), in Olumuyiwa (2012), defines negation as a process or construction in grammatical and semantic analysis that typically expresses the contradiction of some or the entire sentence's meaning. It is the process of converting the affirmative to the negative in a language. A word, part of a sentence or the whole sentence can be negated in a language.

Negation is universal to all languages of the world; Shakhzoda (2021) asserts this notion by saying that negation is found in all known languages. It should be noted that the means of marking negation are different from one language to another. According to Veselovska (2009, p. 54), negation can be analysed based on semantic, lexical, phrasal and clausal. Semantic negation covers antonymy relations with opposite meanings. That is, negation can be viewed in different levels of language, such as morphology, syntax and semantics.

The grammatical rules that bind negation are different from one language to another. Following Shakhzoda (2021), every language has its own syntactic, semantic and morphological devices expressing negation. A language can use a lexical constituent for marking negativity, while some languages use suprasegmental features such as tone to mark negations. Examples of languages that use a grammatical word in marking negations in sentences are Yoruba, English, and Hausa, among others. On the other hand, Ìjẹ̀sà dialect of Yoruba is an example of a language that makes use of the suprasegmental feature (tone) as a negative marker in its sentences.

Negation in every language has a function it performs to change an affirmative to a negative. Webber (2014) classifies these functions of *negation* into making distinctions, correcting assumptions, simply using formulaic structures, and expressing dissatisfaction, disagreement, cautious stance, unfulfilled expectations, and wholehearted agreement. Which means it gives opposite meanings in every context of expression in languages.

2.2 Vowel Lengthening

Vowel lengthening occurs exclusively in the final syllable of the word and not in the syllable's penultimate and antepenultimate position (Hajek, Stevens and Webster 2007). According to Odden (2011), vowel length is the perceived length of a vowel sound: the corresponding physical measurement is duration, which may often be traced to assimilation. That is, a lengthened vowel is pronounced as long as twice as a short vowel, which is peculiar to many natural languages.

Morrison (2011) asserts that vowel lengthening may be derived from phonological processes: vowel coalescence and compensatory lengthening, which can be conditioned by phonological features of the surrounding sounds. She mentions Bena as an example of a language where long vowels may arise through coalescence. This occurs when vowel adjacency is derived at a morpheme boundary. Going by Akinlabi (2004) and Morrison's description of vowel lengthening, Yorùbá attests to this phenomenon.

Morrison uses phonemic contrastive vowel length to explain why adjacent vowels should be analysed as long vowels. She also observes that phonemically long vowels are restricted to certain syllable positions that are language-specific. This means the conditions that trigger vowel lengthening are not universal; rather, they are different from one language to another.

Contexts are the major determinant of vowel lengthening. Let's take English, for instance; the environment is the major factor that determines the duration of producing some vowels in English words. i.e, when a vowel comes before a voiceless consonant, it produces the shortest duration; when a vowel comes before a voiced consonant, it is said a little bit longer; and when a vowel comes at the end of a syllable and is produced for the longest duration.

2.3 Ìjẹ̀sà Segmental System

Vowels are sounds of a language that are realised with no obstruction of airflow from the vocal tract. Ìjẹ̀sà dialect has eleven phonemic *vowel* sounds, which comprise seven oral vowels and



four nasal vowels. The seven oral vowels are [a, e, ε, i, o, ɔ, u] and four nasal vowels [ũ, ã, õ, ã̃]. All the oral vowels in this dialect can be found at the word-initial in Ìjẹ̀ṣà distribution. Consonant sounds are sounds produced with an obstruction or constriction of airflow from the vocal tract. They are the sounds produced with the complete or partial stoppage of air being breathed out. Ìjẹ̀ṣà consonants are eighteen as shown below:

[kp, b, t, d, k, g, f, s, ʃ, h, gb, dʒ, m, n, l, r, j, w]

2.4 Tones in Ìjẹ̀ṣà

The tone is one of the suprasegmental features which can perform lexical or grammatical functions (or both) in a language. Variations of tone can be used to distinguish the meaning of lexical items with the same form. When tone changes the meaning of a lexical item, it is said to have performed a lexical function. Tone performs grammatical function if it is used to give information such as tense, numbers, negation, etc in a language. Awwal (2010, p.13-19) in Awwal (2021) explains that every syllable in a tone language has its assigned pitch of voice or tone. That is, some syllables are produced on a high pitch, and others are produced on a low pitch. Considering Awwal's explanation, the mid tone was not mentioned, whereas some languages have mid tone as part of their tone system. However, the syllable produced on the high pitch of the voice is referred to as a high tone, while the syllable produced with a low pitch of the voice is referred to as a low tone.

Following Bamgbose (1967), Adewoyin (2014) and Adekunle and Ogunkunle (2020), there are three level tones in standard Yorùbá and its variants, of which Ìjẹ̀ṣà is not exempted. These are high(^), low(˘) and mid(-)tones. The high and low tones appear on every nucleus in the syllable of Ìjẹ̀ṣà, and the mid tone is unmarked in the dialect but appears on nasal syllabic consonants [m, n]. These tones mark out each syllable and disambiguate otherwise ambiguous words, i.e words with the same segments. Apart from the lexical function of tone in Ìjẹ̀ṣà, it has an additional function, which is grammatical. Variation of tone on a lexical form can mark different meanings in Ìjẹ̀ṣà. Let us consider the data below:

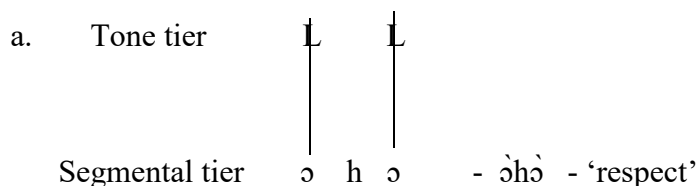
Data 1a

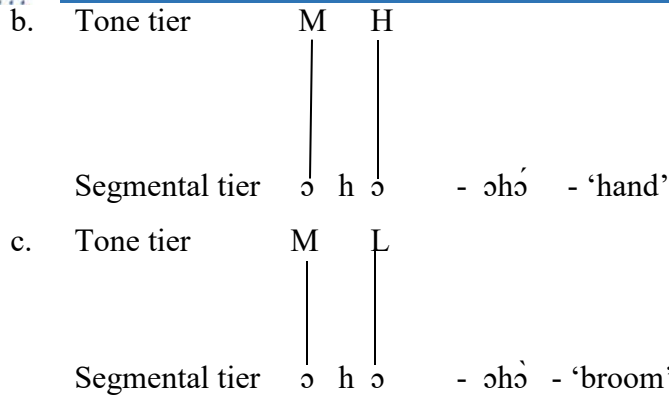
- i. ɔhó ‘hand’
- ii. ɔhò ‘respect’
- iii. ɔhò ‘broom’

Data 1b

- i. ùgbà ‘time’
- ii. ùgbá ‘garden egg’
- iii. ugbá ‘calabash’
- iv. ugba ‘two hundred’

Using the autosegmental framework, the above lexical function of tone can be formalised in a non-linear manner as follows:



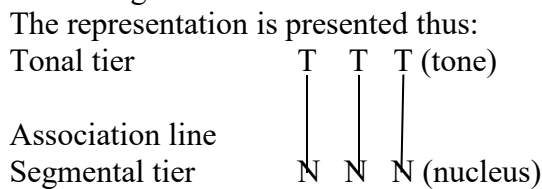


2.5 Theoretical Framework

The framework chosen for this study is Autosegmental Phonology. It is a framework of phonological analysis, proposed by Goldsmith (1976). Autosegmental is a non-linear approach to phonology that allows tone and vowel harmony to be independent and broaden beyond individual segments (consonants and vowels). According to Garba (2021), the autosegmental theory is generally attributed to certain fundamental constraints which postulate the association lines never cross; and in the same way, vowels link to vowels and consonants link to consonants directly, but no skeletal node can be linked to two different segments on different tiers.

Autosegmental phonology was initially developed to address the shortcomings of previous theories (generative phonology and metrical phonology). One of the shortcomings of the previous theories listed above is the challenge of developing an adequate theory for a tone which eventually gave birth to this particular theory. Its immediate source of inspiration was the work of Williams (1971) and Leben (1973); these were the first to introduce non-linear structures into generative phonology in their treatments of tone systems in West African languages. In the model proposed by these writers, underlying tones were represented on separate tiers from the feature matrices representing vowels and consonants; they were subsequently merged with these matrices by Tone Mapping Rules that apply in the course of derivation, creating single-tiered representations in surface structure.

The principal innovation of autosegmental phonology, as presented in Goldsmith (1976), was the idea that tone mapping rules do not merge tonal and segmental representations, but associate their elements utilising formal entities known as Association lines, which must not cross. In this framework, phonological representations consist of parallel tiers of phonological segments, both tonal and segmental.



This study, therefore, will explore the phenomenon of vowel lengthening and tone, which serves as negative markers in the Ìjèṣà dialect of Yorùbá under the autosegmental framework.

3.1 Research Methodology

Data for this study were collected through structured and unstructured interview methods, which are some of the elicitation techniques. The researcher also used the observation method when observing mere conversations of Ìjèṣà people in the field. Five Ìjèṣà native speakers were interviewed, of whom three were males while two were females. These interviews were conducted with the use of the Ibadan 400-word wordlist, SIL 1600 wordlist and different positive and negative statements. All the respondents’ responses were recorded on a sound recorder for proper transcription.



4.1 Data Presentation

The data for this study were grouped into three main categories, which comprise groups (A-C). Each category has a different sub-division as seen below:

Data group A

Context of ‘é’ and its Negative Marker

This section is divided into two: habitual negation and unhabitual negation.

A1. Habitual Negative Marker

A habitual marker is used to express an action that is carried out frequently and repeatedly. In marking the habitual negative constructions, Ìjẹ̀ṣà uses e/é in the positive position, with expressions such as:

Affirmative:

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

- a). é kàwé
3sg:hab read
‘he/she reads’
- b). é gbálè
3sg:hab sweep
‘he/she sweeps’
- c). é sire
3sg:hab play
‘he/she plays’
- d). é foṣo
3sg:hab wash
‘he/she washes clothes’
- e). é sùn
3sg:hab sleep
‘he/she sleeps’

A2. Negative Form:

Ìjẹ̀ṣà Dialect

- a). é e kàwè
3sg:Neg:hab read
he/she does not read
- b). é e gbálè
3sg:Neg:hab sweep
he/she does not sweep
- c). é e sire
3sg:Neg:hab play
‘he/she does not play’
- d). é e foṣo
3sg:Neg:hab wash clothes
‘he/she does not wash clothes’
- f). é e sùn
3sg:Neg:hab sleep
‘he/she does not sleep’

As seen in data A1 and A2 above, the vowel ‘é’ in the affirmative form represents both the subject pronoun and habitual marker. While the subject has a high tone, the habitual negative marker is mid tone pitch. The mid tone is a marker for negative construction in this context.



Data A3 (Un-habitual Negative Marker)

Affirmative:

Ìjèsà Dialect

- a). é mu
3sg. take
'he/she took it.'
- b). é lọ
3sg. go
'he/she went.'
- c). é jà
3sg. fight
'he/she fought'
- d). é pé
3sg. complete
'It's completed'
- e). é ra ata
3sg. buy pepper
'he/she bought pepper'

Negative:

Ìjèsà Dialect

- a). é è mu
3sg Neg take
'he/she didn't take it.'
- b). é è lọ
3sg Neg go
'she/he didn't go.'
- c). é è jà
3sg Neg fight
'he/she didn't fight'
- d). é è pé
3sg Neg complete
'It is not complete'
- e). é è ra ata
3sg Neg buy pepper
'he/she didn't buy pepper'

In data A3, the vowel 'é' serves as both the subject and the negative marker. In addition, the tone on the vowel is high with an additional low tone after the high tone.

Data Group B

Context of Final Tone in Subjects (Nouns) Negative Marker

When nouns occur as subjects of negative sentences, they are followed by kò or kì í in standard Yorùbá, while the final vowel of the subject is lengthened with a high tone in habitual construction tense in Ìjèsà Dialect.

Data B1 (Habitual)

Ìjèsà Dialect

- a). Kólá á sùsé.
Kólá Neg/hab work
Kólá doesn't work
- b). Bólú ú puró.
Bolú Neg/hab tell lies



- 'Bolu doesn't tell lies'
c). Kúnlé é pọ̀nmi
Kúnlé Neg/hab fetch water
'Kúnlé doesn't fetch water'
d). Bùkọ́lá á kàwé
Bùkọ́lá Neg/hab read
'Bùkọ́lá doesn't read'
e). Adé é sùn
Adé Neg/hab sleep
'Ade doesn't sleep'
f). Ureolúwa á jẹ̀ eja
Ureolúwa Neg/hab eat fish
'Ureolúwa doesn't eat fish'

Data B2 (Un-habitual)

- a). Sẹ̀yí ì mò
Sẹ̀yí Neg Know
'Sẹ̀yí didn't know'
b). Ùfẹ̀ è rà bàtà
Ùfẹ̀ Neg buy shoe
'Ùfẹ̀ did not buy shoe'
c). Bọ́lá à gbọ̀
Bọ́lá Neg hear
'Bọ́lá did not hear'
d). Adé è jẹ̀un
Adé Neg eat
'Adé did not eat'
e). Olú ù sùn
Olú Neg sleep
'Olú did not sleep'

The major difference between declarative and habitual negative construction in the above data is that the final vowel of the noun subject is lengthened with a falling tone, which serves as the negative marker in the dialect.

Data Group C

Context of 'Mó' as a Negative Marker

'mó' is used in the context of Ìjèsà imperative negative constructions.

Examples:

Ìjèsà Dialect

- a). mó wa
don't come
'don't come'
b). mó sùn
don't sleep
don't sleep'
c). mó gbe e don't carry it
'don't carry it'
d). mó lọ
don't go
'don't go'
e). mó rà á
don't buy it



f). 'don't buy it'
mó tà á

don't sell it

'don't sell it'

Studying the data group (C) carefully, it is clear that the dialect makes use of the grammatical word in marking negation in the context of imperative negative constructions.

4.1.2 Data Analysis

Negation in Ìjẹ̀sà dialect can be divided into two forms: the grammatical and the phonological. Following Awobuluyi (1978) and Bamgbose (2010), negative markers in Standard Yorùbá are five in the grammar of the language. These are 'kò', 'kì í', 'kó', 'kì í ẹ̀' and 'má'. 'kò' and 'kì í' occur in ordinary declarative statements, má occurs in imperative sentences, while kó' and 'kì í ẹ̀' are used as a negative marker in focus constructions. In Ìjẹ̀sà, the imperative form is 'mó', which is a variant of má in standard Yorùbá, and is widely used, but 'kò and kì í' are never used in the dialect. Instead, Ìjẹ̀sà uses the three tones to mark out negative constructions from positive ones in context.

The data obtainable for this research will be analysed under the framework of autosegmental analysis. The analysis will be in two ways: firstly, rules on negative marking in Ìjẹ̀sà and secondly, the analysis of Low Tone Negative Marker Insertion in Ijesa sentences.

1. Rules on Negative Marking in Ìjẹ̀sà.

The vowels of the first and the third person singular pronouns are usually changed to 'e' with a high tone; the surface vowels of the pronouns are lengthened with a low tone. This low tone marks the negative and is hereby referred to as the Low Tone Negative Marker (LTNM) henceforth. This tone is isolated because it is the only marker of the difference between positive and negative sentences in Ìjẹ̀sà.

Examples:

4. Declarative

a). M M
mo ga 'I am tall'

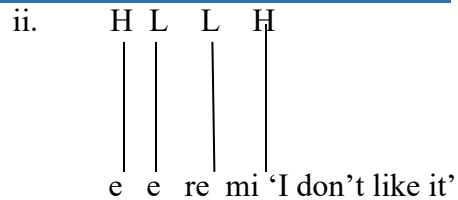
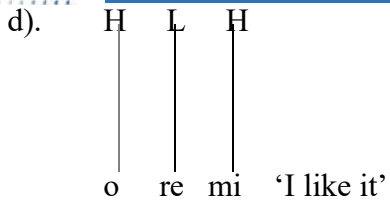
ii. H L M
me e ga 'I am not tall'

b). M L
mo gba 'I agree'

ii. H L L
me e gba 'I don't agree'

c). M H M M
mo mi fọfọ 'I'm washing cloth'

ii. H L MM
me e fọfọ 'I'm not washing cloth'



In these examples, the vowel of the subject in each positive sentence is realised as 'e' in a negative sentence. In addition, the mid tone on such subjects is changed to a high tone as in (4a), (4b) and (4c). The high tone of the positive sentences is retained in the negative ones in all cases of the negative sentences. The LTNM must be preceded by a high tone and may be followed by any tone.

In Ìjèṣà dialect, when the vowel of the subject pronoun in negative construction is /e/, the vowel of the verb must be /a/, /ɛ/ or /ɔ/. The rule of vowel harmony is observed in the choice of /e/ as a negative marker.

Examples:

Ìjèṣà Dialect

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 5 a. mé e ra bàtà | ‘I didn’t buy shoes’ |
| b. mé e pa eḍiye | ‘I didn’t kill a fowl’ |
| c. é è fẹ | ‘he/she doesn’t want it’ |
| d. é è sùn | ‘he/she didn’t sleep’ |
| e. mé è fọṣọ | ‘I didn’t wash clothes’ |
| f. mé e wọlé | ‘I didn’t enter’ |

In the above examples, the vowel /e/ of the subject is in harmony with the initial syllable of the verbs in Ìjèṣà. /a/ in (5a & b), /ɛ/ in (5c), /ũ / in (5d) and /ɔ/ in (5e & f). The last vowel is /u/, and it co-occurs with /e/ as shown below:

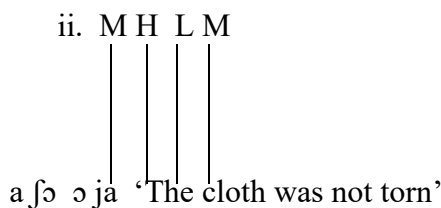
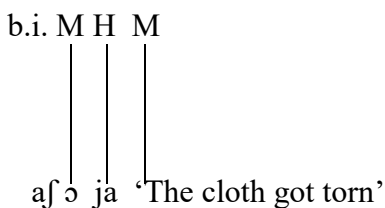
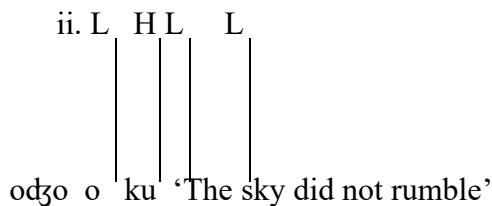
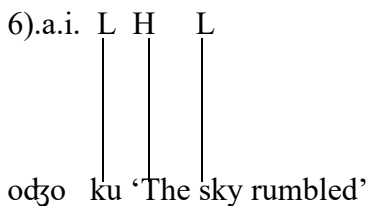
Ìjèṣà Dialect

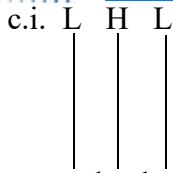
- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 6). a. i. é e puró | she didn’t tell lies |
| b. i. mé e bu | I didn’t abuse him |
| c.i. mé e lulù | I didn’t beat drums |

2. Low Tone Negative Marker (LTNM) Insertion

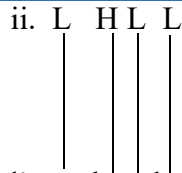
LTNM is inserted either after the high tone vowel of the subject or before the initial vowel of the verb. The final vowel of the noun subject is lengthened to have the LTNM.

Examples of LTNM insertion after the final vowel of the noun subject in Ìjèṣà:





ugba hu 'The garden egg germinated'



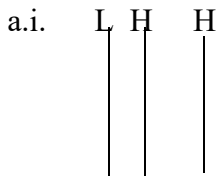
ugba a hu 'The garden egg didn't germinate'

From the examples above, we can conclude that the LTNM is adjoined to the final high tone vowel of the noun in the subject position in this context of Ìjẹ̀ṣà negative markings. We can formalise this rule:

∅ → L/H_# (That is, LTNM is inserted after the final vowel of the subject noun)

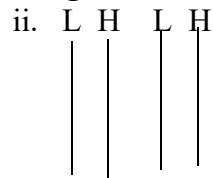
Examples of LTNM insertion before the initial vowel of the verb in Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialect:

8. Positive

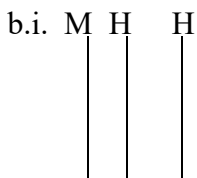


koko kpõ 'Cocoa is ripe'

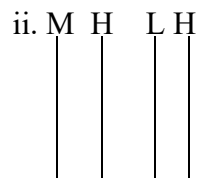
Negative



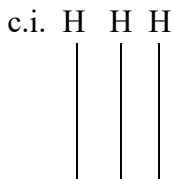
koko kpõ ò 'Cocoa is not ripe'



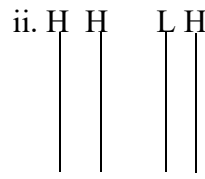
u l e wo 'The house collapsed'



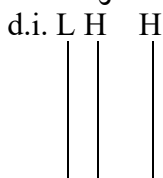
u l e wo o 'The house didn't collapse'



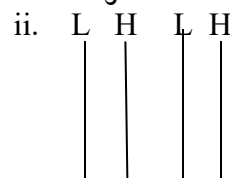
teḍḗ ku 'Téjú died'



teḍḗ ku u 'Téjú didn't die'



ufé wa 'Úfé came'



u f é wa a 'Úfé didn't come.'

From the examples above, we can have a general rule that the LTNM is inserted before the high vowel of the verb. This is formalised as follows:

∅ → L/_ H (That is, LTNM is inserted before the verb with high tone in.)

Ìjẹ̀ṣà lengthens the CV final vowel of the verb with the insertion of a low tone in the position of the high tone of the verb.

4.1.3 Findings

This study can come up with the following findings as the outcome of the autosegmental analysis of negation in Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialect of Yoruba:

- i. 'mó' is the only grammatical word that marks negation in Ìjẹ̀ṣà sentences, while the tone is used in other contexts of negative markings in Ìjẹ̀ṣà sentences
- ii. Ìjẹ̀ṣà uses 'e' to mark habitual negative constructions.



- iii. Ìjẹ̀sà uses 'è' to mark un-habitual negative constructions.
- iv. The LTNM is adjoined to the final high tone vowel of the noun in the subject position.
- v. The high tone of the positive sentences is retained in the negative ones in all cases of the negative sentences.
- vi. In Ìjẹ̀sà dialect, when the vowel of the subject pronoun in negative construction is /e/, the vowel of the verb must be /a/, /ɛ/ or /ɔ/. The rule of vowel harmony is observed in the choice of /e/ as a negative marker in the dialect.

5.1 Conclusion

This paper examines tone as a negation marker in the Ìjẹ̀sà dialect of Yorùbá. An attempt was made to review different related literature, such as negation, tone, vowel lengthening and the autosegmental framework, which are the central ideas of the paper. This paper also sheds light on the sound inventory of Ìjẹ̀sà. Ìjẹ̀sà dialect of Yorùbá has three-level tones as the major means of changing positive sentences to negative ones. This study concludes that the Low Tone Negative Marker is inserted after or before a high tone in the Ìjẹ̀sà dialect. However, the three tones in the dialect mark negation through vowel lengthening in Ìjẹ̀sà sentences.

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THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN TEXTBOOK EVALUATION: NEW EFFECTIVE ENGLISH COURSE FOR SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS 1-3 A CASE STUDY OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KANO STATE

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Abstract

*English Language in Nigerian schools be it advanced or ordinary level of education has suffered a setback in recent years in terms of its usage. Students of Senior Secondary Schools in most of the local governments from whom adequate and background proficiency in English is expected, cannot for instance, produce or construct a well-structured and error free sentence in English. It is appalling and indeed embarrassing to listen to, or read students' essays at the Senior Secondary School level today, with gross misuse and abuse of language. The aim of the study investigates the adequacy of a language teaching material (textbook), with special reference to the **New effective English course for Senior Secondary Schools 1-3 (written in line with the New NERDC 9 year basic education curriculum)** using some Senior Secondary Schools in the Kano State Local Governments as a case study. It is worrisome because, Senior Secondary Students cannot speak English correctly even after they had been taught the English language. These are students supposed to obtained the basic rudiments of the language that are required to obtain a minimum qualification requirement for gaining admission into higher institutions at the foundation level in Nigeria. The study is anchored on Vygotsky (2012), theoretical framework, which states that learning occurs through social interaction within the zone of proximal development (ZPD) that is a good ESL textbook scaffolds learners' language development and encourages collaboration, dialogue, and mediated learning. Finding shows that a good language textbook enhances appropriate spoken skills, and lack of appropriate evaluation of the teaching material results to poor usage. It makes recommendations towards ameliorating the problem by teachers playing adequate textbook evaluation.*

Keywords: *evaluation, textbook, teachers, students, adequacy*

Introduction

The role of teachers in textbook evaluation as a means of judging the quality or otherwise is very crucial in the teaching and learning of the English language in the Nigerian schools and more specifically at Senior Secondary Schools. However, teachers constitute one of the central figure in the active acquisition of a new quality textbook that depends upon social needs, general educational objectives, and up-to date pedagogical and psychological needs of the students. Thus, emphasis is on the knowledge. Therefore, quality textbooks not only serve as the main source of knowledge but also help in developing the student's personality, in respecting his/her individual skills, stimulating interests in learning and in sporting interactivity.

On the basis of these attributes of quality in textbook evaluation, which are derived in compliance with the principle pedagogical documents, personal development, content selection, social correctness, methodological approach and visual layout Reints, (2000). Rogiers and Gerard (1998:18), argue that, textbook functions depend on uses, text focus as well as the environment in which the textbook was created. Evaluation of textbook supports teachers to focus attention on the study of language learning and teaching as we seek to understand them better in order to find a point at which we can manage significant investigation into teaching and learning of language. Therefore, the central process teachers are concerned with is language learning and evaluation, which presented in the form of problem solving, negotiating between knowledge that the learner



holds and new knowledge. Evaluation permits teachers to take their findings into account as well as providing data and ways of analyzing classroom process in such a way that pedagogy cannot be fixed and need to be flexible. Reint (2000), states that, the quality of a textbook is by the extent to which it fulfils didactic function. Teachers/learners should be given the autonomous control to discover a direction for their curriculum and learning which will permit general, successful control of a flexible approach and the needs for new materials based on learner- centered-approaches against teacher centred approaches to increase or develop adequate performance and minimize an inappropriate response.

This is because a well-evaluated textbook will have been useful if they make the point that task-based language learning is not only a means to enhance classroom communication and acquisition but also the means to the development of classroom syllabuses (that account of learning, content and action). A classroom where students are encouraged to respond actively, to explore and take part in purposeful communication with their fellow learners in terms of what they already know, with others in terms of sharing and refining knowledge and with the curriculum content in terms of what has to be learned. Textbook as a vehicle for teaching and learning needs to be evaluated, because textbook may be the ultimate arbiter.

This suggests that learners do not learn directly from the syllabus, but what they learn, or not, is the result of the learning in which the syllabus translated into the classroom environments, in the form of materials but of their use by the teacher and the students in the class. Jaan Mikk (2000:17) says that, the most important function of a textbook is motivating student to learn.

A textbook provides the core materials of a course, and it aims at providing as much as possible in one book it is designed so that it could serves as the only book which the learner uses during a course. Such a book usually includes work on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciations, functions and the skills of reading, writing listening and speaking. According to Mikk, the most important function of a textbook is motivating students to learn (Mikk, 2000: 17).

Research Question

1. How important for the teachers to be part of textbook evaluators?
2. How significant are teachers to textbook evaluation?

Concept of Evaluation

Evaluation means judging the value or otherwise of material based on personal opinions, resulting in an end product or by product, with a given purpose without real right or wrong answers. Therefore, materials evaluation is a systematic appraisal of the value of materials in relation to their objectives and to the objective of the learner using them. Brown (2021) opines that textbook evaluation could be conducted prior to the commencement of a programme or after or of course, concurrently on both occasions in the case of published work, on materials evaluation the focus of attention has been before programme evaluation. According to McDonough and Shaw Skieso (1990), and (1993) there are two category of textbook evaluation, External Evaluation and Internal Evaluation.

External Evaluation

This principle of textbook valuation provides a comprehensive, external overview on how the materials have been organised. The intention is to examine the organisation of the material as stated explicitly by the author/ publisher by looking at.

- a. the blurb; or the claim made on the cover of the teacher/students book.
- b. the introduction and the table of contents.

Both the blurb and introduction can assist the teachers understand the publisher's and/ or author's assertions made for the materials by critically appraising to finding out whether the claims are defensible normally by expecting comments on some or all of the following:

- a. The intending audience

However, this indicates who the materials are beleaguered at, be it teenagers aged 13 and above and/or adult, eg the topic that motivate and would probably not be suitable for another.



b. The proficiency level

Most materials designed at a particular level such as beginners or lower intermediate. This obviously requires investigation, as it could be vary widely depending on the educational context.

c. Context in which the materials are used

Teachers need to establish whether the materials are for teaching general learners or perhaps for teaching English for Specific Purpose (ESP). If the latter, what degree of specialist subject knowledge is assumed in the materials?

d. How the language is presented and organised into teachable units

Materials contain a number of units or lesson and their respective length considering this in mind when deciding how and if they will fit in to a given educational programme. Some materials provide guidelines such as contains fifteen units and provide material for ninety to twenty hours of teaching.

e. The author's view on language, methodology, and the relationship between the language, the learning process and the learner, and other factors that need to be taken into consideration when evaluating textbooks at the external stage McDonough and Shaw (1993) are as follows:

- i) Are the materials used as the main core course or to be supplement to it? This will help to evaluate their effectiveness in a given context as well as the total cost. It may be that share or complete economic will dissuade the evaluator from selecting these materials, especially if they are not going to be the core part of the course
- ii) Is the course book in print and locally available? It is also worth consideration that native and non-native teachers could use the textbook. Some course books offer general teaching hints while others have very little prescribed programmes of how to teach the material including lesson plans. Non-availability of course book may make the students to find it difficult to work with a few textbooks.
- iii) Is a vocabulary list or index included? Having these included, the materials may prove to be very useful to students particularly where the learner might be doing a lot individualised or out-of-class work. Some materials explicitly state that they offer the following: students' book with an introductory unit self-checking unit, an interaction appendix, the vocabulary appendix with phonetic spelling, a list of irregular verbs listening appendix, and the claims are worthy of investigation. The table of content may sometimes seen as a "bridge" between the external and internal stages of evaluation and can often reveal useful information about the usefulness of the materials by giving information about the vocabulary study, and skills to be covered.
- iv) What visual material does the book contain and is it there for cosmetic value or is it integrated into the text?
Visual materials such as photographs, charts and diagrams should not be used as glossy prints in textbooks to make the textbook attractive. It is worth examining if the visual material serves any learning purpose. Such as photograph or diagram incorporated into a task so that, the learner has to comment on it or interpret it in some way? Cluttered/clattered?
- v) Is the layout and the presentation clear or mixed up. Some textbooks are researched and written well, but they are so cluttered with information on every page that teachers/learners find them practically unusable. Hence, a judicious balance between the two needs to be found. Tomlinson (1999), clarity of instructions and stipulate which activity goes with which instruction as part of the overall concept of the lay out of the materials the potentials durability of the materials is another factor in teaching context where materials may be selected for several groups over a period of years. Such as paper, quality and binding need to be assessed.



Internal Evaluation

This principle involves an in-depth investigation into the materials internal consistency and organisation of the materials as stated by the author/publisher by looking at the following;

- a. the presentation of the skills of the materials
- b. the grading and sequencing of the materials
- c. skills involved
- d. authenticity and or artificiality
- e. test and exercises
- f. suitability of the learning styles
 - i) The presentation of the skills in the materials

Teachers may want to investigate if all the language skills are covered, in what proportion, and if this proportion is appropriate to the context in which teachers are working. Are the skills treated discretely or in an integrated way? The author's presentation and treatment of the skills may conflict with the way teachers wish to teach if the skills are presented too much in isolation, for example, if they integrated, is this integration natural?

- ii) Grading and sequencing of the materials

This criterion is very important and requires some exploration, as it is not always patently clear what the principle is. Some materials are quite steeply graded while others claim to have no grading system at all.

- iii) Skills involved

Teachers sometimes find that materials provide too much emphasis on skills development and not enough opportunity for students to practice those skills on extended reading passages.

- a. Where reading listening skills are involved, are recordings authentic or artificial? Teachers need to ascertain whether or not dialogues have been specially written there by missing the essential features of spontaneous speech
 - b. Do the materials incorporate what we know about the nature of real interactions or are artificial dialogues offered?
- iv) Materials expose learners to language in authentic use through the activities they suggest. In other words, the materials input should vary in style, mode, medium and purpose and should be rich in features which are characteristics of authentic discourse in the target language
- v) Suitability of the learning styles: The material should be suitable for different learning styles; there are ways that learners prefer to learn a language. Some have preference for hearing the language, some for seeing it written down, some for learning it in discrete bits, some for experiencing it and many prefer to do something physical whilst experiencing the language with the growth of interest in independent learning and learner autonomy, many materials will claim that self-study modes are also possible.
- vi) Transparency of the materials: the material should be sufficiently transparent in order to motivate students and teachers, some materials may seem attractive for the teacher but not very motivating for the learners, a balance therefore has to be sought. At this stage, it is useful to consider how the materials may guide and frame teacher-learner interaction and the teacher-learner relationship. Does the course book take account of the students' needs as learners and facilitate their learning process without dogmatically imposing the rigid method Cunningsworth (1995:16).

Hutchinson and Torres (1994), see textbook as possible agent for change. This can be achieved if a number of conditions are met first; the textbook needs to become a vehicle for teacher and learner training. In other words, as well as an explicit and detailed teacher's guide, the student book should also include appropriate learning-how-to-learn suggestions. Textbooks have an enormous influence on what is taught in primary, elementary and secondary classes and how it is



taught. According to John (2001:32) “a majority of teachers, use textbooks as their principal curriculum guide and source of lessons.

Tyson (2019:89) points out those new and in-experience teachers, or those who lack adequate time for lesson planning may actually teach from the first page of the textbook to the last, skipping little or nothing. Sheldon (2021) states that textbooks are heavily utilised by teachers, and further identified three main reasons for this. a) developing their own classroom materials is extremely difficult and an arduous process for teacher; b) teachers have limited time in which developing new materials might not be possible; and c) external pressure which restricts many teachers in introducing their own developed materials. For the proper use of any school curriculum, textbooks become part of education system. It has been a regular practice to consider textbooks as the only source of teaching-learning process to be undertaken in schools. For most of the teachers, a textbook is an authentic material to present in the class while for most students it has become a common practice to be burdened with a bag packed with their prescribed textbooks on their way to school.

Tennyson and Park (2020 234) identify criteria for a good textbook quality:

i) Taking account of student idea

Textbooks should help teachers in attending the ideas that students have and help students gain a better understanding of the key concepts and skills. This will help in concept building. Concepts are key building blocks for the structure of knowledge for the various academic disciplines. All concepts at least possess four components namely, attributes, examples, definitions and hierarchical relation.

ii) Engaging students with the relevant context, experiences and phenomena

Textbooks should use a variety of contexts, from visual models to symbolic representations of hands-on activities and first-hand experiences-to building ideas and skills.

iii) Promoting students’ thinking about phenomena, experiences and knowledge

Textbooks should help students to make sense of their experiences and ideas. Textbooks that provide carefully chosen and sequenced questions and tasks can help students reflect on, clarify, and explained their reasoning and ideas.

iv) Developing and using scientific and mathematical ideas

Textbook should provide a wide range of problem solving and practice tasks to help students see the link between concept and skills.

In the light of the aforementioned criteria, empirical studies, recommend eight basic indicators for a quality textbook that has been evaluated and these include: a) conformance of the textbook with curriculum policy, b) text reliability and validity c) appropriate vocabulary, illustrations and format, d)alignment of the text within the book and across the series of the subject, e)text encourages critical and creative learning, f) assessment and evaluation, g) teacher and other learning material, h)bias free text. (Garvin, 2000).

Rea-Dickens (1994) adds that evaluation is concern with immediate practical use rather than ultimate use. Therefore, ESL materials should relate to places within the students’ own community it should reflect real life situations that students deal within their local environment. It is particularly important that the textbook content should not focus only on skills but should also focus on real life a communicative situation that is on actual and essential exchanges that people make in normal circumstances for example commercial transactions directions, explanations, apologies, invitations, filling out forms, telephone messages, healthcare, reading classified adverts.

Similarly, Richard and Rogiers (2001:70) state that what a speaker needs in order to be communicative competent in a speech community is not to be concern with accuracy of form but also with appropriateness in relation to the context. This means that learners should not be made to rehearse patterns simply in order to get them right rather than to express meaning. Put another way the idea that mastery of grammar means mastery of language makes teachers to judge their learner’s proficiency on the basis of accuracy alone. It is also inevitable that students’ language production should be as correct as possible. Therefore, language function and language form do not operate isolation, but as part of a network of interconnected factors all of which need to be taken into



account in materials evaluation. Textbook evaluation is a very important activity for all ESL teachers because no second language acquisition research can provide a definite answer to the real problem of second language teaching.

There is no predetermining correct theory of language teaching originating from second language acquisition research Cook (1996). Sheldon (1988) says that course book evaluation is fundamentally a subject rule-of-thumb activity and that no neat formula grid or system will ever provide a definite yardstick. Ideally there is no definite answers from second language research (SLA) that are expected to be applied better than the others, but these will not stop from applying what they know about second language learning to the development of materials designed to facilitate learning process. Thus, teachers because they understand their own learners best can rely on their intuitions about language learning when they set out to write or evaluate textbook, but the reliance on intuition can be useful if they are connected to classroom experience.

Hopkins (2019) states that the teacher as researcher has the ability to think systematically and critically about what he or she is doing and collaborate with other teachers. Central to this activity is the systematic reflection on one's own classroom experience to understand it and to create meaning out of that understanding. Freeman (2016) puts it at its most basic: "you have to know the story to the story."

The teacher is in full control of the classroom proceedings because he is "the primary knower", (Berry, 1981), the "source of approval" (Edwards, 1981) and a "gate keeper" (Erickson 1976). These debunk the argument that places teachers at last place on a scale of importance, for the teacher represents the most important figure in any language teaching operation. Nunan (1999) opines that teachers need to be aware that motivation is a consideration in determining whether learners are willing to communicate. Clearly the more meaningful the materials are for the learners involvement the better the outcome will be.

The Role of Textbooks

In the ESL classroom, materials are an important aspect of the curriculum. They are the observable features of a teacher's methodology, and can contribute greatly to course's syllabus. O'Neill (2021) provides four justifications for the use of course book. Firstly, a large portion of a course book's materials can be suitable for student's needs, even if not specifically designed for them. Secondly, course books allow students to look ahead, or refresh themselves with past lessons. They remove the element of surprise in students' expectation. Thirdly, course books have the practical aspect of providing material, which is well presented in inexpensive form. Finally, and most importantly, well-designed course books that are improvised and adapted by the teacher, empower students to create spontaneous interaction in the class.

According to O'Neill 2021:111) "since language is an instrument for generating what people need and want to say spontaneously, a great deal must depend on spontaneous, creative interaction in the classroom." Therefore, course book should be accessible to a variety of students regardless of their learning goals, as well as been adaptable to the diversity of teachers and teaching styles. Thus, ESL teaching has to come to some balance between the students' goals in ESL learning, in their current level of the language skills in English and in their need for orientation to life. However, ESL students' need carefully selected course books in order to fill satisfaction because all teaching improves in quality if it is based directly on identified needs of students.

The Limits of Textbooks

Most experts agree, however, that heavy dependence on a single course book is detrimental to student's needs and that adaptability and supplemental materials are supportive additions. (Swales 1990, Nunan 1991, Allwright 1991, Medgyes 1994, cunningsworth 1995) and Stern 2000.

The general view among current researchers supports the opportunity for choice, in accordance with a student's learning needs and interest. Informal teaching materials with the specific group of students in mind will always assist professional, published material (Stern 19992:353). Furthermore, in discussing what is "available to be learned" in the classroom as well as what is "taught"



Allwright (1991:8) “content is not predictable”. It is, rather, something that emerges because of the interactive nature of the classroom event.” Although a course book may assist in some way, it cannot determine the over-all content of a language programme. He believes that course books hold a limited role, restricting students to merely “captive learners”. He further advocates that, a “whole-person involvement”, in which students, through learner training; actively participate in the management of their learning, in such a way that course book-led teaching would be found impossible.

A strong alliance placed on the course book by the teacher can reveal his considerations, or lack of, toward the over-all learning and teaching process. More so, to those teachers who have no input toward their use in the teaching context, there may be no distinction between syllabus, methodology and the textbook used. All may be intertwined in an officially approved publication from which personal creativity is void. Cunningsworth (1995:10) provides four interrelated disadvantages to an approach, which is dependent on a single textbook. First, there can be a lack of variety in teaching procedures. Secondly, innovations toward individual student’s needs are reduced. Third, spontaneity and flexibility diminished. Fourth, there can be a lack of creativity in teaching techniques and language use. He further states that, heavy dependence on textbooks is far from ideal as it reduces the importance of the individual contributions that good teachers make at all levels in the learning process. A well-designed textbook which allows for adaptation and a certain degree of learner spontaneity is generally regarded as the most visible tool in the balanced teacher/learner relationship. At best, they should provide only a framework for which this interaction and improvisation occurs (O’Neill 2021).

Cunningsworth (1995), the aim of the textbook should correspond as closely as possible to the teachers’ own methodology, it is of great importance that teachers evaluate textbooks in terms of their ability to realise these aims. Due to the recent growth of materials in ESL publishing industry, guidelines are necessary to raise teacher’s awareness to various textbooks designs rather than criticising instructors who are handicapped to a certain course book, relevant evaluation criteria should instruct teachers in how to best select textbooks that fit their certain needs.

Rivers (1999) presented a set of checklist for textbook evaluation based on seven major areas: appropriateness for local situation, appropriateness for teachers and student, language and ideational content, linguistic coverage and organisation, types of activities, practical considerations, and enjoyment index. Each of these evaluating items also includes several questions that aim at evaluating some features. The rating system in River’s checklist (477-483) is based on a five-point scale: i) excellent for my purpose ii) suitable, iii) will do, vi) not very suitable, and iv) useless for my purpose. One valuable point about the checklist is that it makes use of clear terms and if needed it presents enough explanations on several concepts. Considering its comprehensiveness, this checklist can be a good source of ideas or reference about what point to consider in developing checklists or writing materials. However, with regard to practicality in evaluating textbooks several defects exist. One point is that the checklist is not presented in a user- friendly format. The other point is that the user is faced with some main areas that should be rated, while each of this areas include several other items and features that cover a variety points.

According to this rating system it is not really possible to compare several competing textbooks, as well as each area of one book. Another important point is that the weighing system is based on the use of some terms including: excellent for my purposes to useless for my purpose. These terms are just indicators of the suitability of the materials for a special context but not the appropriacy of them and this might course variety of answers even in a same situation.

In contrast, Daoud and Celce –Murcia (2021) as cited in Murcia, (2001) introduce a broad evaluating checklist. They consider five major components for their checklist: subject matter, vocabulary and structures, illustrations, and physical make-up. Also there is a section for teacher’s manual which includes four major parts: general features, type and amount of supplementary exercises for each language skill, methodological/pedagogical guidance, and linguistic background information. The rating system is based on a five- point scale: i) excellent, ii) good, iii) adequate, iv) weak, and v) totally lacking.



Daoud and Marcia's checklist seems to be organized in such that it categorizes some main and familiar concept like exercises, illustration, etc. the format of the checklist is user-friendly and easy to follow. Therefore, the format can be a reference in designing checklist. Furthermore, the checklist pays attention to the existence and content of teacher's manuals that are not taken seriously in most other checklist. However, when the user starts working on the items s/he will face several difficulties. One of the major problems with this checklist is that although the terms that are used in each item are simple, but more explanation on several items is needed to enable the user to apply them according to the authors.

Williams (1993) presented a scheme for evaluating ESL/EFL textbooks, arguing that it could be adapted for particular contexts. The scheme includes the following features: up-to-date methodology of L2 teaching, guidance for non-native speakers of English, needs of learners, and relevance to socio-cultural environment. Each of these features can be evaluated in terms of linguistic/pedagogical aspect: general, speech, grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing and technical. For each of these aspects, then, four evaluative aspects considered to provide a checklist. The weighing system of this checklist is based on a five-point scale: 0-4

Williams hecklist seems to have a user-friendly and easy to follow format. While the scheme mainly focuses on very broad quality features of textbook and concept of teaching/learning language, it really ignores some important and detailed points. Moreover, the author has not provided enough explanation to clarify the concept of each item. The checklist has tried to consider local differences and the effect of first language

Methodology

A total of fifteen thousand Senior Secondary School teachers serve as the population from which 269 sample Teachers of English language drawn, according to the Kreycie and Morgan statistical procedure for determining population and sample size for research activities in which 200 males and 69 females teachers across Senior Secondary Schools in Kano state were selected. However, 37.17 % of the respondents have 1-5 years teaching experience, 29.73% have 6-16 years' experience, 22.30% of 16 -25 years' experience in teaching while, 10.78% , 26 and above. See Table 1, for information on the respondents. In addition, there are 44 local government areas in Kano State, 14 local governments in the Kano North, 15 in the Kano Central while other 15 in the Kano South. Therefore, seven local governments were selected from Kano south, 7 from Kano Central while 8 from Kano North. Conversely, 22 local governments serve as the sample. In addition, the study also randomly selected forty- four (44) students across 44 forty-four local government for questioning of the textbook to be evaluated.

Research Design

The research work is analytical used a quantitative based approach, examining a textbook material meant for teaching and learning English in the Kano State Secondary Schools. The study looks at accuracy via phenomenon, which also investigates what the researcher observed precisely. Record of what evaluated is made upon to analyse, synthesize and estimate the information contained in the textbook. The analytical survey enabled the information obtained from the representative sample of the population, the material and the existing situation. It is an efficient, viable, reliable, and valid means of gathering data from a number of sources in a relatively accurate manner. The study involves respondent's views on the effectiveness, significance, reliability and viability of the textbooks used in Senior Secondary Schools. *The New Effective English Course for Senior Secondary Schools 1-3 (written in line with the New NERDC 9 year basic education curriculum)*, which is Designed to strictly adhere to, in all the public and private schools nationwide for the teachers and students learning English as second language. Because the book had been integrated into the National Curriculum. For this, therefore, teachers' response and students' response from the sampled schools constitute one of the sources of the data of the study.



Instrumentation

Evaluating a textbook involves three criteria logically and systematically followed. First, selecting textbook. Second, deciding and defining the criterion for evaluation. Third, analyzing the effectiveness of the textbook in matching their claims with learners’ needs (Rea-Dickens & Garmaine, 1992). The researcher, perusal a number of checklists proposed by different authors, (Chastain 2007; Williams 1983, 2011; Rivers1987; Cunningsworth 1995, 2000; Ur 1996, 2014; Banfield and Quirke 2008, 2016, Skierso’s 1991 and McDonough and Shaw 1998 & 2003). Finally, it was decide on those features, which are deemed fit and common at the time necessary to evaluation. The outline of the questionnaire consists of five main parts and different sub parts.

Data analysis

This study analyses the role of teachers in textbook evaluation in the Senior Secondary Schools in Kano state. A sample of two hundred and sixty nine English teachers, selected from public and private schools and eighteen questionnaire items was developed. This questionnaire summarises in essence, the views of the teachers on the course book “*New effective English course for Senior Secondary Schools 1-3*” (written in line with the New NERDC 9 year basic education curriculum), on its content, vocabulary, exercises and activities, and attractiveness of the textbook and physical make-up. The questionnaire was administered on to the sample respondents, simple percentage was employed to analyse the result of each, which is responded to by the subjects. More so the total response is use as the parameter for determining whether the textbook is relevant or irrelevant for the idea analysis. However, the total yes point for response on the two hundred and sixty nine English language teachers and Directors Quality Assurance on each aspect of the textbook was recorded.

Analysis of the Result

The table below contains the percentages from the sampled subject’s responses on the content of the Senior Secondary Schools textbook.

Table 1

CONTENT	NO	%
Is the subject matter presented either topically or functionally is logically organized ?	62	23.04%
Does the content serve as a window to learning about the target language culture?	52	19.33%
Are the reading selection authentic pieces of language?	61	22.7%
Compared to text for native speakers, does the content contain real-life issues that challenge the reader to think critically about his/her world view?	49	18.21%
Are the text selections representative of the literary genre, and do they contain multiple sentence structures?	45	16.72%
TOTAL	269	100

The first research question, “to what extent is the textbook effective according to content in the textbook?” was measured through five items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in the table (1) above.



As the table one indicated, out of the two hundred and sixty nine that serve as the sample subjects of the research, sixty- two (62) teachers representing 23.04% agreed with the subject matter of the content of the book that is not relevant to the student’s need. Fifty- two (52) of the teachers representing 19.33% of the total number of the sampled subjects said that the content served as a window to the learning about the target language culture, while 22.7% agreed that reading selection is authentic pieces of language. Forty nine (49) teachers which represent 18.21% stated that the text contain real-life issue and forty five (45) that serve as 16.72% claimed that the text selection is a representation of literary genre of the multiple sentence structures.

Furthermore, table 2 below shows the responses to the teachers on the relevance of the or otherwise of the vocabulary as contained in the book.

Table 2

VOCABULARY	NO	%
Are the grammar rules presented in logical manner and in increasing order of difficulty?	81	30.11%
Are the new vocabulary words presented in varieties of ways e.g. glosses?	67	24.91%
Are the new vocabulary words presented at an appropriate rate so that the text is understandable and so that the students are able to retain a new vocabulary?	61	22.67%
Are the new vocabulary words repeated in the subsequent lessons to re-enforce their meaning and use?	60	22.31%
TOTAL	269	100

The second research question, “to what extent is the textbook effective according to the vocabulary?. was measured through four items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in table two above. From the above analysis, it can be seen that eighty one (81) teachers representing 30.11% agreed that the grammar rules are presented in a logical manner and increasing order of difficulty. Sixty seven (67) respondents representing 24.91%, agreed that new vocabulary words are presented in varieties of ways and provide the learners opportunity in learning vocabulary. While another sixty one (61) teachers out of the sampled teachers, which is 22.67% disagreed that the new vocabulary words are not presented at an appropriate rate, and 22.31% agreed that the new vocabulary words are repeated in subsequent lessons to re-enforce their meaning, and use in the textbook.

Table 3

EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES	NO	%
Are there interactive and task-based activities that require students to communicate?	67	24.91%
Do instructions in the textbook tell students to read for comprehension?	58	21.56%
Are students sufficiently given adequate example to learn techniques for reading comprehension?	45	16.73%
Do the activities facilitate student’s use of grammar rules by creating situations in which these rules are needed?	56	20.82%
Do the exercises promote critical thinking of the text	43	15.91%
TOTAL	269	100



The third research question, “to what extent is the textbook effective according to the exercises and the activities in the textbook?” was measured through five items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in table three above. From the table it can be noted that 24.97% agreed that the exercises and the activities could improve the student’s communicative competence because they give for the creation of task based activities and exercise. Fifty-eight respondents equals 21 percentage agreed that the instruction in the textbook encourages students to read for comprehension and for communicative and meaningful practices. In addition, Forty five (45) respondents representing 16.73% disagreed that there are no sufficient examples given in the textbook to help students to learn techniques for reading comprehension that will help the students to increase their word power. Furthermore, fifty six (56) teachers, which represent 20.82% of the sampled subjects were of the view that student’s use of grammar was facilitated by the activities, because it was incorporated in the text pair group work, while 15.91% agreed that the text promote critical thinking through the exercises and activities.

Table 4

ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE TEXTBOOK AND PHYSICAL MAKE-UP	NO	%
Is the cover of the book appealing?	125	46.2%
Is the visual imagery of high aesthetic quality?	40	14.2%
Are the illustrations simple enough and close enough to the text that they add to its meaning rather than detracting from it?	60	22.30%
Is the text interesting enough that students enjoy reading it?	44	16.35%
Total	269	100

The four research question, “to what extent is the textbook effective according to effectiveness and physical make-up? was measured through three items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented on the table above. The result reflected in the above table shows that 125 teachers representing 46.2% stated that the book cover is appealing. While 14.2% of the respondents said, the visual imagery is of high aesthetic quality. 22.30% of the respondents confirm that the illustrations are simple enough and close enough to the text in the sense that they add to its meaning rather than detracting from it and forty four (44) teachers are of the view that the textbook is interesting enough that the students can enjoy reading it.

The student’s questionnaire was not dissimilar to that of the teachers because it was also based on the two responses, that is, “agree” and “disagree”. The responses of the students on the textbook in question were on content, grammar, exercises and activities, and physical make up as shown in the tables below.

Table 5

CONTENT	N0	%
Are there enough topics in the textbook that deal with current affairs?	5	11.36%
Does the content of the textbook help you to learn more about the target language culture?	12	27.27%
Does the content of the textbook take in to consideration your cultural background?	3	6.81%
Does the content of the textbook help you to learn about the four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking)?	24	54.54%
Total	44	100



Table 6

EXERCISE AND ACTIVITIES	NO	%
Do the exercises and the activities in the textbook promote your language learning?	11	25%
Are the exercises and activities in the textbook easy to do?	10	22.7%
Do you enjoy the exercises and the activities in the textbook?	5	11.4%
Do the exercises and activities encourage fair or group work communication?	8	18.2%
Do the exercises and the activities help you to learn more language rules?	10	22.7%
Total	44	100

Findings

From the data analyzed, it was revealed that the textbook was acceptable from the viewpoint of the majority of the English teachers/students who were familiar with the textbook that was *New Effective English Course for Senior Secondary Schools 1-3*. The researcher uncover from the data that the respondents found the textbook useful because it deals with some aspect of culture of their environment as well as the other culture and customs.

It was discovered that course book introduce other foreign cultures and customs, eg in unit 3, 8 and 10 The juxtapositions of the two cultures provided an avenue for language task for better communication.

Another finding reveals that there is no way the home culture and that of the foreign could be avoided in the learning of the language because it is particularly important that the culture, the students are exposed to in the classroom and in the written materials are true reflection of culture language they would encounter in real life.

It was also one of the findings that exercises/activities in the course had been organised and graded from simple to complex.

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COMMUNICATIVE VALUES OF SOME SELECTED OBJECTS AMONG THE AWGBU IN ORUMBA NORTH OF ANAMBRA

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Abstract

*Communication entails acquiring and sharing with either individual or group. There are some communicative objects, which only have meaning as ascribed to them in the society. The mode, form and manner of communication vary from age to age and from culture to culture. Igbo culture is filled with objects of varying significances. It is generally believed among the Igbo that there is an erosion of cultural values since the inception of modern technology and mass media. The study identifies some of the non-verbal means of communication among the Awgbu (in Orumba North Local Government Area of Anambra, Nigeria). The data for the study were collected through primary and secondary sources. The study employed interview and focus group discussion in the collection of primary data, while the secondary data were collected from some selected published materials: Anyanwu (2005), and Ogbu (2013). The participants for this study were between the ages of 16 and 81 years. The study is anchored on the symbolic interactionism by Blumer (1969) which states that human life is based on symbols which are culturally derived social objects that have meanings which are created and maintained by individuals in the society through social interaction. The study reveals the traditional modes of communication such as *omụ nkwụ* (palm frond), *Udala* (African cherry), *Mkponana* (canon explosive), *ogene* (gong), and *nzu* (white chalk) are still in use and very effective in disseminating information among the people with some modifications in some instances. The study recommends the teaching of non-verbal means of communication to younger people not only informally but also in schools for preservation and continuity.*

Keywords: *Non-verbal communication, symbols, objects, information, interaction, mass media*

Introduction

Language is an important medium for social interaction. Okolo and Ezikeojiaku (1999) are of the opinion that language is the medium through which we establish our most important human relations. According to Sapir (1921, p. 8), language is defined as “a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols”. It is observed that communication can take place without one necessarily uttering a word (that is non-verbally). That is, the absence of words or utterances does not mean an absence of communication. It is equally observed that without making any conscious effort, we constantly receive messages from the environments we find ourselves in, and in the same way, we communicate or pass-across several messages whether we mean it or not.

What then is communication? Communication according to *Merriam-Webster dictionary* is a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of



symbols, signs and behavior. The process of communication is a system comprising the sender, receiver, signal, as well as the context. Each has role for effective communication. The signal is the link between the sender of the message and the receiver; while the context of the message is everything not belonging to sender, receiver, or signal. Context according to *Oxford dictionary (Concise Oxford Dictionary)* is the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood. Therefore, we must use the meanings of the words, the context in which they occur, and some pre-existing knowledge of what would be a likely message as we work toward a reasonable interpretation of what the producer of the sign intended it to convey. Our interpretation of the “meaning” of the sign is not based solely on the words, but on what we think the writer intended to communicate (Yule, 2010). In other words, the meaning is based on shared knowledge. Context contributes to a better understanding of messages by creating a mutual harmonic atmosphere, or it may disturb the relationship between people involved. Sending and receiving the message can be achieved through both verbal and non-verbal methods. While verbal communication is identified with speech, non-verbal communication is identified with symbols, signs and sounds. The mode, form and manner of communication vary from age to age and from culture to culture. Yet, the concept is universal as it is intended to share our ideas and feelings, verbally or non-verbally with as many people as possible (Anyanwu, 2005), but culturally bound.

We communicate far more information to other people through non-verbal means than what has been conveyed by our words alone. Some of this communication is fully conscious while others are not. Many behaviors are not deliberate, nor are we aware of performing them. Likewise, while we are all affected by the behavior of others, we do not fully appreciate how it shapes our own perceptions and emotional state. When people talk, the content of what they say usually corresponds to the tone of their voice, the posture and gesture. When they feel that there is a discrepancy between verbal and non-verbal messages, the communicator tend to give more weight to the non-verbal cues. We can classify communication into three: verbal, non-verbal, and a combination of verbal and non-verbal (Anyanwu, 2005). This study focuses on the second type: non-verbal. Non-verbal communication is a system consisting of a range of features often used together to aid expression. The combination of these features is often a subconscious choice made by native speakers or even sub-groups/sub-cultures within a language group. Non-verbal communication has not been explored like other areas of linguistic study, yet, very relevant in information dissemination.

Non-verbal communication is often regarded as the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless messages. It is the act of conveying a thought, feelings, gesture, posture and facial expressions. People act towards things based on the meaning those things have for them, and these things are derived from social interaction and modified through interpretation. Studies such as the work by Albert Mehrabian (a psychologist) have revealed that less than 10% (ten percent) of communication takes place verbally, while other non-verbal takes the rest percentage and form part of our language and culture. It seems reasonable that more studies should be conducted on this great aspect of communication. Always consider cultural differences when you send or receive non-verbal messages. A message that has a particular meaning in one society can have a completely different meaning in another society. The same also applies to objects which rely heavily on shared meanings. There is no direct relationship between objects and what they symbolise. Symbols are completely interrelated through analogical bonds, hence, the relationship between objects and their meaning is arbitrary. Any understanding of language use requires knowledge of the peripheral systems of human communication. Just as the language system itself must be learned so these other systems of communication must be learned. Communication involves a social act of sharing concepts, ideas, emotions through the use of signs and symbols – images, which by convention evoke a complex of meaning. The agreement among members of a particular social group as to what signs and symbols represent sustained its shared meaning.

The scope of non-verbal means of communication is extremely vast. The study takes varied perspectives: gender studies, sociology, anthropology, history, religion, and literature, among others.



The linguistic treatment of this problematic is also strongly solicited, especially those that examine the linguistic encoding of some selected objects. Therefore, the objectives of this study are to identify various non-verbal means of communication and their uses among the Awgbu people. The study also assesses if these communicative objects and their various interpretations or meanings are understandable by younger students (who have responsibility to promulgate this culture). Awgbu is an autonomous community (with five villages) under Orumba North Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria.

Previous studies

Quite a good number of scholars have contributed to the study of non-verbal communication, among them are: Anyanwu (2005), Ukpokolo (2011), Ekeke (2012), Ogbu (2013), and Udechukwu (2019).

Ukpokolo (2011) examines the perception that women have nothing to do with *oji* (kolanut) and *ofò* (staff of authority and justice), the two symbols of peace among the Igbo. It identifies the place of the Earth goddess in *oji* and *ofò* ritual performances. As a key participant in these rituals, gender is mainstreamed in the usages of *oji* and *ofò*. According to the finding of the study, the kolanut is not presented to women in any gathering, but after the ritual performances, the kolanut plate can be passed round for people to take a piece including a woman. "A woman also does not climb the kolanut tree. The reason is that kolanut is used to communicate with the deities and shrines, and the woman does not feed the deities". The *ofò* cannot be possessed by a woman. According to Uwalaka (1996, p. 5), "*ofò* is associated with maleness while *ogu* is associated with femaleness".

Similar to the study was a study by Ekeke (2012), who examines *Ofò* as one of symbols in African traditional religion among the Igbo people. The paper analyses the relevance of symbolism in African Traditional Religion with special focuses on the functions and types of symbols. The paper concludes that *Ofò*, the symbol of sacred authority and lineage headship among the Igbo remains an instrument of both blessings and curse depending on the usage.

Ogbu (2013) investigates the issue of the essence of symbols on Igbo modern thrones. Her attention centred on the symbolic motifs on Igbo modern thrones in Anambra State, specifically in Onitsha, Awka and Nri which statistics show have modern throne with hybrid symbolism. The symbols are classified into: (a) human symbols (b) animal symbols (c) emblems (d) geometric and floral designs. The study further interprets the individual symbols as well as providing the iconographic and functional analysis of the interpreted motifs in the peoples' context using field information to cross-check the available literature. Photographs of the thrones and their associated symbolic motifs were provided. The study also showed a shift and elaboration of symbolism as a result of change in ideology, occupation and general worldview. Christian motifs and some emblems on the thrones reveal the impact of Christianity in Igbo culture; others serve as a reflection of modern concept of power with its political shift and values.

Anyanwu (2005) assessed modes of mass communication in traditional Igboland. According to Anyanwu (2005), the world over has modes of communicating their ideas, feelings and messages, which Igboland is not an exception. Traditional Igboland employed several modes of verbal and non-verbal communication and a combination of both. His study revealed some of Igbo traditional objects of mass communication which include; *Ogene* (metal gong), *Ekwe* (wooden gong), *Ikorò/Igba* (talking drum), and *Opi* (horn). According to him, despite the assault of modernism, these modes of communication are still being used. The paper attempts to show that, with the modern means of mass communication, the Igbo traditional modes of communication share a common aim (to affect others).

Udechukwu (2019) gives clear identification and definition of Igbo cultural symbols and their significance to Igbo modern life. A descriptive method of research was adopted where she interacted and interviewed some Igbo people across age, class and gender. The result obtained from the study lends insight into the significance of symbolism in Igbo everyday existence. The study classified Igbo symbols into: animal symbols, ritual symbols, number symbols, royal symbols,



ancestral symbols and cultural symbols. According to Udechukwu (2019) these groups of symbols have their significances and effects in Igbo and African culture. For example, one animal or the other have helped them in time of need and trouble which made them to start venerating them, and any violation in the veneration of these animals in the olden days or killing them affects the defaulter(s) and sometimes the whole community.

The study by Ukpokolo (2011) focuses on inactive role of female gender to *oji* (kolanut) and *ofọ*; that of Ekeke (2012) examines *Ofọ* as one of the symbols in African traditional religion among the Igbo people. Anyanwu (2005) assessed modes of mass communication in traditional Igboland in general while this present study assesses communicative values of some selected objects among the Awgbu, a community which is located in Orumba North Local Government of Anambra State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework employed in this study is the symbolic interactionism, which was coined by Blumer (1969). This framework is of the belief that the meaning of a thing or object is dependent on the agreement between the people of that community. That is, if a community agrees that an object signifies something, then, that is the meaning of such object. Blumer (1969) specified three basic premises with regard to symbolic interactionism, according to him: (i) Humans act towards things on the basis of the meaning those things have for them (ii) The meaning of things is derived from social interaction (iii) These meanings are dependent on, and modified by an interpretive process of the people who interact with one another.

In accordance with George Mead and other pragmatists, symbolic interactionism is based on sociological perspectives on self and the society. The main idea of symbolic interactionism is that human life is based on symbolic domain. These symbols are culturally derived social objects that have meanings which are created and maintained by individuals in the society through social interaction. Symbolic interactionism proves that the meaning of a symbol is conventional and culturally based, and this message is maintained through social interaction. Blumer (1969) focused on the meaning of objects which are more defined in terms of its actions and consequences in relations to its context. The meaning of a thing according to Blumer is based on the action that thing performs.

The symbolic interactionism of George Mead explains that once we have conceptualized an object we can now think of that object even when that object is invisible. Therefore, the object is thought of symbolically. Mead explains that symbolic conceptions and thought reduce the shortcomings of limited experience of human beings to what we actually see, hear, or fear. He concludes that almost all interactions between and among human beings are dimensions of exchange of symbols by presenting four primary and interrelated stages. The first stage is impulse and that “impulse which involves an immediate sensuous stimulation, the need to do something about it” (quoted in Ritzer, 2000, p. 208). He sees the second stage as “Perception”. Meads sees perception as involving incoming stimuli as well as the mental images they create. People do not simply respond immediately to external stimuli but rather think about and assess them through mental imagery. They also actively select characteristics of a stimulus and release among sets of stimuli. That is, a stimulus may have several dimensions, and the actor is able to select among them (quoted in Ritzer, 2000, p. 208). Mead calls the third stage “Manipulation”. He argues that sequel to the manifestation of the impulse with the object perceived, what follows immediately is action – taking with regard to the conceptualized symbol. The fourth and last stage according to Mead is “Consummation” and at this stage that the actor in symbolic interaction particularizes the specific aim of his choices of the many possible meanings of the object, towards satisfying the original impulse (Ekeke, 2012).

This theoretical framework perfectly fits for this research work due to the fact that it seeks to explain the meaning of objects in relation to their context.



Methodology

The data for this study were collected through primary and secondary sources. The primary source was through interview (face to face and phone calls) and focus group discussion. According to Patton (1990), a combination of different methods provides a cross-data validity checks and therefore reduces errors that can be experienced when one particular method is used. This study uses the descriptive research design which is largely meant to describe the state of affairs as it exists in a given place. Descriptive research according to Okolo (2009, p. 221) “is that research which specifies the nature of a given phenomenon”. Descriptive design helps to find out more about the phenomena and therefore captures it in a detailed way (Wisker, 2001). A total of fifty-eight (58) people participated in the study. The participants were between the ages of 16 and 81. For the interview, twenty-eight (28) people were interviewed (comprising of 19 males and 9 females). For focus group discussion, a total of five group interviews were organized, with participants numbering thirty (30). Each group had between four and eight participants. The first group was with a group of five (5) married women. The second group was a group of four (4) elderly men conducted after one of the clan’s general meetings. The third group was the group of six (6) secondary school students (3 males and 3 females), in the school compound, while the fourth group was with eight (8) adults (5 men and 3 women) who are traders from Awgbu and reside in Benin. The fifth and last group was a group of seven (7) university students (4 females and 3 males). The focus of interview and focus group discussion is to solicit information on objects that communicate to the people and the kind of information each of them communicates.

The interview and focus group discussions were tape recorded and played back for analysis. The study was conducted between December 2022 and June 2023. The secondary data were collected from published materials which include Anyanwu (2005), Ogbu (2013), and Nwokoye & Eze (2017).

Some Selected Objects and Their Communicative Values among the Awgbu People

This section presents data from the study. The objects names and the meaning attached to each are given below:

(1) *Oji* (Kolanut *Acuminata*): *Oji* is a bitter brown seed containing caffeine, and a source of cola extract. It is the most important object in Igbo tradition; it is revered, respected and adored. *Oji* according to Nwadike (2007) means custom; that is, *omenaala jikotara Igbo onu* (the custom that unites the Igbo people). *Oji* is an all important symbol associated with *ndi Igbo* (the Igbo). It is celebrated and forms the basis or bedrock of Igbo traditional ceremonies. *Oji* is used in varied traditional ceremonies. In the Igbo traditional settings, *oji* permeates all aspects of life: political, social, economic, and religious. A lot of respect is accorded to it for its diversified importance. According to one of our respondents, the sacredness of *oji* and its tree are one of the reasons why the dry wood of the tree is not used as firewood. In its unique position in the cultural life of Igbo in general, *oji* symbolizes: life, communion, hospitality, reconciliation, unity, peace, sealing of covenant, among others. Osuji (1998, p. 44) affirms this when he says: “Kolanut symbolizes peace, respect, goodwill, acceptability, settlement of quarrel and in fact anything that stands for love and unity”. That is why *oji* is used for every occasion not just among the Awgbu community but among the Igbo in general and it is one of the most surviving cultural practices of the Igbo race, and sustaining of the language leading to saying that, “*oji anaghị anụ oyibo*” (*oji* does not hear English). In accordance with the tradition and custom of the Igbo, the prayer over the *oji* was always performed in the Igbo language, but inter-relationship between the Igbo and other people from varied linguistic background in different ceremonies people sometimes recently add English in consideration with non-Igbo guests. The kolanut is a symbol of life and for this reason many profound and mysterious interpretations and formalities are accorded to it. *Oji* is an item that must be presented in any occasion such as birth, death, wedding, meetings of any kind, ceremonies, etc. Its presence signifies peace and hospitality for the presenter and acceptance from the person to which the kolanut is presented to. Its presence also signifies life leading to the saying, *onye wetere oji, wetere ndu* (he who brings kolanut, brings life).



Oji and their numbers among the Igbo: The study reveals that *Oji*'s cotyledon and their numbers signify something among the Awgbu people. *Oji* with one cotyledon is not divided into pieces. According to one of our respondents, culture demands that such *oji* (with one cotyledon) is label "dumb kolanut" (*oji dara ogbi*) which should not be eaten, and it is a bad omen to have such. *Oji* with two cotyledons signifies bad omen and must not be eaten as well. This kind of *oji* is known as "*oji kuru aka*" (*oji* that clap hands), and it is an abominable kolanut. People believe that once *oji kuru aka*, people must find out the reason for that bad omen. *Oji* with three cotyledons is called *oji Ikenga* or *oke oji* (great kolanut). *Oji* with four cotyledons represents completeness, as well as the four market days in Igbo land: *Eke, Orié, Afo, Nkwó* and that is an indication that it is a good one representing the four economic days of the people. There is also *oji* with five cotyledons, which according to Okekenta (2012) symbolizes procreation, good luck and useful abundance (*oji uba* and *omumu*). Lastly, *Oji* with seven cotyledons (though not common) signifies abundance, excess, extreme and celebration. According to one of our respondents, once *Oji* is with seven cotyledons, it calls for celebration; the host will look for any available animal, kill and celebrate with his guests. Among the Igbo, number seven is not an ordinary number and as such should not be joked with or neglected. This belief is in line with Blumer (1969) that social objects have meaning which are created and maintained by individuals in the society through human interactions. However, it is disheartened that secondary school and university students during focus group discussions were not aware of varied *oji* cotyledons and what they signify among the Igbo. It is also surprising that 75% of these students could not differentiate *Oji* Igbo from other kind of *Oji*, and 82% of the learners that participated do not know the interpretations and importance of different cotyledons.

(2) Palm leaves: Palm tree is one of the most important economic trees among the Igbo. The leaves of this tree are classified into two: (2a) *Omú Nkwú* (the plume of palm tree) and (2b) *igu Nkwú* (Palm Leaf).

(2a) *Omú Nkwú* (the plume of palm tree) is generally recognized as a symbol of non-verbal means of communication among the Awgbu people. It is a part of palm tree used in different occasion with varied communicative functions. According to one of our respondents, *omú nkwú* has ordinary and sacred functions. The ordinary functions of *omú* from the study include; (i) tying small pack of things (such as *ogiri* and *ukpaka*); (ii) *Omú* is often placed in the farms, lands, trees which are under dispute. One of the respondents, Maazi Akunwanne states that when *omú* is tied round the land or at the four corner of the land, it means that the land is on dispute and everyone should stay away from the land. It is an indication that if anyone ventures to go there, trouble will ensue. Therefore whoever sees where *omú* is used to make barricade should not trespass for the avoidance of trouble. (iii) If any *omú* is on a lorry or bus, it means the lorry or bus is conveying home a corpse. (iv) If the *omú* is tied round the *Udala* (African cheery), cashew, *ube* (local pears) and mango trees, it means that no one is allowed to climb the tree or pluck the seed. The study reveals that there is always repercussion for anyone that goes contrary to this. (v) *Omú* is used in taken possession of a portion of communal land for the year farming. One of our respondents (Ugonnanyere) states that they have communal lands, they as kinsmen have where they farm every year, and any part of the land where *omú* is placed from the chosen land indicates that that particular portion of the land has been taken by someone, and other people should stay away from that portion. (vi) The *omú* placed on any item in the open market means that the said item is not for sale. (vii) If a knot of it is in any person's mouth, it means he will neither talk nor will he be talked to. (viii) *Omú* is also used to show sacred places or trees, as well as forbidden places of entry. (ix) When *omú* is tied round the compound, it means that no one is allowed to enter the place. (x) *Omú* symbolizes peace. For example, when a community and another community are at war with each other, the one on the part of peace often sends the other *omú*.

(2b) *Igu Nkwú* (Palm Leaf): Palm leaf is a branch of palm tree with many uses. It is used as a shade. Once it is used to make shade in the forest or farm, it means that some people have their rest there. Since it signifies the presence of human, anybody that sees it from afar and needs help comes to the place. Also, if someone is missing his way and sees it, the person goes there to meet whoever takes shade there for direction. Also, if one is in dare need of water, matchstick and like, the person



knows that someone is there and might get help from such person. Another importance of *igu nkwu* among the Awgbu people is its usefulness during funeral. Before the advent of canopy, *Igu Nkwu* is used as a shade in front of the house of the bereaved. If it is used as a shade in front of a person's compound, it signifies that someone dies there. Though canopy has taken over most of this recently but among the Awgbu people, they still raise at least one shade with *igu nkwu* where they are performing funeral, or place the *igu nkwu* on top of a canopy, especially the one where the family of the bereaved stays.

(3) *Udala* (African cherry): *Udara* grows and provides popular fruits which everyone both old and young enjoys. This tree is not ordinary tree among the Awgbu people. It is a tree believed not to be planted by anyone, the seed germinates and grows where the gods of the land chooses. It symbolizes heart of the children, fertility, procreation and abundance. According to one of our respondents (Akunwafo), "there is a spirit behind the *udala* tree, the spirit of procreation, the spirit of children". He states further that barren women are encouraged to frequent the *udala* tree especially during the mid-day to attract the spirit of children. The study also reveals that there are consequences (to the person, family as well as the clan) of cutting down *udala* tree without performing proper sacrifices, and appeasing the spirit of the children. Another elder (Maazi Okoyendukwe) notes that it is near abomination to defecate under the *udala* tree. According to him, the environment of *udala* tree is sacred; it attracts the spirits especially during the night and mid-day.

(4) *Mkponana* (gun/canon explosive): Another instrument of non-verbal communication is the gun and canon type of explosive known in most parts of Igboland and Awgbu specifically as *mkponana*. The tip of this canon is buried beneath the surface of the earth and detonated with a flame to produce a heavy and far-reaching sound. A gun shot at night sends message that an important person is dead and burial rites are to begin the next day. The sound communicates or sends a message to near and distant communities or villages especially regarding death and burial/funeral. On the day of burial, the first *mkponana* announces the arrival of the corpse, while the second indicates that the corpse has just been lowered to the grave. During funeral, when an important people (such as the in-laws) come for condolence visit, *mkponana* announces their entrance and also to welcomes them. In addition, people that come for condolence visit with masquerade or dance group are always welcome with *mkponana*, even when the gun powder finished, they have to wait as people run round and get it and properly welcome them. Also, *mkponana* is used to announce the close of daily receiving of visitors during funeral ceremonies. In addition, when a married woman dies, her spirit is escorted back to his father's family by his paternal people within the period of funeral. *Mkponana* is used not only to announce the return of the people from their in-laws, but also welcoming back the spirit of the late Ada (daughter of the family) back to her paternal home, without this, the rite is not complete according to one of our respondents (Maazi Onyiruka). Also, during new yam festival, *Mkponana* is used not only to announce the end of new yam rites, but also to inform the people that they can begin to eat the new yam.

(5) *Ogene* (metal gong): The *Ogene* is a metal disc with a folded rim which when struck with a stick or a piece of metal produces a resonant sound. The function of these instruments, especially when beaten in an area of the community at night, is to attract and hold attention for verbal communication. Among the Awgbu, *ogene* is used for announcement not only in the market place, but also round the village. The sound of *ogene* draws people's attention to the person striking it. After striking the *ogene* (and gotten the attention of the people), the person makes the announcement. Also, when this instrument is sounded depending on the time and tone, the people is reminded of the meeting, burial or marriage to attend, rehearsal, etc. It can also mean that a member of a group is dead. According to one of the respondents (Mrs Ibeachu) "majority of our people often know the message delivered by this *ogene*, but some especially the young maiden do not" (my translation). According to her, if one is not sure of the particular message, such a person asks her neighbor(s), or the two can walk to the announcer.

(6) *Nzu* (white chalk): *Nzu* is very important symbol in Igbo culture because it signifies some of the most important and spiritual attributes of Igbo worldview such as purity, clean heart, justice, sincerity, truth and faithfulness. It is offered to a guest to rub on his wrist or foot as a mark of



welcome. A host can draw a single vertical line on the ground for his guest which signifies peace. The visitor can draw four vertical lines which signify four Igbo market days (*Eke, Orie, Afo, and Nkwo*) and crosses them. This means unity or togetherness every day according to one of our respondents. When *nzu* is rubbed across the left eye by native doctors or juju men, it conveys the message that these men have the ability of detecting hidden mysteries. It also conveys the message that these men can remove evil spirits either by remote control, herbal medication or by talisman or sacrifices. A woman visiting another woman who had just put to bed shows her joy by rubbing *Nzu* on her face (powder has however replace this). If a community declares war on another community, they send such a community a black chalk; but a messenger of peace clutches a white chalk. When it is used for sacrifice, it signifies justice, equity, and purity. When it is used to welcome visitor, it signifies that the visitor is well received with open and clean heart. This means also that both the visitors and the host will never hurt each other or keep malice or be silent if any of them sees or hears of any evil against each other. The host and visitor can use *nzu* to draw parallel line on the floor. If *Ozo* draws line, it symbolizes *igba ndu* (covenant) – an indication of absolute trust against poisoning and evil plot. The ritual is an offering to life and concrete evidence that one is innocent and calls on the mother goddess, *Ani* as witness to open hands and clean hands. This particular means of communication according to our respondents (Maazi Onyiruka) is fading.

(7) Leaves hang on the entrance door of someone's house. According to one of our respondents, when a person visits another and he/she did not meet anyone at home, the visitor usually plucks any leaf around the compound, and attaches it to the entrance door handle. When the occupant(s) comes back, they automatically know that someone visited while no one was at home. However, this mode of communication according to our respondents is eluding with the advent of mobile phone, but still most effective till date with the elderly people.

(8) The appearance of tortoise/ bees at one's home: The study reveals belief among the people that some animals (such as tortoise, snake and bees) are messengers. People do not eat them and their appearance at one's home signifies warning or danger. Anytime one sees these at their home, they know there is danger and have to make inquiry to abate any evil occurrence. According to one of our respondent (Mr Ukwuego), once you see these in your home, you immediately go and ask the message they come to deliver. According to him the message is often from a deity, either someone has reported the person to the deity. For example if you owe someone and refuse to pay or you took someone's land among others, ignoring the warning often leads to pre-mature death, or a kind of accident (my translation).

(9a) *Nkwu enu* (Palm wine): This is used in virtually all occasions and celebrations. According to one of our respondents, breaking of calabash of palm wine on the way for marriage ceremony indicates something about the marriage. The family of the man has to turn back and inquire from the ancestors for the reason. Here either some rituals are performed before or immediately after the marriage or the marriage is cancelled.

(9b) Also, a gourd-cup of palm wine is given to the bride-to-be during the marriage ceremony; whoever she gives the wine indicates her choice of husband. However, if the cup of palm wine falls down from her hand (that is, the bride-to-be) when she is going to give her husband-to-be the wine during marriage ceremony, it means that the marriage should be suspended or totally cancelled to find the cause according to one of our respondents. The finding reveals that if the bride-to-be finished the cup of wine, it indicates she rejects whoever her people want to impose on her.

(9c) Palm wine and *Ube* leaf: If a man does not want to continue marrying his wife, he buys palm wine and puts *ube* (local pear) leave inside the calabash of the wine and sends the wife to her parents. When the in-laws start drinking the wine and see the *ube* leave, it indicates that the marriage of their daughter has collapsed and she has been sent back to her parents.

(10) Striking of one's Foot: The study reveals that striking your foot on a stone or any hard object along the road while going to an important occasion communicates something to the victim. Striking the **left foot** means misfortune, or that the person is going to meet trouble, harm among others. Often when this happened, the person has to turn back and make inquiry on the reason for the bad omen. However, striking the **right foot** means good fortune, favour, success, etc. According



to a respondent, “It is very difficult for me to continue where I am going once I strike my left foot on anything because I know that I will not get good result from the place. For example, if I am going to see someone, I know that either the person will not be at home, or the purpose will not be in my favour”. The students interviewed were not aware of this communication and belief among the people.

Recommendation

From the study and findings, the following recommendation was made; that teaching of non-verbal means of communication to younger ones. There is need to incorporate the teaching of this nature to our young ones through the incorporation of this to the curriculum. In the words of Maazi Iloegbu (one of the respondents), “majority of our children do not know about *oji* and their different numbers and what these numbers signifies and as such could make mistake eating the ones that are forbidden to be eaten. Also, *nzu* is very important symbol among the Igbo culture. Also, the objects and their communicative values are vanishing because of intercultural interferences and neglect by Igbo people themselves. The values are very much needed in our society today, and therefore, it is good that younger ones should always be trained to acquire these values.

Conclusion

Communication is the exchange of information or ideas. Acquiring information and being able to give information is the key to a successful living. Objects do not have meanings in themselves but have meanings as confirmed to them in the society, the reason why one symbol can mean different thing to people from different linguistic background. The mode, form and manner of communication vary from age to age and from one culture to another, which Igbo is no exception. Objects used in communication according to Okolo and Ezikeojiaku (1999) include all intentional and non-intentional display of material things such as implements, clothes, art objects, sticks, leaves of various kinds and so on. Most of these things communicate a lot to us. It seems that most traditional mode of communication is vanishing from our people in preference to western systems of life in recent time. In other words, there is a belief among the Igbo that there is an erosion of cultural values (communication inclusive) since inception of modern technology and mass media, especially those that constituted a veritable source of human existence in the past.

The study identified some objects of mass communication among the Igbo with focus on Awgbu people. The objects identified include, *oji*, *omu nkwu* and *igu nkwu*, *udala*, *mkponana*, *ogene*, *nzu*, leaves hang at the entrance of someone’s house, the appearance of tortoise/ bees at one’s home, palm-wine, as well as striking one’s foot while going to an important place. Although there are phenomenal changes in the Igbo traditional society due to colonisation, modernisation, education, information technology, population growth, modern economic activities, infrastructure and human resources development, these modes of communication are still in operation. This confirms the study conducted earlier by Anyanwu (2005) that despite the assault of modernism on Igbo culture, these modes of communication are still in use.

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rites of passage and the disruption of female education in Khady's *Mutilée*: A female Bildungsroman perspective

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Abstract

A rite of passage is a ceremonial event that marks an individual's transition from one social or religious status to another. Rites of passage in Khady's Mutilée are considered as a rigid convergence of cultural expectations and life-altering barriers that redirect a girl's path from a classroom to marriage. This is designed to enforce traditional or cultural conformity. Thus, this paper examines how rites of passage in Khady's Mutilée impede the educational development and personal growth of the protagonist, Khady. Drawing on the theoretical framework of the contemporary female Bildungsroman, the study argues that the cultural rituals imposed upon Khady, particularly female genital mutilation and the social expectations that follow initiation rites, interrupt her journey toward intellectual and psychological maturity. Thus, all these cultural rituals depicted in Mutilée are not considered as rites of passage but a violation of fundamental women's rights. Unlike the classical Bildungsroman in which the protagonist progresses toward self-realization and social integration, Khady's development is constrained by patriarchal traditions that redefine her identity primarily in terms of marriage and reproductive roles. Through close reading analysis, the paper demonstrates how Khady the writer, the narrator and the protagonist of Mutilée critiques the cultural practices that transform rites of passage into mechanisms of gendered control, thereby limiting girls' educational opportunities and reinforcing patriarchal domination. The narrative reveals that the convergence of initiation rituals and early marriage not only interrupts the educational trajectory of girls but also shapes their identity formation within a system that privileges patriarchal authority. Ultimately, the paper argues that Mutilée exposes the structural challenges confronting girls as they navigate the passage to womanhood in a hostile world, while simultaneously foregrounding the importance of education as a pathway toward autonomy and self-determination. This paper therefore recommends formal education as a weapon for African women to overcome hegemonic restrictions.

Keywords: *female Bildungsroman, initiation rites, early marriage, girls' education, patriarchy, Khady's Mutilée.*

Introduction

Bildungsroman, frequently equated with coming-of-age narratives, depicts the formative and intellectual development of individuals as they navigate social structures and attain self-awareness. However, feminist critics have argued that the traditional Bildungsroman often fails to account for the unique constraints faced by female protagonists. As Abel, Hirsch, and Langland (1983) note, the female Bildungsroman frequently depicts a conflict between individual aspirations and patriarchal expectations that restrict women's autonomy. In the context of African literature, this tension becomes particularly pronounced when cultural traditions interconnect with gender inequality.

Literally, on a daily basis, young girls face obstacle to education due to cultural norms and harmful practices, early marriage, poverty and violence. In view of this, African women literary writers in this contemporary era, have put pen to paper to identify and deconstruct (if not all) some of the profound socio-cultural ills that hinder the educational attainment of young girls' coming-of-age in androcentric societies.



Education is a right for all children irrespective of the gender. However, in some African societies, female children are still denied the right to education which makes it difficult for them to play equal roles with their male counterpart in patriarchal society. Historically, some cultures do not accommodate the education of females and when they do, girls are not granted the chance and support they need to thrive. Hence, some female children turn to be loafers.

Several scholars had explored initiation rites as fulfillment of tradition in the indigenous African society, but not much have been said on the initiation rituals as the violation of fundamental human rights of young girls in male dominated societies. To this end, this paper intends to unearth the negative effects of cultural rites on the education of young girls and women in Africa and particularly in Senegal through the African female Bildungsroman of Khady Koita's *Mutilée*.

Bildungsromane (plural form) according to (Bezhanova, (2014:5) offer a space where female writers and readers can explore how women's experiences advance their personal growth and analyse obstacles to such growth. Bildungsromane, thus, become a shared territory where female writers and readers can discuss different scenarios of development, voice their concerns about the problematic aspects of growing up female, and participate in a joint effort of resolving the issues facing them. By situating Khady's narrative within the framework of the contemporary female Bildungsroman, the study highlights how the protagonist's coming-of-age journey is marked by tension, resistance, and the negotiation of oppressive cultural norms. Khady through her personal experiences, exposes the contradictions inherent in cultural practices that claim to preserve tradition and to prepare her for womanhood but instead become instruments that undermine her educational prospects and personal autonomy.

The Concept of Initiation Rites

Initiation rites are regarded as sacred ceremonies that transform an individual's social or sexual status. Initiation into adulthood for young girls and women is a sacred rite of passage that many people accept as cultural values in African societies. At this stage, parents or community prepare young girls for their deeper development or growth when they are on the brink of middle age; to make them become "real women". Hipple (2019) quoted Fraizer John, "When you come through the initiation process, you are officially a man or woman. You know it, society knows it, and you are prepared for the tasks at hand and the entirely different situation because you go through a training process to learn all your new roles in society." In this regard, initiation period is painstakingly an education ground whereby young girls and boys are being prepared to learn new things about life and culture that will transform them from one social position to another. The acquisition of these new cultural values may tend to be detrimental to female children.

Van Gennep (2003) elucidates rites of passage as ceremonial devices used by societies to mark the passage or transition of an individual or a group from one social status or situation to another. According to him, rites of passage resolve *life-crises*; they provide a mechanism to deal with the tension experienced by both individuals and social groups during ambiguous occasions including, but not limited to, birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Rites of passage function to accomplish status transitions; they provide a mechanism for individuals and their societies to recognise those who negotiate the rites as intrinsically different beings. (Van Gennep cited in *International Encyclopaedia*: 2003).

Van Gennep explains further that rites of passage fall into three phases: separation, transition and incorporation. In the first phase, people withdraw from the group and move from one place or status to another. The second stage which is also referred to as liminal stage is when the ritual or initiation is properly done. During this period, one's sense of identity hangs up to some extent during the period of transition. In the third phase, the initiators reintegrate back into the society, having completed the rites.



Ampim (2003) in his own turn identifies five stages of rites of passage that are essential to human growth and development: rite to birth, rite to adulthood, rite to marriage, rite to eldership and rite to ancestorship. Ampim further states that “initiation rites are a natural and necessary part of a community, as are arms and legs natural and necessary extension of the human body.” In essence, initiation rites and human beings are inseparable. Following the above notions, it is noted that during the process of becoming adulthood, an individual undergoes certain rituals to change status, identity or to metamorphose to adulthood. Thus, the person involved, changes and grows into “responsible, community-oriented adults.... or, to the next more mature phase. In some African countries, coming-of-age rituals are not taken for granted. This is because society looks down on someone who has not undergone the process of traditional initiation and regardless of the person’s age, he is not viewed as a “full grown adult”.

All human beings pass through transitional stages, but women's lives are especially marked by changes, which force them to another level of direction. For instance, the experience of genital mutilation, menstrual cycle, stage of pregnancy and even motherhood among the rest are changes that transform young girls coming-of-age to adulthood. There are also physical changes when the breasts start showing, there are emotional changes when a girl starts socializing to the world and learn from people, and there are intellectual changes when a girl awakens to her consciousness to question all the obnoxious coming-of-age rituals.

The initiation process of young girls as revealed in Khady Koita’s *Mutilée*, starts when they undergo important life events such as female genital mutilation, menstrual cycle (girls), ritual bath, virginity test and a knock on the head. All these serve as an indicator that the teenagers are mature, ripened for marriage and sexual union. Having crossed the hurdles of all these rituals, it means one has come-of-age or somewhat reached the stage of maturity or adulthood. Thus, all the aforementioned rituals change Khady’s identity in *Mutilée* and also divest her fundamental human rights.

Rites of Passage and the Interruption of Female Education

Female genital mutilation as a violent rite of passage

A central component of Khady’s initiation is female genital mutilation which is traumatic and coercive experience. The female genital mutilation in Khady’s *Mutilée* is served to integrate individuals into the social fabric of their communities. However, such a rite is portrayed by Khady as a mechanism that redefine the identity of young girls according to patriarchal expectations. Female genital mutilation (Salindé) is presented as a ritual of purification under the guise of Islamic religion, which is nothing but a myth. The reality dawn on the author when she gets to know that female genital mutilation has nothing to do with religion but just for men’s domination. “Seule la domination en est la vraie raison” (P.16). She affirms :

La grand-mère nous annonce que nous allons être salindé pour « pourvoir prier » ce qui veut dire [...] « être purifiées pour accéder la prière ». En français : “excisées » [...] « coupées ». (Mutilée 15)

[The grandmother announces to us that we are going to be salindé “to be able to pray” which means “to be purified, to have access to prayer” In French, “excised” [...] “cut up”.] *My translation*

Khady describes her coming of age ritual thus:

. Les jambes écartées. [...] La dame chargée de l’opération dispose d’une lame de rasoir [...] Elle tire avec ses doigts, [...] ce minuscule morceau de chair et coupe comme si elle tranchait un morceau de viande de zébu. (19) C’est une douleur inexplicable (Mutilée 20)

[The legs apart. [...]. The woman in charge of the operation held a razor blade. She pulls with her fingers, this tiny bit of flesh and cut as if she was cutting a piece of bull meat. It is an indescribable pain.] *(My translation)*



For Khady, initiation marks the moment when her role within the community shifts dramatically. Once she undergoes the ritual, she is no longer treated as a child whose primary responsibility is learning. Instead, she is regarded as a woman who must prepare for marriage and domestic life. Thus, womanhood is defined not by intellectual maturity or personal growth but by conformity to tradition. Within the framework of the female Bildungsroman, such a definition undermines the protagonist's opportunity for self-development. Rather than facilitating Khady's growth, the ritual imposes a predetermined identity that restricts her educational aspirations. This physical violence of the initiation ritual is accompanied by deep psychological trauma that further undermines Khady's educational prospects. The pain and humiliation she experiences leave lasting emotional scars that affect her sense of self-worth and confidence. Her suffering becomes a barrier to intellectual engagement, illustrating how cultural violence can erode the psychological foundations necessary for learning. Within the framework of the female Bildungsroman, psychological resilience is essential for the protagonist's journey toward maturity. However, Khady's traumatic initiation disrupts this process, leaving her emotionally vulnerable and socially constrained.

Patriarchal Authority and the Regulation of the Female Body

Beyond the immediate violence of the ritual, the novel illustrates how patriarchal power operates through the regulation of the female body. Khady's initiation represents a moment when the community asserts its authority over her future. By subjecting her to the ritual, society symbolically claims ownership of her body and identity. This dynamic reflects broader feminist critiques of patriarchal systems in which women's bodies are treated as sites of social control. Firestone (1970) argues that patriarchal societies often maintain their dominance by regulating female sexuality and reproductive capacity. According to Khady, it is men that instigate female genital mutilation and compel women to execute the operation. In addition, the reasons why they want women to be circumcised as manifested in the text are:

Assurer leur pouvoir, croire que leurs épouses n'iraient pas vers d'autres géniteurs, ou que les hommes des tribus ennemies ne les violeraient pas ! D'autres explications, encore plus absurdes, voudraient que le sexe des femmes soit impur, diabolique [...] (Mutilée 16)

[To affirm their power, to believe that their wives would not go after other men, or that enemies from other tribes would not rape them! Other more absurd explanations were that female organs are impure and diabolical [...] (My translation)

In view of this, initiation rites perform precisely this function. The ritual effectively transforms Khady into a socially acceptable woman whose primary role is to serve the expectations of men and the community. Her body becomes a symbol of cultural continuity, ensuring that traditional norms remain intact. However, this symbolic function comes at the cost of her personal autonomy and educational potential.

Early Marriage and the Restriction of Educational Aspirations

Following her initiation, Khady is expected to transition into marriage and domestic life. In the cultural framework depicted in the novel, initiation signifies that a girl has reached the stage where she can assume the responsibilities of a wife and mother. It is affirmed in the text,

A partir du moment où une fille est réglée et que les seins sont visibles, les parents pensent qu'elle est prête à être mariée. Et ils souhaitent un mari le plus vite possible (Mutilée 51)

[The moment a girl starts menstruating and the breasts are visible, the parents think she is ready to be married off. And they crave for a husband as soon as possible.] My translation

This ideology of early marriage announces another rite of passage which is "a knock on the head". This particular rite of passage symbolises that a girl-child is ripe for marriage in Senegal. Khady,



while discussion with her grandmother, one of her elder sister's friends rushes in and gives her a small knock on the head which is an indicator that Khady is already married off. This is exemplified in the excerpt below:

Une amie de ma sœur aînée arrive un courant et me donne un petit coup de poing sur la tête. [...] Et là, j'ai compris. C'est fini. Ils m'ont mariée à la mosquée. Le coup de poing est le signal. (Mutilée 55).

[One of my elder sister's friends runs in, and gives me a knock on the head. [...] And there, I understood it is finished. They have got me wedded in the mosque. The knock is the signal] (*My translation*)

At this juncture, Khady's education has grounded to a halt, she is overwhelmed with sadness. Her mother warned her not to go out again, not to move close to boys and she should not talk to them. According to her, she is mischievous and difficult to control but never meant any harm. Sneaking out to chat with her boyfriends and girlfriends is just a game. Khady is entrapped by marriage: she can no longer do whatever she likes. This scenario makes her to be psychologically and emotionally devastated.

According to Soninke tradition, when a young woman is married, an agreement is reached among men and the ceremony takes place without her in the mosque. However, in a utopian society, where the society is perfect, it is absurd to marry a girl off in absentia and to an unknown man. Khady's consciousness is awakened, she knows exactly what the problem is but she dares not challenge the tradition in order not to be ostracised. Khady expresses her feelings that she sits there like an idiot, passive and incapable to react to the confirmation of her new status. « *C'est notre destinée. Donc, il est impensable de dire non* » (*Mutilée*, 50). [It is our destiny. So, it is unthinkable to say no]. And if any girl says no, the response is "*Tu l'aimeras plus tard*" [You will love him later] (*Mutilée*, 51). To buttress her argument further, she reveals : « *Une fille qui refuse ce que les parents lui proposent tombera forcément sur un mauvais mari !* » (*Mutilée*, 52) [A girl that refuses whomever the parents propose will possibly fall on a bad husband] (*My translation*)

Khady as a young girl is totally submissive to her parents' wish, so as not to put the family honour in jeopardy. And to reach for self-culture or seek her own voice placed the protagonist in the position of a rebel or criminal to society.

This compliant attitude of Khady is refuted by Malimouna, the *bildungsroman* heroine of Fatou Kéïta's *Rebelle*. Through confrontation and violence, Malimouna rejects every initiation revolving around coming-of-age rituals. She defies Female Genital Mutilation, child marriage, virginity test and all the rest.

In Khady's *Mutilée*, the *Soninke* perpetuates self-imposed traditions instead of creating an enabling future for their daughters. Child marriage usually marks the end of a girl's education, restricting her chance of developing skills that can help her achieve economic survival and also rid the prospective children out of poverty. This expectation has profound implications for Khady's education. Once she is considered marriageable, the community no longer prioritizes her schooling, instead, her future is envisioned within the confines of the household. And barely at the age of thirteen and half years old, she is married off to an unknown cousin Moussa. « *La demande en mariage d'un cousin inconnu [...] à treize ans et demie* » (*Mutilée* 48).

Within the structure of the female *Bildungsroman*, such an early transition into marriage represents a significant interruption of the protagonist's developmental journey. Rather than pursuing intellectual growth, Khady is forced to conform to domestic roles that limit her independence. Thus, Khady highlights how cultural norms surrounding marriage can restrict girls' access to education and economic autonomy.

Tradition and the Struggle for Female Empowerment

The genre of female *Bildungsroman* is adopted by Khady to portray her own coming-of-age experiences. Khady's experience is literally a matter of life and death and that is why the genre of coming-of-age is labelled as a wilderness survival novel (near-death-experience). Khady's narrative ultimately highlights the tension between traditional cultural practices and the modern ideal of



education as a pathway to empowerment. While the community views initiation as an essential cultural institution, the novel reveals the harmful consequences it has for young girls.

This tension reflects broader debates within African feminist thought regarding the need to reevaluate cultural practices that perpetuate gender inequality. As Oyěwùmí (1997) argues, gender hierarchies in many societies are maintained through institutions that regulate women's identities and social roles. By depicting her suffering, Khady invites readers to question the legitimacy of traditions that restrict female autonomy. The novel suggests that genuine cultural progress requires a critical examination of practices that undermine the intellectual and personal development of women.

Conclusion

Khady, through her autobiographical text, exposes the detrimental effects of certain rites of passage on girls' educational attainment and personal development. Rather than facilitating the transition to empowered adulthood, the initiation rituals depicted in the novel reinforce patriarchal norms that limit female autonomy. When examined through the lens of the contemporary female Bildungsroman, Khady's experience represents a disrupted coming-of-age narrative. The rites that are meant to prepare her for womanhood instead derail her educational aspirations and subject her to a system of social control.

Having considered the physical and psychological trauma Khady passes through, this paper finds out that coming-of-age rituals like those treated in this article, violate the fundamental human rights of Khady and any other girl-child in male-dominated society. It is also discovered that coming-of-age rituals deter Khady's progress and impede her educational achievement. Finally, it is critically observed that initiation rituals have nothing to do with religion; the only reason behind it, is men's domination. Youssafai (2013) categorically stated in United Kingdom, when she was delivering her speech on 'the right to education of every child', avows, "Let us pick up our books and our pens. They are our most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher and one book, one pen can change the world. Education is the only solution. Education first." As a survivor, Khady uses her pen as a tool to reconstruct and restore the identity and dignity of womanhood. She conserves new ideologies that undermine the socially imposed traditions called rites of passage in a male-dominated society.

Therefore, to eradicate illiteracy, education is not attached to one particular gender; every child either male or female has the right to be educated. However, Education is the only weapon that will make women economically buoyant, liberate young girls and women from fetters of poverty and servitude status.

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ASSESSING SEMINARIANS' APPROACH TO WHATSAPP INFODEMICS AND INFORMATION OVERLOAD

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Abstract

This work investigated seminarians' approaches to WhatsApp infodemics and information overload, a growing challenge in digital ecclesial contexts. Anchored on information overload theory, cognitive load theory, and stress and coping theory, the research examined how seminarians perceive, process, and respond to incessant WhatsApp communications. Employing a cross-sectional quantitative descriptive survey design, the study targeted all 47 Catholic diocesan seminarians of Uromi Diocese across three Nigerian seminaries: All Saints, Ekpoma, SS. Peter and Paul, Bodija, and St. Albert the Great, Abeokuta, using 15-item four-point Likert scale questionnaire administered via Google Forms. With 43 valid responses (91.49% response rate), instrument validity was ensured through expert review, while reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89. Findings show that seminarians experience significant and pervasive information overload, often resorting to avoidance and prioritization as coping mechanisms, yet struggling with consistency in organizational habits. While media literacy is embraced for validation purposes, its practical application remains weak. The study concluded that unchecked information overload constitutes a pandemic of the mind, threatening seminarians' vocational formation and future ministry. Consequently, it recommended stricter group communication guidelines, structured digital literacy workshops, and mandatory curriculum integration of applied media literacy skills. By equipping seminarians with these competencies, formation houses can transform the challenge of infodemics into an opportunity for disciplined digital engagement and priestly readiness.

Keywords: Cognitive Dissonance, Infodemics, Information Overload, Seminarians, WhatsApp

Introduction

The contemporary digital environment has fundamentally transformed how information is shared, particularly through instant messaging applications like WhatsApp. This platform, designed for both personal and professional communication, have increasingly become conduits for both necessary and unnecessary information. WhatsApp groups, which may initially be created for specific purposes, are often inundated with messages that deviate from their original intent. These messages may include text, videos, images, and other media artifacts that, while perhaps well-intentioned, clutter digital spaces, consume data, and overwhelm recipients (Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018). This overabundance of content contributes to what has been termed "infodemic," (information pandemic) where users struggle to differentiate between important communications and trivial or misleading information (World Health Organization, 2020). The impact is many-sided, affecting not only the attention and focus of users but also the storage and usability of their digital devices.

The sending of unsolicited information, whether on WhatsApp groups or via email, raises questions about user behaviour and intent. Individuals often circulate messages for social, emotional,



or informational purposes without considering the relevance or necessity for the recipients. Some messages may aim to inform or entertain, while others might be advertisements, chain messages, or even harmful misinformation (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017). This behaviour, though common, creates a tension between the sender's perceived utility of the message and the receiver's capacity or willingness to process it. In professional or purpose-driven groups, the disregard for rules governing relevance can undermine the group's objectives and dilute the effectiveness of communication.

Recipients of unsolicited messages adopt a range of coping strategies, reflecting their attitudes toward information overload. Some may exercise selective attention, choosing to read only messages deemed relevant, while others may block senders or exit groups entirely to manage cognitive and digital load (Okhueleigbe & Aduloju, 2023). These responses are influenced by personal interest, perceived message importance, and the frequency of message receipt (Eppler & Mengis, 2004). Over time, habitual exposure to excessive or irrelevant content may lead to disengagement, where individuals ignore or fail to recognize even important messages, creating risks of missing critical information. The digital ecosystem thus becomes a space of both opportunity and risk, where user behaviour, attitudes, and cognitive capacity interact to shape information processing.

The theoretical underpinning of this phenomenon is closely linked to media richness and cognitive load theories, which posit that individuals have a finite capacity to process information effectively (Daft & Lengel, 1986). When digital spaces are saturated with high volumes of low-relevance content, users experience overload, stress, and decreased comprehension. This operationalizes the variables of message volume, content relevance, and user cognitive capacity, highlighting the need for strategic interventions that optimize information flow while minimizing unnecessary digital burden.

Media literacy becomes a critical solution for seminarians to these challenges. Media literacy defined as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media in various forms (National Association for Media Literacy Education, 2023), equips individuals with the cognitive tools to discern between important and irrelevant content. In the context of WhatsApp infodemics, media literacy enables users, like seminarians to identify credible sources, filter unnecessary messages, and engage with information critically rather than passively. By operationalizing media literacy, digital users can transform from passive recipients to active navigators of information landscapes.

Practical strategies grounded in media literacy include educating users on message relevance, verification of sources, and appropriate sharing norms. For WhatsApp groups, this may involve establishing clear group rules, moderating content, and encouraging members to respect the purpose of the group. These approaches address both the sender behaviour (what types of messages are circulated) and recipient behaviour (how messages are processed), operationalizing both variables for practical application (Livingstone & Helsper, 2007). Users who develop adaptive strategies, such as selective engagement, critical evaluation, or filtering, demonstrate resilience in managing digital communication challenges. Conversely, lack of media literacy skills may exacerbate vulnerability to misinformation, phishing, and cognitive overload, emphasizing the importance of structured educational interventions.

Statement of the Problem

In recent times, concerns have been raised regarding seminarians' communication habits, particularly in relation to the use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp. A priest observed that a seminarian posted to his parish consistently failed to respond to messages, a pattern he noted had also been exhibited by a seminarian previously assigned to him. This attitude was perceived as a sign of indifference or poor interpersonal conduct. Upon further engagement, the seminarian disclosed that the reluctance to check messages stemmed from the overwhelming influx of unsolicited information and incessant postings on his WhatsApp handle, which created a sense of digital fatigue. Similar sentiments were echoed by two additional seminarians within the same diocese, indicating a recurring and systemic challenge. Despite the growing recognition of this



phenomenon, a critical review of available literature revealed that studies addressing seminarians' attitudes towards infodemics remain limited, poorly contextualized, and largely inadequate. This gap underscores the urgent need for a focused and context-driven investigation that captures the experiences of all seminarians within a diocese of the ecclesiastical province of Benin City.

Aim and Objectives of the study

The aim of the study was to examine how seminarians engage with and respond to infodemics and information overload on WhatsApp, particularly in relation to discernment, credibility assessment, and usage patterns. Below are the specific objectives:

1. to examine the extent of WhatsApp infodemics and information overload experienced by seminarians in the Catholic Diocese of Uromi,
2. to assess seminarians' attitudes and coping strategies toward excessive or unsolicited messages on WhatsApp;
3. to explore how media literacy approaches can be utilized to manage information overload and enhance critical engagement with digital content among seminarians.

Research Questions

1. What is the extent of WhatsApp infodemics and information overload among seminarians in the Catholic Diocese of Uromi?
2. What are the attitudes and coping strategies of seminarians toward unsolicited or excessive WhatsApp messages?
3. How can media literacy approaches be applied to manage information overload and improve critical engagement with digital content among seminarians?

Literature Review

Existing scholarship on WhatsApp infodemics and information overload within Nigerian ecclesial and educational settings presents both convergences and tensions. (Igbafe & Anyanwu, 2021) highlights the ubiquity of WhatsApp in tertiary institutions, drawing parallels with seminarians' daily formation, while Ogunsola (2019) emphasises how church personnel in Ibadan appropriate social media for religious activities, thereby revealing both opportunities and excesses. Aghaulor and Hyginus (2020), in their seminary-focused presentation, underscore the formative challenges ICT introduces into clerical training, a concern echoed in Owerri-based evaluative studies (2022), which identify WhatsApp as a driver of fake news dissemination among young people. Uwalaka (2021) further demonstrates, through pandemic-era investigations, how misinformation flows amplified cognitive burden, while Ogunbola (2025) establishes the moderating role of media literacy in shaping perceptions of fake news in Lagos. Complementing these, the ISCA paper on Akwa Ibom theological colleges (2022) stresses measurable academic impacts of social media use, and Afolaranmi (2023) proposes a normative framework for pastoral leaders, contrasting descriptive accounts with prescriptive intervention. Nigeria Health Watch's infodemic management workshop (2021) adds a public-health perspective, aligning with OpastPublishers' analysis (2020) of the Catholic Church's struggles and opportunities in social media adoption, both of which illuminate institutional-level concerns that seminarians inevitably inherit.

Empirical Review

"Academic Use of WhatsApp and Technostress" (Al-Abdullateef, 2022) investigated the role of WhatsApp in academic groups with the aim of determining how group size, message relevance and activity contribute to perceived information overload. The study was framed by technology acceptance and technostress theories and used a cross-sectional survey design among university students as the population. A convenience sampling technique produced a sample of 218 postgraduate and undergraduate students. Major findings showed that receiving an excessive



volume of irrelevant messages correlated with higher perceived information overload, reduced group usefulness, and increased stress. The study concluded that WhatsApp group practices can generate significant information load when group purpose and membership control are weak. It advocated clearer group guidelines, moderation of membership, and training on group management to limit unnecessary postings.

“Demographic Factors Influencing the Impact of WhatsApp Misinformation” (Bapaye & Choudhari, 2021) examined vulnerability to COVID-19 misinformation on WhatsApp, aiming to identify demographic predictors of susceptibility. The study used a cross-sectional survey guided by the persuasion and information processing literature, sampling adult WhatsApp users in a developing country context via stratified sampling to yield 1,200 respondents. Major findings indicated that younger, less educated, and lower digital-literacy cohorts reported higher exposure and greater difficulty in managing the volume of misinformation, effectively experiencing an infodemic. The authors concluded that demographic factors shape the extent of exposure and overload and that targeted digital-literacy interventions are required. The study proposed demographic-tailored education campaigns, platform-level labelling of dubious content, and the use of community moderators to reduce spread.

“COVID-19 as Infodemic: The Impact of Political Orientation and Open-mindedness on the Discernment of Misinformation in WhatsApp” (Bonafé-Pontes, Lopes, & Ribeiro, 2021) aimed to quantify the presence and discernment of misinformation circulating on WhatsApp during the early COVID-19 period and to relate discernment to individual differences. Anchored in dual-process models of cognition, the study used a correlational survey design with an online convenience sample of 630 WhatsApp users. Major findings revealed high prevalence of COVID-19 misinformation on WhatsApp and that lower critical thinking and stronger partisan orientation were associated with increased acceptance and sharing, indicative of an infodemic amplifying information overload. The study concluded that WhatsApp acted as a vector for high volumes of low-quality content, producing cognitive burden for recipients. It called for the promotion of critical evaluation prompts, integration of fact-checking tools within chat interfaces, and intensified public awareness campaigns.

“What’s up with WhatsApp? A review of its role in student groups” (Research Review, 2025) conducted a systematic exploration of WhatsApp’s role in student communication with the aim of mapping its benefits and harms for student cohorts. Grounded loosely in uses and gratifications theory, the review synthesized empirical surveys and qualitative studies using PRISMA-style selection across higher-education populations. The population across reviewed studies consisted of university students; sampling techniques varied by study but commonly used purposive or convenience samples with sample sizes ranging from small qualitative cohorts (~20) to larger surveys (200–800). Major findings consistently documented that WhatsApp increased communication efficiency but also generated information overload, distraction, and message fatigue when group numbers or irrelevant content increased. The review concluded that the platform produces widespread informational intensity among student cohorts and **urged** the establishment of institutional policies. It further emphasised the need for institutional guidelines for academic WhatsApp use, training on message management, and the adoption of moderation roles to limit volume and preserve relevance.

“Too much to handle’: Impact of mobile social networking on information overload and well-being” (Matthes, Karsay, Schmuck, & Stevic, 2020) aimed to assess longitudinal relationships among mobile social network site use, perceived information overload, and psychological outcomes, drawing on stress and coping theory. The study used a two-wave panel design among young adult social media users, recruited through probability sampling in one national cohort, yielding a sample of 1,042 respondents across waves. Major findings showed that higher intensity of mobile SNS use predicted greater information overload over time, which in turn predicted depressive symptoms and lower well-being; coping strategies such as active information management mitigated some negative effects. The authors concluded that information overload on mobile messaging platforms evokes negative attitudes and adaptive/maladaptive coping responses. The study suggested



promoting time management strategies, encouraging digital breaks, and designing platform features to reduce volumetric pressure.

“Information overload and fake news sharing: The mediating role of resilience” (Bermes, 2021) investigated how information overload from social media relates to fake news sharing and the role of individual resilience as a coping resource. Anchored in resilience and information processing frameworks, the quantitative cross-sectional study used online sampling of 640 social media users. Major findings indicated that information overload increased susceptibility to misinformation sharing but that higher resilience and deliberate avoidance strategies correlated with reduced sharing and more critical attitudes. The study concluded that coping strategies—particularly resilience-enhancing behaviours and selective exposure—can alter attitudes toward excessive messaging and reduce adverse outcomes. It advanced resilience-building interventions, training in selective attention, and organisational supports to reduce unsolicited message flows.

“Roles of Worry, Social Media Information Overload and Fatigue in Behavioral Outcomes” (Jiang et al., 2022) sought to map the pathways from pandemic-related worry through information overload to social media fatigue and downstream behavioral changes, using stress-strain-outcome theory. A cross-sectional survey of 1,100 adult social media users recruited via stratified online panels provided the dataset. Major findings demonstrated that worry about the pandemic heightened information overload, which produced fatigue and lowered engagement; coping responses varied from avoidance and unfollowing to active verification. The study concluded that avoidance and prioritisation are common coping strategies but that consistency of organisational habits was low. It highlighted the need for institutional encouragement of verification behaviour, structured media-use schedules, and training to improve organisational habits.

“Postgraduate Students’ Perceptions of WhatsApp Groups” (Mohammed, 2025) aimed to explore attitudes toward academic WhatsApp groups and the coping mechanisms adopted by postgraduate students. The study applied a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design based in uses and gratifications and coping literature, sampling 312 postgraduate students via purposive sampling from a regional university. Major findings revealed ambivalent attitudes: appreciation for convenience coupled with frustration over irrelevant content and message volume, leading to coping behaviours such as muting, selective reading, message batching, and temporary group exits. The study concluded that coping strategies are largely behavioural and situationally adopted rather than skill-based. It outlined practical measures such as teaching message-management techniques, establishing group norms, and institutional training on communication discipline.

“Media Literacy Interventions: A Meta-Analytic Review” (Jeong, Cho, & Hwang, 2012) performed a meta-analysis with the aim of estimating the overall effectiveness of media literacy interventions on media knowledge, criticism, attitudes and behaviours. Grounded in cognitive-development and critical pedagogy theories, the study synthesized 51 intervention studies using meta-analytic techniques. Major findings showed a moderate positive effect ($d = .37$) of media literacy interventions on knowledge and critical evaluation outcomes. The authors concluded that structured media literacy programmes reliably enhance critical engagement with digital content and can reduce susceptibility to misinformation. The study endorsed the integration of media literacy into curricula and sustained evaluation mechanisms.

“Media LIT: Overcoming Information Overload” (RAND Project Brief, 2021) described an applied media-literacy course designed to strengthen citizens’ ability to identify and avoid false information and manage information flow. Evaluation findings indicated improvements in misinformation detection and information management. The brief proposed the adoption of modular, platform-specific media literacy interventions and institutional endorsement to maximise uptake.

“Dealing with Information Overload: A Comprehensive Review” (Arnold, Becker, & Klein, 2023) sought to map prevention and intervention measures addressing information overload across work and education settings, using PRISMA guidelines. Framed by cognitive load and information management theories, the systematic review covered multiple empirical studies employing experimental, quasi-experimental and survey designs spanning varied populations and sampling methods. Major findings identified effective interventions such as digital-organization training,



interface design changes, and education in selective attention and critical evaluation. The review concluded that multifaceted approaches combining skills training with platform or organizational changes produce the greatest reductions in overload. It suggested amongst other embedding digital-organization curricula, platform feature improvements (e.g., message batching), and managerial policies to guard against unsolicited messaging, recommendations that can inform media-literacy curricula for seminarians.

“Impact of Digital Media Literacy on Attitude toward Generative AI Acceptance in Higher Education” (Sergeeva, Pavlova, & Grigoryan, 2025) investigated the effect of a contemporary digital media-literacy curriculum on attitudes and self-reported competencies among university students, with the aim of validating measurement scales and assessing intervention impact. The study used a quasi-experimental pre/post design grounded in self-efficacy and information processing theories and sampled 420 higher-education students via cluster sampling. Major findings showed significant improvements in media-literacy subscales, increases in critical evaluation self-efficacy, and more selective engagement with automated content, implying reduced tendency toward cognitive overload. The study concluded that structured, validated digital media-literacy programs can alter both attitude and behaviour in measurable ways. It encouraged the adaptation of validated modules to specific institutional contexts (religious formation settings included), longitudinal assessment for retention, and integration with pastoral formation curricula to strengthen discernment.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on information overload theory (Toffler, 1970; Eppler & Mengis, 2004), which posits that individuals faced with excessive volumes of information experience diminished decision-making quality, stress, and disengagement, conditions highly relevant to seminarians navigating constant WhatsApp notifications. Complementing this is cognitive load theory (Sweller, 1988; Paas & Ayres, 2014), which emphasizes the limits of working memory and explains how unsolicited and irrelevant digital messages create cognitive strain, thereby reducing attention and reflection. To account for adaptive behaviours, the study draws on stress and coping theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), which frames seminarians’ strategies such as avoidance, muting, or selective engagement as attempts to manage informational stressors. Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a comprehensive framework for explaining seminarians’ experiences of WhatsApp infodemics, their coping strategies, and the role of media literacy in mitigating negative effects.

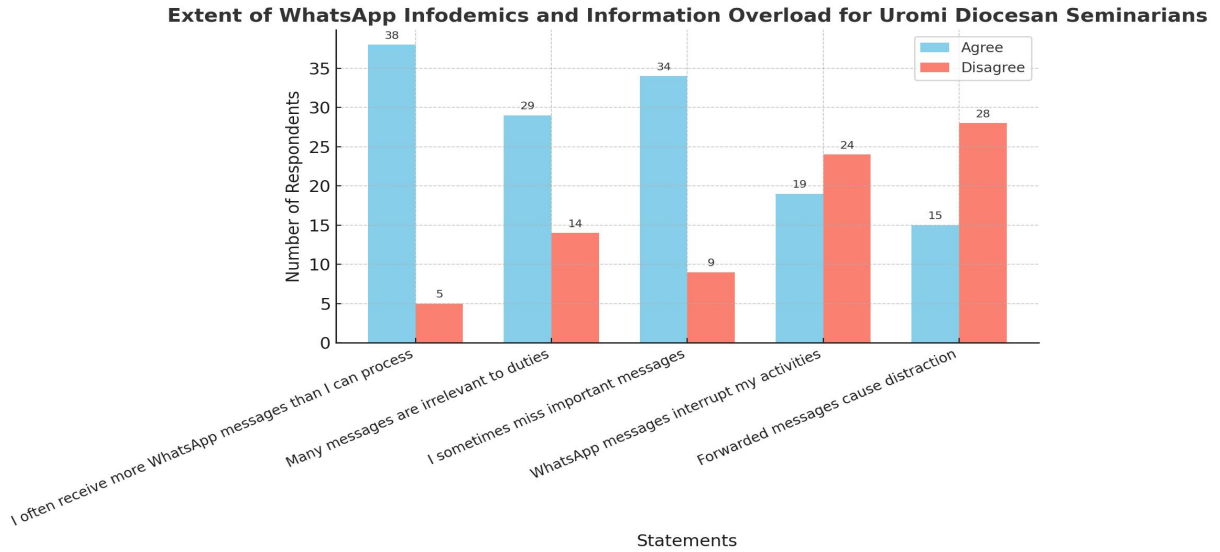
Research Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive survey design with a quantitative orientation, utilizing a structured questionnaire based on a four-point Likert scale. The target population comprised all Catholic seminarians of Uromi Diocese currently studying in three major seminaries in Nigeria: All Saints Major Seminary, Ekpoma (21), Saints Peter and Paul Seminary, Bodija-Ibadan (13), and St. Albert the Great Major Seminary, Abeokuta (13), yielding a total population of 50 seminarians. Given the relatively small population size, a census approach was employed, and the questionnaire, comprising 15 carefully validated items, was distributed to all 47 participants through Google Forms, ensuring full coverage and eliminating sampling bias. Forty-three seminarians completed and returned the instrument, representing 91.49% response rate, which is considered highly reliable for quantitative studies. Content and face validity of the instrument were established through expert review by specialists in communication and social research, while internal consistency was confirmed via a pilot test yielding a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient above the acceptable 0.70 threshold. These methodological choices ensured rigour, minimized error, and enhanced the reliability and generalizability of the findings.



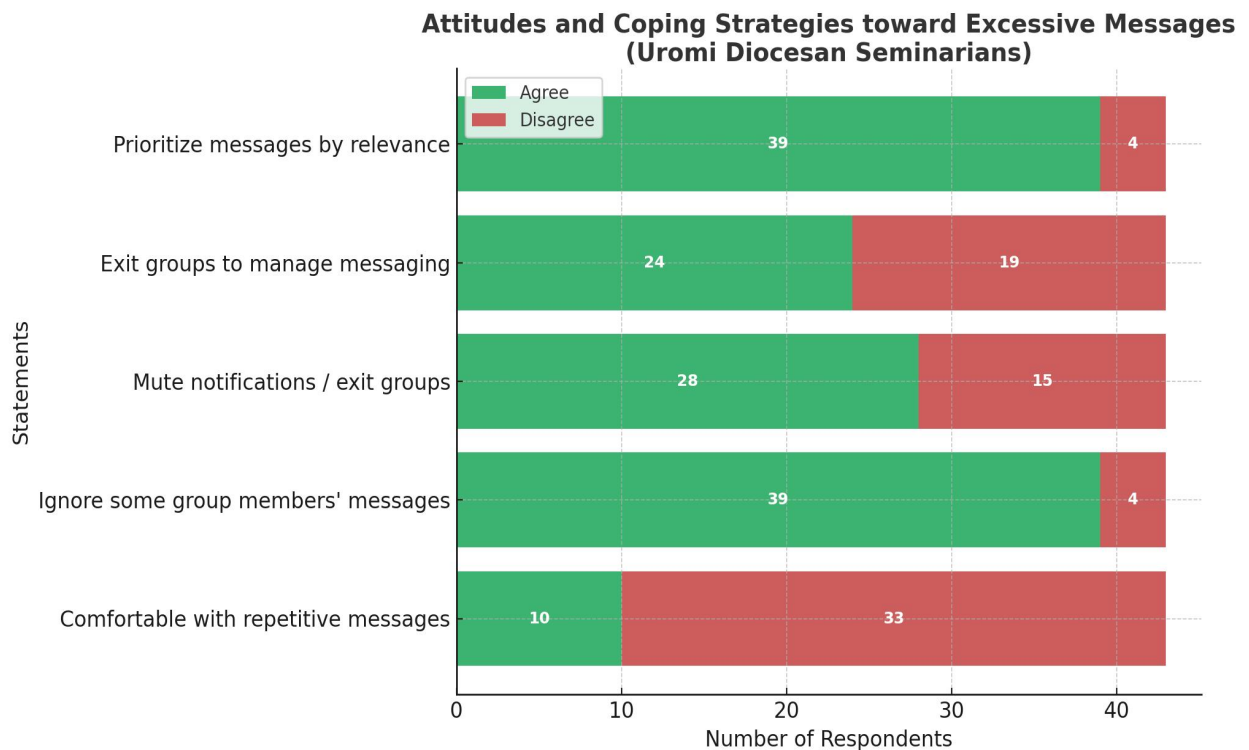
Presentation and Analysis of Data

Fig. 1



Based on the Synthesis Chart, the Seminarians exhibit a strong consensus and highest frequency for proactive media verification, with cross-checking information (WM=3.77) being the most consistent practice (STD=0.59), closely followed by credibility verification which shows a near-unanimous agreement (high Kurtosis=3.73). Conversely, while generally agreeing on the importance of validation, the Seminarians display the greatest variability and lowest frequency in personal organizational habits like managing messages (STD=0.90) and using specific fact-checking tools (WM=2.79), indicating these are inconsistent or less-adopted practices.

Fig 2



In the chart above, the data on coping mechanisms confirms a pronounced aversion to message redundancy, as evidenced by the statistically significant 'Disagree' decision and low central tendency (WM=1.791) for comfort regarding repetitive content. Conversely, active coping strategies exhibit a high statistical consensus and strong adoption, with prioritizing messages based



on relevance recording the highest WM (3.140) and minimal dispersion (STD=0.655), reflecting the group's most successful self-management tactic. While methods of avoidance like muting and ignoring are widely accepted ($WM \geq 2.977$), the act of exiting groups is associated with the highest variance (STD=0.847), suggesting this is the least uniform or most situationally dependent coping strategy within the cohort.

Table 1: Uromi Diocesan Seminarians' prioritization of WhatsApp messages based on the sender or content relevance

Statement	V.Often (4)	Often (3)	Seldom (2)	Never (1)	WM	STD	Kurtosis	Decision
I verify the credibility of messages before accepting or forwarding them.	55.8%	44.2%	0.0%	0.0%	3.558	0.655	3.732	Agree
I cross-check information from multiple sources before believing or sharing it.	88.4%	0.0%	11.6%	0.0%	3.767	0.591	2.261	Agree
I use fact-checking tools or reliable websites to confirm questionable information.	23.3%	32.6%	44.2%	0.0%	2.791	0.794	-1.313	Agree
I manage my WhatsApp messages by archiving or pinning important ones for future reference.	23.3%	44.2%	23.3%	9.3%	2.814	0.896	-0.563	Agree
I avoid forwarding sensational or unverified news to others.	67.4%	23.3%	9.3%	0.0%	3.581	0.655	0.411	Agree

Uromi Diocesan Seminarians overwhelmingly prioritize proactive media verification over personal organizational habits, as evidenced by the statistical hierarchy of their responses. Specifically, cross-checking information registers the highest WM (3.767) and the lowest STD (0.591), indicating it is the most consistent and agreed-upon practice, while the extremely high Kurtosis (3.732) for credibility verification signals a sharp, near-unanimous consensus on its critical importance. Conversely, practices requiring active message management (archiving/pinning) and the use of fact-checking tools both show the lowest frequency ($WM \approx 2.8$) and the highest statistical



variability ($STD \approx 0.8$ to 0.9), confirming these are the most inconsistent and least adopted strategies within the cohort.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of this study is that: “the extent of WhatsApp infodemics and information overload experienced by Uromi Diocesan seminarians is significant and pervasive”. This mirrors the broader Nigerian and international evidence that WhatsApp is both ubiquitous and prone to propagate low-quality content (Igbafe & Anyanwu, 2021; Ogunsola, 2019), and accords with empirical findings that high message volume and weak group governance produce technostress and perceived overload (Al-Abdullateef, 2022). Divergence appears when comparing seminarians with general populations: demographic vulnerability studies (Bapaye & Choudhari, 2021; Bonafé-Pontes et al., 2021) report higher susceptibility among younger/low-literacy cohorts, whereas the seminarians in this sample report stronger normative verification—an outcome plausibly explained by vocational formation and ecclesial norms that valorize truth-seeking (Aghaulor & Hyginus, 2020) but tempered by practical constraints (volume, platform affordances). Theoretically, these results align with information-overload and cognitive-load accounts: verification requires cognitive resources, and sustained high message volumes produce strain that makes systematic tool use less likely despite high motivation to verify. Methodologically, the high response rate (43/47, 86%) and instrument reliability support internal trustworthiness, but the clustered responses (high kurtosis) caution against ceiling effects and social-desirability inflation of self-reported verification practices.

Findings for the second objective (attitudes and coping strategies) show a predominantly active-selective repertoire: strong prioritization of messages by relevance had a high mean ($WM = 3.140$, $STD = 0.655$), while avoidance behaviours such as muting and ignoring were widely accepted ($WM \geq 2.977$); comfort with repetition was rejected ($WM = 1.791$), and exiting groups produced the greatest variance ($STD = 0.847$), signalling that discontinuation is a situational, ethically fraught choice for clerical trainees. These empirical tendencies converge with longitudinal and panel studies that link intensive mobile SNS use to overload, fatigue and both adaptive (time management, prioritization) and maladaptive (withdrawal, depressive symptoms) responses (Matthes et al., 2020; Jiang et al., 2022).

Resilience research (Bermes, 2021) explains reduced sharing under high resilience and supports the observed tendency toward selective exposure rather than indiscriminate forwarding; postgraduate and student studies (Mohammed, 2025; Adeleke et al., 2024) similarly document muting, batching and temporary exits as common tactics. The stress-and-coping lens (Lazarus & Folkman) clarifies that seminarians employ a mix of problem-focused coping (prioritization, verification) and emotion-focused strategies (muting, ignoring) to manage informational stressors, while formation constraints identified by seminary practitioners (Aghaulor & Hyginus, 2020) and pastoral frameworks (Afolaranmi, 2023) shape the ethical calculus behind group exit decisions—hence the observed heterogeneity. Policy and institutional literature reinforce that behaviorally anchored practices alone are insufficient without institutional norms and moderation.

The last finding (media-literacy measures and critical engagement) reveals a clear gap between epistemic intent and capacity: despite high self-reported cross-checking, formal media-literacy tool adoption is modest ($WM = 2.791$), suggesting reliance on interpersonal triangulation and heuristics rather than systematic, skill-based verification. This gap is consistent with meta-analytic and programmatic evidence that structured media-literacy interventions produce measurable gains in critical evaluation and self-efficacy (Jeong, Cho & Hwang, 2012), and with recent quasi-experimental work showing curriculum integration yields durable attitude and competency shifts (Sergeeva et al., 2025). Systematic reviews emphasize that complex interventions, combining skills training, organisational rules, and interface/design changes—are most effective at reducing overload (Arnold et al., 2023), a prescription reinforced by local intervention studies (Ogunbola, 2025) and by practitioner toolkits from Nigeria Health Watch.

Contrasts in the literature reveal important moderation effects: demographic tailoring (Bapaye & Choudhari, 2021), political orientation and cognitive styles (Bonafé-Pontes et al., 2021)



can constrain the effectiveness of generic literacy programmes, while short, behaviourally focused modules (Mohammed, 2025) often achieve higher uptake among busy cohorts—an important implementation lesson for seminary formation. In theoretical terms, media-literacy interventions reduce cognitive load by automating evaluative heuristics and increasing schema-based processing (cognitive-load theory), while also enhancing coping self-efficacy (stress-and-coping theory). Practically, the evidence supports a tailored, curriculum-embedded strategy for Uromi, bite-sized, platform-specific literacy modules, enforced group norms/moderation, and message-management training, coupled with longitudinal evaluation and objective logging of message volumes to overcome the limitations of self-report and to test scalability beyond the present diocesan sample (Jalaludin, 2024).

Conclusion

Excessive information is no longer a mere challenge; it has become a pandemic of the mind, more insidious than a tsunami, silently eroding attention, mental resilience, and spiritual focus. For seminarians, men in formation who are trained to value time, discipline, and clarity of communication, unchecked information overload is not just a distraction, but a direct threat to their vocation. As future priests, they will inevitably be thrust into a society already drowning in infodemics, and without deliberate preparation, they risk being swept away themselves. Thus, for the seminarian, media and information literacy is not an elective skill but an existential necessity, one that safeguards his own world and equips him to guide the people he is called to serve. Anything less would be a failure both in formation and in mission.

Recommendations

Seminary Rectorate should establish clear guidelines for seminary groups, including limits on non-essential postings, structured message scheduling, and the designation of 'Academic/Spiritual Priority Groups' to control message flow and combat overload.

The Seminary IT Coordinator should introduce structured digital literacy workshops focused on time management and message organization (e.g., archiving, categorization), reinforcing consistent habits through peer accountability systems.

The Academic Dean should help the seminary by integrating mandatory, practice-based media literacy modules focusing on fact-checking tools and applied digital discernment into the core curriculum, ensuring the theoretical knowledge translates directly into habitual action.

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ASSESSMENT OF METHODS SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS USE TO TEACH READING COMPREHENSION IN ILORIN METROPOLIS, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Scholarly researches, chief Examiners' reports and results of senior secondary school students' in external examinations have continued to reflect students' poor performance in reading ability and comprehension. Reading comprehension is a vital component of academic success and literacy development, especially in Nigeria, where English is the primary medium of instruction. Despite its importance, students in Ilorin metropolis continue to perform poorly in reading related tasks, raising concern about the effectiveness of current teaching methods. This study examines the influence of teacher variables - gender, age, qualification, experience, school type and location – on methods being used to teach reading comprehension in secondary schools. A descriptive survey design was adopted, and data were collected using a researcher-designed questionnaire titled: *Assessment of Methods Secondary School Teachers' Use to Teach Reading Comprehension in Ilorin Metropolis (AMESSECTETERECO)*. Fifty English Language teachers' from public and private schools were randomly selected. Descriptive and inferential statistics, including the *t*-test and ANOVA, were used for data analysis. Findings revealed that student-centered methods such as group discussion and summarization of texts are the most frequently used teaching methods. While some teachers still employ lecture-based and grammar-focused approaches, the shift toward interactive methods is evident. However, limited library resources and inadequate instructional materials hinder effective reading instruction. The study also found no significant difference in teaching methods based on teachers' variables. It was therefore recommended that interactive teaching strategies, instructional resources and regular teacher training are to be put in place for improved performance in reading comprehension.

Keywords: *Comprehension, Reading Comprehension, Teaching Methods, Teacher Characteristics, English Instruction*



Introduction

Reading comprehension is a critical component of literacy development and academic success among secondary school students. The scholarly evidences have consistently showed that many secondary school students in Nigeria struggle with understanding and interpreting texts effectively. This challenge has contributed to poor performance in English Language and other subjects that require strong reading skills, as evidenced in the recurrent poor results in external examinations like the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE).

Adebayo and Oyetunde (2020) have identified effective reading comprehension strategies to include guided reading, reciprocal teaching, group discussion, and the use of context clues. However, evidence suggests that many teachers in Nigerian secondary schools still rely heavily on traditional, lecture-based, and grammar-focused methods that do not adequately support students' comprehension development (Adebayo & Yusuf, 2020)

According to Adebayo and Yusuf (2020), if teachers are not using appropriate instructional methods, students' ability to comprehend, analyze, and apply information from texts will continue to be hindered, affecting their overall academic performance. They attributed teachers' choice of methods to variables such as gender, age, qualification, and school type.

West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) offers a benchmark against which mastery of the key subjects, including English Language, by students can be determined. Students' performances in English over the past few years have not reflected understanding of the language.

Table 1: Showing the Percentage Trend for WAEC Examination Results between 2020-2024

YEAR	A1	B2	B3	C4	C5	C6	D7	E8	F9
2020	3.8%	4.1%	5.8%	4.5%	4.2%	5.5%	6.1%	6.2%	60.18%
2021	8.1%	12.9%	12.3%	9.5%	11.2%	10.5%	7.3%	9.8%	18.4%
2022	9.2%	7.8%	9.9%	11.1%	10.9%	8.5%	9.5%	9.7%	23.64%
2023	7.9%	10.8%	8.3%	11.2%	12.1%	9.4%	9.6%	10.8%	20.19%
2024	7.2%	10.3%	8.5%	10.9%	8.1%	7.4%	9.0%	9.8%	27.88%

Slight rise in failure in 2024 to 27.88% from 20.19% in 2023, according to the WAEC Chief Examiners' report was due to poor handwriting, weak comprehension, misinterpretation of questions, and inadequate time management.

Several factors have been identified as leading to the decline in English Language performance, especially in reading comprehension. These include poor reading culture, inappropriate teaching methods. There have been a drift towards consumption of digital media, thus less contact with traditional reading materials that influence vocabulary acquisition and comprehension skills. Excessive use of informal language, the extensive use of slang and abbreviations in web-based communication has had an impact on students' grasp of formal English, which is important for academic success (Adegbite, T., & Bello, K., 2019).

Traditional teaching methods such as lecture method may not be effective in addressing individual learning needs or in building critical thinking skills necessary for comprehension. In this method limited practice opportunities are given. The students are not adequately provided with writing and speaking practice, which sabotages fluency and confidence building in English Language use (Saadia, & Naveed, (2024).



Approaches and Method for Teaching Reading Comprehension

Approaches for teaching reading comprehension in secondary schools involve a combination of methods, and techniques to meet the needs of learners. Teachers centered method is a conventional model of teaching in which the educator serves as the primary authority figure and the central source of knowledge in the classroom. In this instructional framework, the teacher takes full control of the learning environment by dictating the pace, content, and structure of lessons, while students are positioned as passive recipients expected to listen attentively, take notes, and adhere strictly to directions. This method is often lecture-driven, placing significant emphasis on rote memorization and factual recall over critical thinking or problem-solving. Evaluations within this approach are typically standardized, comprising tests, quizzes, and examinations that demand specific, correct answers. Furthermore, students' interactions are generally minimal, with limited opportunities for collaborative learning or peer discussion. As noted by Dhakal (2024), the teacher-centered paradigm, though effective in maintaining order and delivering uniform content, may hinder students' creativity and limit the development of independent learning skills.

A student-centered approach, also known as learner-centered instruction, represents a significant shift in educational practice, moving the focus from the teacher to the learner. Rather than the teacher being the sole authority and source of knowledge, the student becomes an active participant in their own learning journey. Olawuyi, and Ogunyemi (2020), who asserted that when students are engaged in group discussions, it leads to better comprehension outcomes, In this model, the teacher takes on the role of a facilitator, guide, or coach who supports and scaffolds learning rather than dictating information. Core features of this approach include active learning, where students engage in discussions, hands-on tasks, group projects, and problem-solving activities; student autonomy, which allows learners to have greater control over what they learn, how they learn it, and at what pace; and collaborative learning, which emphasizes teamwork, peer interaction, and cooperative efforts are emphasized.

Subject Centered Approach is also another critical approach. The subject-centered approach, also known as the subject-matter-centered approach, represents a traditional educational philosophy that prioritizes the content or discipline being taught as the central element of instruction. In this model, the curriculum is structured around distinct academic subjects such as mathematics, science, and history, with the primary goal being students' mastery of each discipline.

Reciprocal Teaching Method is one of the importance methods under subject approach. This collaborative approach encourages reading comprehension through guided dialogue between teachers and students. Under this method, students learn four big strategies: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. Teachers model the strategies, giving up responsibility to students incrementally.

Techniques are applied in small groups where students take turns to be discussion leaders, promoting active participation and critical thinking. Among notable strategies is Cooperative Learning Strategy. This learning strategy reinforces learning through peer interaction. When Students discuss texts, respond to questions, and teach each other in groups, techniques are assigned roles within groups to promote participation and accountability (Afolabi, & Yusuf, 2019).

In this study, teachers' age refers to the chronological age of educators currently employed within the school system. Teachers are categorized into three distinct age groups. Young teachers, typically between the ages of 20 and 30, represent about 11% of the teaching workforce, according to data from the OECD. Experienced teachers, ranging from ages 30 to 54, make up the majority—approximately 55%—of all teachers. Lastly, Veteran teachers, also referred to as older educators, are aged 55 and above, accounting for 34% of the teaching population. This classification helps provide insight into the generational dynamics within the education sector, which can influence teaching styles, adaptability to technology, and perspectives on pedagogical practices.

Formal education, subject matter knowledge, and instructional planning are the factors that take prominence in offering an effective reading comprehension instruction. In research, evidence has repeatedly revealed that students under professionally trained instructors have better learning outcomes. A study carried out in Taraba State has shown that students that were taught by qualified



teachers showed significantly better grades in English Language compared to the students that were taught by the unqualified instructors. In addition to being qualified, teacher years of experience is what makes instructional strategy more sophisticated as well as improves classroom management skills that are fundamental in effective teaching in reading comprehension.

The type of school a student attends whether public or private can significantly impact their reading comprehension. Private schools, for instance, often benefit from better funding, which translates into greater access to reading materials, well-stocked libraries, and up-to-date technology that enhance reading development. Additionally, these schools may attract more qualified and experienced teachers, capable of delivering high-quality reading instruction. The curriculum and teaching methods can also vary by school type; some may place a stronger emphasis on reading comprehension and employ more advanced or interactive strategies to teach it. Furthermore, private and boarding schools often feature smaller class sizes, allowing teachers to provide more personalized support to students', particularly those who struggle with reading.

The location of a school whether urban or rural can significantly influence students' reading comprehension due to variations in environment and access to essential resources. Urban schools typically benefit from greater access to learning tools such as libraries, internet connectivity, and a wider range of reading materials, giving students' more opportunities to engage with texts. Additionally, students in urban settings are often exposed to more linguistically diverse and enriched environments, which can enhance their language development and comprehension skills. Parental education levels also tend to be higher in urban areas, leading to greater support for reading at home. On the other hand, rural schools frequently struggle with a lack of qualified teachers, social amenities, learning tools such as libraries, internet connectivity, reading materials, which directly impacts the quality and effectiveness of reading instruction. These disparities collectively shape how well students' in different locations are able to develop strong reading comprehension abilities.

Therefore, this study seeks to assess the methods secondary school teachers use to teach Reading Comprehension in Ilorin Metropolis.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to assess the methods teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis. Specifically the study aims to assess:

1. the general method used by the teachers to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis;
2. the influence of teachers' gender on the methods used to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis;
3. the influence of teachers' age on the methods used to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis;
4. the influence of teachers' qualification on the methods used to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis;
5. the influence of teachers' years of experience on the methods used to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis;
6. the influence of school type on the methods used to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis;
7. the influence of school location on the methods used to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What general methods do teachers employ to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin Metropolis?
2. How does a teachers' gender influence the choice of methods used in teaching reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis?



3. What is the influence of teachers' age on the selection of methods for teaching reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis?
4. How does teachers' qualification affect the methods employed in teaching reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis?
5. Could teachers' years of experience influence the methods for teaching reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis?
6. How does school type (private or public) influence the methods used by teachers' in teaching reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis?
7. How does school location (rural or urban) influence the methods used by teachers' to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on gender

H₀₂: There is no significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on school type.

H₀₃: There is no significance difference in the in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on age.

H₀₄: There is no significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on qualification.

H₀₅: There is no significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on years of teachers' experience.

Theoretical Framework:

The teaching of reading comprehension in secondary schools, particularly within Ilorin Metropolis, is best understood through the framework of several foundational educational theories that guide both instructional practices and assessment strategies. One of the most influential is Constructivism, a theory rooted in the works of Jean Piaget (1896–1980) and later expanded by Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934). Constructivism posits that learning is an active, constructive process whereby learners build new knowledge upon the foundation of their existing understanding. Piaget emphasized the stages of cognitive development and the importance of hands-on, discovery-based learning. Vygotsky added a sociocultural dimension, highlighting the role of social interaction and language in the construction of knowledge. In reading comprehension, this implies that students do not simply absorb information from texts; rather, they interpret and make sense of the material through personal and collaborative experiences. In Ilorin classrooms, this theory is reflected in student-centered instructional strategies such as guided group discussions, peer teaching, and collaborative learning activities. However, the practical application of Constructivism varies widely, with some teachers still defaulting to lecture-based instruction due to constraints like large class sizes, limited resources, or inadequate professional training.

In summary, while Constructivism, offers powerful insights into how reading comprehension can be effectively taught and assessed, the practical application of the theory in Ilorin's secondary schools remains inconsistent. This underscores the need for ongoing professional development, curriculum reform, and support systems that enable teachers to align their methods more closely with research-based best practices in reading comprehension instruction.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population includes all English language teachers in Ilorin metropolis. Ilorin Metropolis included Ilorin West and part of Ilorin East Local Government Areas of Kwara State. Fifty (50) respondents were proportionately selected from four randomly selected schools as samples. The research instrument for this study was a researcher designed questionnaire tagged 'Assessment of Methods Secondary School Teacher Use to Teach Reading Comprehension in Ilorin Metropolis (AMSSTTRC)'. The questionnaire was divided into Section A and Section B. Section A would contain the demographics information of the respondents



which includes school type, gender and qualification and Section B contains items on teaching methods. The researcher subjected the instruments to both face and content validity to ensure consistency and accuracy of the instrument. A pilot study was conducted with a small sample of English Language teachers outside the main study area. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach’s Alpha to ensure internal consistency of the item using spilt half methods. A reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. Simple percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, while t-test and ANOVA were used to test the research hypotheses.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	24	48.0%
Female	26	52.0%
Total	50	100.0%

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents Based on Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
NCE	6	12.0%
B.sc	6	12.0%
B.Ed.	11	22.0%
B.A	9	18.0%
Ph.D.	3	6.0%
Total	50	100.0%

Research Question 1: What are the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis?

Table 3: Showing the methods secondary school teachers use to teach Reading Comprehension in Ilorin Metropolis

S/N	ITEMS	Regularly	Occasionally	Rarely	No occurrence	Mean	Rank
1	I use lecture-based method to teach reading comprehension skills.	32(64.0)	18(36.0)	-	-	3.64	4 TH
2	I use Reciprocal teaching method in teaching reading comprehension.	29(58.0)	21(42.0)	-	-	3.58	6 TH
3	I employ Deductive method in the teaching of reading comprehension.	29(58.0)	20(40.0)	1(2.0)	-	3.56	8 TH



4	I use guided reading method to help students understand texts while teaching reading comprehension.	30(60.0)	20(40.0)	-	-	3.60	5 TH
5	I engage students in group discussions as a method of teaching reading comprehension.	47(94.0)	3(6.0)	-	-	3.94	1 ST
6	I employ Inductive teaching method to teach reading comprehension.	29(58.0)	21(42.0)	-	-	3.58	6 TH
7	Communicative method is deployed to teach reading comprehension to students.	34(68.0)	16(32.0)	-	-	3.68	3 RD
8	Students are taught using context clues as a method in reading comprehension classroom.	30(60.0)	17(34.0)	3(6.0)	-	3.54	9 TH
9	I use grammar translation method to make students understand reading comprehension.	19(38.0)	31(62.0)	-	-	3.38	10 TH
10	I use summarization method to explain comprehension to students.	39(78.0)	10(20.0)	1(2.0)	-	3.76	2 ND

Note: The figures in parentheses are in percentages

Source: Field Survey 2026

Table 3 showed the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis. It was revealed that the use of Discussion and Summarization methods came first and second, while Context Clues and Grammar Translation methods came last in order of teachers' usage in the teaching of reading comprehension among secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis. This implies that teachers of English use discussion and summarization methods to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin Metropolis.



Testing the Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on gender.

Table 4: Summary of t-test showing difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension based on gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std Deviation	T	F	Df	Sig	Decision
Methods	Male	24	36.75	3.68	0.157	5.099	48	.059	H₀ Not Rejected
	Female	26	36.88	2.26					

Source: Field Survey 2026

Table 4 revealed that male respondents had mean score 36.75 and standard deviation 3.68 while female respondents had mean score 36.88 and standard deviation 2.26, the t was 0.157, degree of freedom 48, F was 5.099 and significant level of 0.059 (P>0.05). This implies that there was no significant difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

H₀₂: There is no significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on school type.

Table 5: t-test Summary of the Significance Difference in the Methods Secondary School Teachers Use to Teach Reading Comprehension in Ilorin Metropolis Based on School Type

	School type	N	Mean	Std Deviation	T	F	Df	Sig	Decision
Methods	Public	25	36.5600	2.82961	0.609	0.322	48	.573	Not Sig
	Private	25	37.0800	3.20052					

Source: Field Survey 2026

Table 5 showed the summary of t-test results showing the significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on school type. It was revealed that male respondents had mean score 36.56 and standard deviation 37.08 while female respondents had mean score 2.82 and standard deviation 3.20, the t was 0.609, significant level of 0.573 (P>0.05). This implies that the null hypothesis on school type was not rejected.

H₀₃: There is no significance difference in the in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on age.

Table 6: ANOVA Summary of the difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension based on age.

Age	N	Mean	Std	F	Df	Sig
9-12 Years	22	37.00	3.47	0.591	49	.624
13—16 Years	9	35.88	1.54			
17 Above	13	36.00	2.39			
Total	50					

Source: Field Survey 2026



Table 6 showed the summary of ANOVA in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on age. With the sig. value of .624, the hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on age was not rejected.

H04: There is no significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on qualification.

Table 7: ANOVA Summary Showing Difference in the Methods Secondary School Teachers Use to Teach Reading Comprehension Based on Qualification

Qualification	N	Mean	Std	F	df	Sig
NCE	6	36.6667	1.87083			
Bsc.	6	36.6667	1.87080			
B.A	9	33.3056	2.0000			
B.Ed.		37.0588	2.74933	0.933	49	.432
MA	-	-	-			
M.ED	12	37.0588	2.74933			
Ph.D.	3	38.0000	6.55744			
Total	50	36.1400	3.1400			

Source: Field Survey 2026

Table 7 showed the summary of ANOVA in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on qualification. With the Sig. value of .432 which is more than the 0.5 level of significance, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significance difference use of instructional resources of teachers of students with disabilities based on qualifications was not rejected.

Summary of the Findings

1. Discussion and Summarization methods are the predominant methods teachers employed in the teaching of reading comprehension in Ilorin Metropolis while Context Clues and Grammar Translation methods were least used by the teachers.
2. There was no significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on gender.
3. There was no significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on teachers age.
4. There was no significant difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on qualification.
5. There was no significance difference in the methods secondary school teachers use to teach reading comprehension in Ilorin metropolis based on school type.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that teachers use Group Discussion and Summarization methods predominantly in the teaching of reading comprehension, with a strong emphasis on interactive and student-centered approaches. Among the strategies identified, group discussion ranked highest. This finding indicates that teachers recognize the importance of collaborative learning and summarization in enhancing students' understanding of reading materials. This finding aligns with the study by Adewumi and Owolabi (2012), who noted that when students are engaged in group discussions, it leads to better comprehension outcomes, especially in language-related subjects.

Furthermore, the study found that variables of gender, age, qualification and school type did not significantly influence the methods employed by teachers. This suggests that there is a level of



uniformity in teaching practices among teachers in Ilorin metropolis. This finding aligns with the conclusions drawn by Yusuf, Onifade, and Bello's (2016) reports that teacher demographics had little influence on instructional practices in teaching reading comprehension. It also aligns with the submissions of Sanni (2021) who explained that effective teaching practices are influenced more by continuous professional development than the age of the teacher.

However, in contrary Eze and Eze (2017) reported that private schools tend to employ more innovative strategies due to better resources.

Conclusion

The study assessed the methods employed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin metropolis for teaching reading comprehension. The findings revealed that teachers predominantly use Group Discussion and Summarization Methods in enhancing students' reading comprehension skills.

The study found no significant difference in the methods used based on gender, age, qualification, or school type, indicating a relatively uniform pattern of teaching methods across schools in Ilorin metropolis. This uniformity can be attributed to standardized teacher training, curriculum implementation, and educational policies enforced by the Kwara State Ministry of Education Human Capital Development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Educational stakeholders should sensitize teachers on the limitations of lecture-based teaching for reading comprehension and encourage the adoption of student-centered approaches.
2. Government and school proprietors should invest in providing adequate teaching aids such as graded reading materials, comprehension texts, workbooks, and digital resources to enhance effective reading instruction.
3. Regular classroom monitoring and supervision should be conducted to ensure that teachers are applying effective reading comprehension strategies.

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IMMANUEL KANT'S CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE AND THE NIGERIA'S DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM: TOWARDS ACHIEVING DIGITAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Abstract

Though Nigeria has one of the fastest-growing digital economy in African continent, a digital boom so to say, there is a dire ethical challenge in data privacy, surveillance, and online misinformation. The present paper explores the possibility of using the categorical imperative of Immanuel Kant as a framework for creating digital responsibility in the Nigerian digital arena. The approach is analytical. The focus is on how Kantian ethics can be employed to fecundate modern and responsible digital citizenship through an analysis and evaluation of already existing digital laws, enforcement procedures, and online habits. The discovery finds the existing procedures or practices ethically wanting insofar as human beings, the digital citizens are treated as means rather end in the Nigerian digital world. The positive elements of intrinsic worth, sense of duty, universalizability principle, and autonomy as found in Kantian ethics are indispensable ingredients in achieving humane and responsible digital ecosystem. It is the thesis of the paper that baring its absolutist tendency, a good application of Kantian categorical imperative can serve to fecundate responsible digital citizenship thereby curbing the above ethical deficiency.

Keywords: digital responsibility, Nigeria, Kant's categorical imperative, human dignity, universalizability, and digital ecosystem.

Introduction

The present digital transformation and boom in Nigeria have some attendant ethical challenges. In real life situations, legal and ethical boundaries are clearly known and respected in relationships. Encroachment can easily be detected and defaulters held accountable for their actions or wrong doings. Conversely, in on-line situations there is a tendency for people to hide behind the keyboard and commit crimes or abuses believing that the online ecosystem is a *no-man's-land* and a world of unfettered freedom. There are abuses in the areas of data privacy protection, surveillance and control of misinformation. This is evidenced in the high rate of cybercrimes, cyber bullying, dissemination of fake news, cyber threats, etc. The Guardian Newspaper (26 November 2025), as reported by Adamu Abuh, et al, states that "digital abuse in Nigeria is a major crisis, with an estimated 68.9 million people, particularly women and girls, facing online harassment, including cyberbullying, impersonation, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, sextortion, and deep fake abuse." How can the above ugly situation be morally addressed? This is the task before us.

The present work explores Kant's deontological ethics which builds on rationality, intrinsic value, and sense of duty. This is built on the ethical principle of universalizability. Deontological ethics is often contrasted with utilitarian ethics. It is the conviction of the researchers that the best form of healing or solution for a moral decadence is one rooted in the intrinsic principles that under-



gird peoples actions and inactions - *sanatio in radice*. This anchors on the fundamental reason that the human person is a rational being imbued with freedom and knowledge and whose rights and freedom ought to be respected as a matter of duty. This serves as the motivation for the choice of Kant's ethics.

The methodology is analytical. The philosophical tool of analysis helps to bring out the meanings embedded in the terms, concepts and symbols in the work. It is also a method known to dissect the whole into parts so as to bring out their latent meanings. The work is generally divided into five sections. The first section is the introduction. The second section highlights the surge in digital transformation in Nigeria, the attendant ethical challenge and the imperative of a proper ethical framework. The motif here is informed by the fact that development without morality is no development. The third section is an exposé on Kant's deontological ethics with a focus on his Categorical Imperative. The fourth section applies Kant's categorical imperative to the Nigerian digital ecosystem in view of determining the possibility of its fecundating responsible and ethical digital operations. The focus here is on data privacy, surveillance and online misinformation. The fifth section serves as the evaluation, recommendation and conclusion.

The Digital Transformation in Nigeria and the Imperative of Proper Ethical Framework

Nigeria is unarguably experiencing an unprecedented digital transformation. The Honourable Minister for Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr Bosun Tijani (no date) in his welcome address on the Ministry's website unequivocally affirms this fact in these clear terms:

As we stand on the cusp of a new era, characterised by rapid technological advancements, I believe it is our collective responsibility to harness the transformative power of innovation and technology, coupled with the ingenuity of the Nigerian people – young and old – to accelerate our development and position ourselves at the forefront of the global digital discourse.

Data and facts on the ground further attest to the truth of the above claim. At the second quarters of 2025, the digital economy contributed N7.37 trillion (14.4%) to the real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Fagbemi, 2025). Emma Okonji, echoing the statistics released by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), reports in *Thisday Newspaper* (11th Dec., 2025) that Nigeria today boasts of over 142 million active internet subscribers and social media users. With the above boom comes various digital challenges such as cybercrimes as exemplified in the popular 419 scams, love scams, internet fraud, infringement on privacy, cyberbully etc. The available instruments for combating the above challenges such as Cybercrime Prohibition Prevention Act (2024); Nigeria Data Protection Act (2023), etc, notwithstanding, the rate of the above crimes, fraud and abuse continues to escalate at geometric progression thus calling for urgent attention. There is therefore a dire need for proper ethical framework to guide interactions in the Nigerian digital space. The traditional approaches and instruments hitherto employed are more inclined to positive administration of laws and acts. There is need for an ethical ground-norm upon which can be anchored principles and inner motivations that propel the human will, in collaboration with rationality towards doing what is good and desirable both in the real world and the digital world. It is the human person that operates in both worlds.

Kant's Categorical Imperative: A Brief Exposé

Immanuel Kant is a German philosopher born in Konigsberg on April 22nd 1724. He is said to have been "always sensitive to the longings of the heart that cannot be met by the cold dictates of theoretical reason" (William F. Lawhead 2015). Two of Kant's works *The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785) and the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1787) were devoted to his moral philosophy. In line with the rationalist philosophers, Kant agreed that anything that deserves to be called knowledge must be universal, necessary, and certain (Lawhead 2015). This is epitomized in his transcendental method or approach to knowledge which gives universalizability and necessity as fundamental conditions of knowledge. In a similar way a proper ethical



formulation, should have the essential ingredients of universalizability and necessity. For Kant, morality applies to human beings on account of their rationality (reason) which places them on a special position amongst the created order. 'The lawgiver' for Kant is reason itself. A rational rule is one that is universal and consistent. It is universal in that it is a rule that applies to all people, at all times, and in all circumstances. It is consistent in that it does not lead to any contradictions (Lawhead 2015). On another note, Kantian ethics places emphasis on duties, respect of the dignity and worth of persons. Sense of duty as well as reason are the two factors upon which he anchored his moral law.

Categorical imperative is quite different from hypothetical imperative. While hypothetical imperative is premised on any possible certain conditions, desire or ulterior motif, categorical imperative is absolutely unconditional. Kant's Categorical Imperative is expressed in the catchy expression: "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law" (Immanuel Kant 1993 (Original work published 1785)). This is rationally justifiable. Kant equally expressed it morally in another formula: "So act as to treat humanity, whether in your own person or in another, always as an end and never as only a means" (Kant 1993). The idea of autonomy is highly pivotal to Kant's categorical imperative. The word 'autonomy' is derived from two Greek words *autos* (self) and *nomos* (law), a combination of the two words means "self-legislation". This simply refers to the inbuilt characteristic of the human will to serve as a law to itself; unencumbered by or independent of any objects of desire, inclinations. The categorical imperative demands that one employs the principle of autonomy by stating that one acts only in accordance with that maxim through which one can at the same time will that it becomes a universal law. Autonomy contrasts with heteronomous. This is the case where the will is influenced by extraneous factors such as appetites and emotions. The human reason or rationality plays significant role here. For Kant the autonomy of the will is the "supreme principle of morality" (G 4:440). Autonomy goes in tandem with freedom. An autonomous action is one done deliberately and self-consciously. The concept of autonomy has become a key issue in philosophy, medicine and law.

Finally, the intrinsic worth or value as well as the dignity and respect accorded to humans all anchor on the human autonomy. It is on the basis of this that Kant insists that the human being should be treated not as a means but an end-in-itself. In the light of the above exposé, one can now evaluate the practices in Nigerian digital environment vis-à-vis Kant's categorical imperative.

Kant's Categorical Imperative vis-à-vis Nigerian Digital Ecosystem

The deontological ethics as exemplified in Kant's categorical imperative calls for duty and respect of the human person as an end in itself and not as a means. This is a simple moral standard to be applied when analyzing the data collection, surveillance systems and the integrity of information (Johnson & Cureton, 2022). Unlike the consequentialist ethics or approach which believes that the outcomes alone define the actions, the Kantian ethics refers to the intentions and focuses on the principles of the technological and digital practices and further considers whether these practices place human dignity in proper perspective that can be generalized without contradiction.

The present work will dwell on three areas of Nigeria online space that are salient such as coverage of data privacy protection, surveillance and control of misinformation. The human autonomy and dignity is questioned in all these areas and must be evaluated in terms of morality. The research questions that will inform the research will take the following form: (1) How does the practices in the Nigerian digital spaces adhere to the Kantian moral principle? (2) What are some of the systematic violations of human dignity due to the application of data and surveillance? (3) How can the categorical imperative fecundate change of policy to safeguard the digital rights and at the same time permit technological progress?

The significance of the present work lies in the growing current of interest on the ethical dimension of digital practices among Nigerians. Recent occurrences attest to the above claim. In the area of data protection, the Nigeria Data Protection Commission (NDPC) has started conducting investigations of over 1,000 entities on compliance breach nay a sign of heightened awareness



regarding digital rights (Wolfenden, 2025). Simultaneously, the 2023 elections demonstrated that the misinformation campaigns can negatively affect the democratic process and the voter turnout dropped to 26.72% part of which can be attributed to the manipulation of the media (MDIF, 2024). These tendencies indicate that there is an immediate need of ethical frameworks beyond regulatory compliance, which will give ethical grounds of digital citizenship. The imperative of balancing technological and digital innovation with respect for human dignity is a noble idea that calls for not only a positive legal but also adequate ethical framework.

Digital Autonomy and Human Dignity

Remarkably, Kant's concept of autonomy is echoed in the famous Onora O'Neill's principled autonomy (2002). O'Neill advocated for autonomy that is bound by duties and principles, rather than just subjective preferences (2002). This is autonomy that operates within the framework of shared obligations; which is the capacity to act on the grounds that can be intelligible to another in a communicative, rational dialogue. It aligns with transparency, informed consent and meaningful choice requirements in digital contexts as far as the collection and use of personal data is concerned. Users are expected to be in a position to understand words, terms and conditions on which they engage digital services and judge them rationally.

Kant's ethics is concerned with human dignity in which people possess intrinsic values that cannot be instrumentalized (O'Neill, 2002). This ideal has enormous implication for the present digital culture in which user information is largely regarded as a valuable resources to be traded commercially, as opposed to a declaration of self-agency. Such assumptions that human experience could be transformed into data sets that could be worked with the help of algorithms raises serious doubts whether digital technologies could respect or violate the dignity that Kant describes as the main part of the humanity of the human and a core factor in moral philosophy.

The aspect of autonomy has particular problems with the digital environment in Nigeria. The digital divide with the 45.5% internet penetration rate creates a situation where internet access is already a prerequisite to the freedom of choice in an already digital society (Freedom House, 2024). The unconnected are systematically excluded from belonging and participating in existing opportunities as almost all basic services are migrated from analog to digital arena. In addition to this, some websites and platforms also pose big challenges to their users. People can be exploited by way of cognitive biases as well as unduly manipulated. This rather vitiates rational decisions as required by Kantian autonomy.

Respect for human dignity also requires that the digital systems must be designed to enhance rather than diminish the human abilities. When algorithms provide consequential determinations of persons, e.g. as over creditworthy or not employed or on social services, without giving the notion of how it was determined or with any meaningful appeal, it does not treat persons as beings capable of understanding and challenging decision-making that affects their lives but as objects to be processed by an algorithm instead. Even the most accurate and efficient of these systems sometimes fail to pass test of the most basic Kantian standards.

Kantian Evaluation of Nigerian Digital Practices

Data Privacy: Instrumentalization versus Respect for Persons

A cursory look at the Nigerian digital ecosystem shows that much needs to be done as far as data privacy management or data protection is concerned. Understandably, measures for protection of data are enshrined in the Nigeria Data Protection Act (NDPA) 2023, such as enhanced data protection regarding sensitive personal data and a requirement of registration of major processors (ICLG, 2025). Nonetheless, evidence of lack of compliance abound such as the case of the NDPC examining more than 1,000 entities and fining them massively, including N766.2 million on Multichoice Nigeria (ICLG, 2025).

Exploitative surveillance cultures, commodification of personal information and even outright forceful and illegal extraction of information from victims are rampant. Most times a lot of



personal information are collected without seeking the consent of the people. The practice goes against the respect for humanity formulation as the process takes users more as a source of valuable data but not as autonomous agents worthy of respect (Gwadi and Igbashangev, 2025). The legal requirements of informed consent processes often lack the needed transparency and are not rationally determined since the legal texts they describe appear incomprehensible to an average Nigerian user.

Instrumentalization occurs when the human person is directly or indirectly used as a means to an end such as using a person's data without his or her consent to achieve a purpose. In the Nigeria's digital ecosystem, one's data are often tracked, collected and used by companies, governments, politicians etc. Though such data can be used positively for planning and developmental projects, consent and respect of human dignity should be applied where and when necessary. Ethical issues arise when tech companies, data-driven businesses and institutions exploit or treat users as mere data and not as human persons endowed with rationality and freewill. These are most often for profiteering without any due consideration on the rights, freedom and privacy of the victims who may not fully understand how much of their information is being stored, sold, or used for purposes like targeted advertising or behavior prediction. When this happens without clear permission or awareness, individuals are no longer treated as rational agents with dignity. They become tools in a system built to make profit or control a behavior.

Nevertheless, there are those who justify the present day manipulative practices and further argue that Kantian moral principles are not feasible in the digital world given that they are absolute and as such fail to account for the uniqueness of particular situations. Similarly, terms of services are voluntarily accepted by the users who are free to choose autonomously despite the complexity of the terms. Simple wisdom demands that one halts further action when in doubt. Moreover, full disclosure of the intricacies of data practices may overload users with information which can be counter-productive to free decision making instead of reinforcing it.

However, the above defense fails to appreciate properly Kantian demands of meaningful autonomy. Consent that is made with terms that are intentionally obscure or a design pattern that is exploitative do not find a rational basis that is required of Kantian ethics. According to O'Neill (2002), real freedom imply that people have access to information about the principles applicable in their treatment and can properly analyze them. By devising consent systems that deliberately aim to maximize profits via cryptic and deceptive presentation of vital details, digital platforms are driven to achieve strategic, but not communicative, objectives, which is a breach of the respect of the rational agency upon which the of Kantian ethical theory rests.

Surveillance: State Power and Individual Dignity

The prying surveillance and other spying practices especially on the social media by the security agencies in Nigeria raise serious moral concerns (Stegen, 2025). The Cybercrimes Act permits electronic surveillance on the pretext of national security, but the routine monitoring of computer-mediated interactions where individuals do not know or consent to it disregards the imperative to handle persons as ends in themselves (Oghogho et al., 2024).

A further examination of the phenomenon of surveillance in the light of Kant's universalizability test could be quite informative. Would we tolerate a society in which we have government's surveillance of all the digital communications? This type of ominous surveillance would essentially change the very essence of communication as a free process, taking away the trust and authenticity without which no meaningful discourse can be held. Under the close monitoring of the population, the autonomy and freedom that Kant regards as crucial aspects of human dignity is denied to them.

Surveillance systems also view citizens as potential dangers that need to be closely monitored and not as individuals who are independent and can operate freely. Such instrumental orientation does not synchronize with the Kantian ethics since it tells negatively on the dignity of the larger majority that do not constitute any form of threat or harm to the society. However, this makes the whole nation to become victims of surveillance on account of a few that are guilty of crimes. The



advocates of surveillance may argue that security threats such as terrorism, cyber-crimes and political instabilities generate valid demands of surveillance. The need to defend citizens can be used to justify surveillance to avoid grave harms. In addition, the citizens who are involved in the open digital environments possess lower expectations about their privacy and therefore surveillance is not as invasive as a physical search. They think that the consequentialist advantages of such prevention of attack or crime supersede any abstract interests in dignity.

This defense, however, cannot succeed on the Kantian grounds since it considers dignity as something that can be exchanged or traded on security benefits. In the ethics of Kant, human dignity is treated as absolute and inviolable. Categorical imperative prohibits use of the innocent to achieve security goals irrespective of the scale of returns attained. Individuals are ethically obligated to uphold their informational privacy, and the states cannot subjugate such obligations just because of the need of security.

Moreover, consequentialist calculation presented by the defenders of surveillance goes against the very framework of Kantian deontological ethics. Although the harms prevented by surveillance may be either major or minor, the question to ask is whether the surveillance treats individuals with the respect to which their dignity deserves. Invasive surveillance that takes place without the awareness of individuals or without significant control does not pass this test. The ethics proposed by Kant allows taking of security measures, though in such a way that they do not interfere with the free agency of others. This is to say that an element of transparency, responsibility and proportion is needed, which is mostly lacking in the existing surveillance procedures in Nigeria.

Misinformation: Truth-Telling and Democratic Discourse

The prevalence of false information on the Nigerian digital ecosystem poses serious moral challenge. Truth-telling and its opposite which is lying are considered as central concepts in the Kantian moral system since lying breaches the principle of universalizability (universal lying would reduce trust to ashes, and people could no longer communicate) as well as the principle of respect to a person (lying would turn other people into objects to be used and not persons).

The 2023 elections in Nigeria painted the image of how misinformation can be corrosive. An example is the use of social media influencers to spread disinformation by the political parties that exploited ethnic and religious differences (Freedom House, 2024). Deepfakes that are produced through artificial intelligence pose a threat to future elections based on more advanced deceptions (Aigbiniode and Goodman, 2025). From Kantian standpoint, such practices are systematic in breaching the rational autonomy required to engage in democracy, and instead of relating to the citizens as rational entities, who can make informed decisions, they relegate citizens to objects which are to be manipulated.

The obligation of truth is not just limited to individual actors, but also to platform operators and policymakers. The social media companies that make their algorithms to encourage engagement instead of accuracy would be against the Kantian principles because they would have established the spaces in which misinformation can flourish. By platforms using cognitive biases to gain the greatest attention of users, the latter objectify them, as objects of advertisement and revenue, but not as independent agents who deserve to be told the truth. The Kantian imperative requires that the design of platforms put the interests of the users and the rational status of the users over the commercial interests. Above all, the gap in the overall artificial intelligence and deepfakes regulations means a lot in terms of guarding the integrity of information. Fact-checking approach such as MyAIFactChecker are good projects, though they need more involvement and spread into digital ecosystems to create an impact.

Critics may argue that the regulation of the free flow of information or censorship runs contrary to freedom of speech which Kant encourages. Understandably, misinformation and legitimate speech may not be always easily distinguished, and the enforcement mechanisms can be directed at the political enemies. These notwithstanding, individuals are obligated to think critically on the



information they are fed. The state obligation to ensure that individuals tell the truth to the letter may lead to infantilism thus making the people to lack the right to make their own judgment.

The above points are important issues that should be considered seriously. Although the ethics of Kant values freedom of expression, it should occur in a manner that respects the autonomy of other individuals. Intentional misinformation violates this need because it seeks to distort, rather than inform. The categorical imperative prohibits random and dehumanizing censorship, but permits and even requires censorship that protects the contents of rational discourse. This can be augmented with fact-checking systems and content moderation so as to guarantee the dissemination of authentic information.

Recommendations

Policy Framework Enhancements

The Kantian ethics demands that the Nigerian digital governance be modeled in such a way that the human dignity is respected and not just on the need to maximize commercial or political gains. First, there should be equal treatment in the area of data protection. The NDPC must ensure not only the technical compliance but also the actual adherence to the user autonomy, the consent mechanisms applied must be made to guarantee actual comprehension and not artificial assent.

Second, transparency and accountability are required in the surveillance programs. Security measures are permitted by Kantian ethics, but only those measures which consider citizens as an end in themselves. This may also involve the inclusion of warrant in the judicial review in order to engage in surveillance, regular publicity on size and performance of the programs, and huge compensations against unsuitable surveillance. Security agencies must have the right to conduct surveillance based on individualized suspicion as opposed to entire populations as the source of potential dangers.

Third, though elaborate systems of AI (Artificial Intelligence) and automated decision systems are most times adopted, Kantian ethics holds that the consequential determinations must be explainable and contestable as these involve rational human beings. This allows autonomous agents to understand and challenge determinations. To provide effective human jurisdiction and authentic mechanisms, decision-making algorithms employed in administering credits, jobs, or government services must be conditioned to adhere to transparent standards that respect human dignity.

Fourth, the regulation of platforms should be more about autonomy of the users. This implies that the use of manipulative design patterns should be banned. Transparency in configuration of algorithms should be a *conditio sine qua non*. Platforms should be subject to legal liability as a way of discouraging the dissemination of misinformation.

Institutional Capacity Building

A broader application the Kantian principles in the Nigerian digital ecosystem requires stronger regulatory power. The NDPC and similar agencies may need resources to keep track of high-level technology, competence in morality structure and skills in technical expertise. Global partnership may also be needed to supplement or complement whatever local efforts that are made. Nigeria needs to encourage strong institutions. Similarly, proper digital governance cannot be achieved without proper communication and synergy between the government, civil societies, business community, and other institutions.

Digital Literacy and Public Education

Kantian autonomy requires rational and well informed citizens. Nigeria should invest in multilevel digital literacy and policy enlightenment which would encompass the privacy rights, discernment of misinformation and informed decision-making process when it comes to digital services. These programs are not meant to be limited to the urban educated individuals but should be extended to the rural and the marginal groups which are most vulnerable.

Education without morality is no education. Accordingly, technology and digital education should incorporate the moral dimension of technology rather than solely technical skills. There



should be mechanisms that enable the citizens to evaluate how digital practices affect their dignity and autonomy so that they can insist that the platforms and policymakers treat them better. Digital ethics and ethical digital citizenship should be introduced in schools and young Nigerians should learn to use the technological and digital spaces without losing their sense of morality.

Balancing Innovation and Human Dignity

Every good innovation is meant to uplift rather than degrade the human dignity. Nigeria has massive and unfolding potential in the development of its digital economy. To maximize these benefits, it is quite necessary to uphold the Kantian imperative of persons never being used as a means to an end alone. It includes the rejection of spurious division between innovation and ethics. Both can be achieved simultaneously. Similarly, sustainable digital economies thrive best when founded on the issues of trust and dignity.

Innovation should not be stifled by inhuman moral principles. The business constructors who take into account the user autonomy and dignity are able to create stable and sustainable businesses. But those who rely on exploitation create poor systems that are not sustainable. The Kantian ethics provides a form of guideline on how to model business that would satisfy the needs of commerce and moral demands. Virtue must stand in the middle.

Evaluation and Conclusion

The present work has examined the Kant's categorical imperative in view of employing it as an ethical framework for Nigerian digital ecosystem. The focus is on data privacy, surveillance and misinformation. At the core of Kantian ethics lies the respect for human dignity and the call for duty. The tenets of universalizability and the submission that persons should be treated as ends in themselves serves as a canon for evaluating common practices in data collection, surveillance and misinformation. These serve as antidote to the practice that subjects citizens to either commercial or political agendas or gains. The test of universalizability exposes the inconsistency of existing practices.

The digital governance in Nigeria has a long way to go as far as achieving adequate protection and justice for Nigerian digital citizens. Although the NDPA 2023 sets significant legal guidelines, their enforcement is still unsatisfactory and some spurious practices therein tend to contradict the Kantian ethical principles. Some data platforms treat users merely as sources of important information, rather than as independent rational agents that should be respected. The surveillance systems are used to monitor whole populations on the premise of arresting possible danger rather than on personal suspicion. Citizens are also exploited via misinformation. The cumulative effects of the above digital malpractices are obvious. They fundamentally show gross lack of strong moral standing.

It is on this basis that the present work presents the Kantian ethical paradigm which provides optimism as well as criticism for the status quo. It offers practical reforms and makes a clarion call to respect human value and yet allow technological advancements by giving straight forward moral ingredients namely: human dignity, autonomy, and universalizability. The recommendations enunciated above show how the Kantian ethics can be applied when framing policies on data privacy, accountability in surveillance, regulation of the platforms, and integrity of information. The issue of implementation is still daunting. The capacity to regulate is constrained by the scarcity of resources. The Kantian individualism can be in conflicts with cultural contexts. Similarly, critics tend to argue that Kant's categorical imperative is too broad and absolute as to properly address the ethical demands of particular situations. Different situations may call for different ethical approach. Most times political forces do oppose reforms that pose threat to their interests. Vulnerable populations are often excluded due to the digital divide occasioned by digital illiteracy and other factors. These are some of the challenges that can militate against the adequate implementation of Kantian ethical model.

These notwithstanding, the status of Nigeria as one of the leading digital economies in Africa demands that proper balance is created between innovation and the human person. The



Kantian approach to digital governance provides a framework that can be used in digital ecosystems, markets and other areas. It further proves that technological advancement does not have to harm human values. The basic ethical lesson from Kant's categorical imperative is that in the realm of the digital as in any other field, individuals are to be treated as ends not means.

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